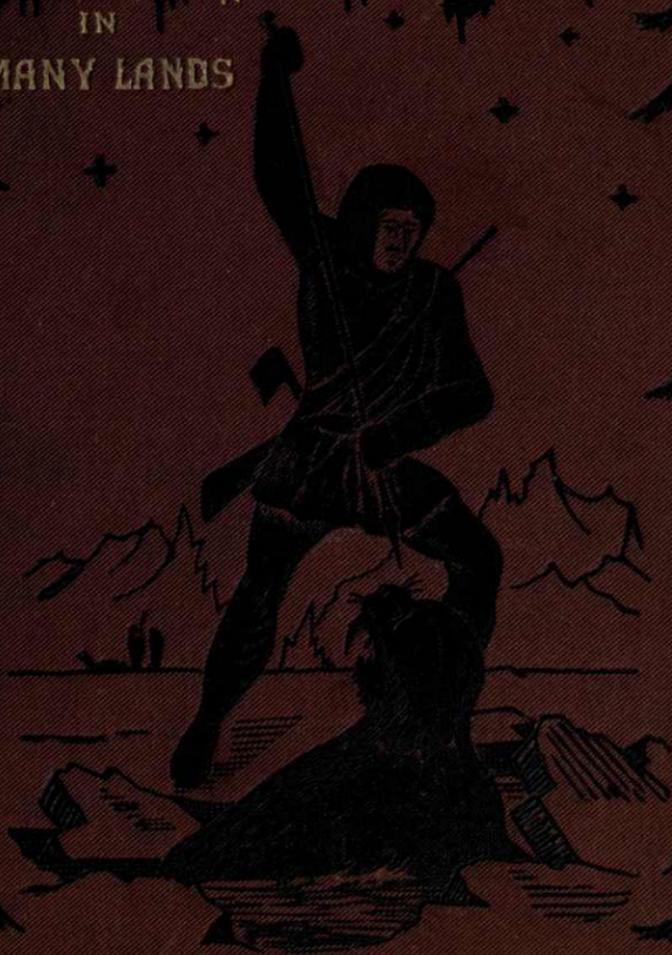


SCENES WITH THE
HUNTER AND THE TRAPPER

IN
MANY LANDS



A BOOK FOR BOYS



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SCENES WITH THE HUNTER

AND THE TRAPPER IN MANY LANDS.

STORIES OF ADVENTURES WITH WILD ANIMALS.



IN PURSUIT

Thomas Nelson and Sons,
LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND NEW YORK.

SCENES WITH THE HUNTER

AND THE TRAPPER IN MANY LANDS;

OR,

STORIES OF ADVENTURES WITH WILD ANIMALS.

BY

W. H. DAVENPORT ADAMS.

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"What pleasure, sir, find we in life to lock it
From action and adventure?"—SHAKESPEARE.

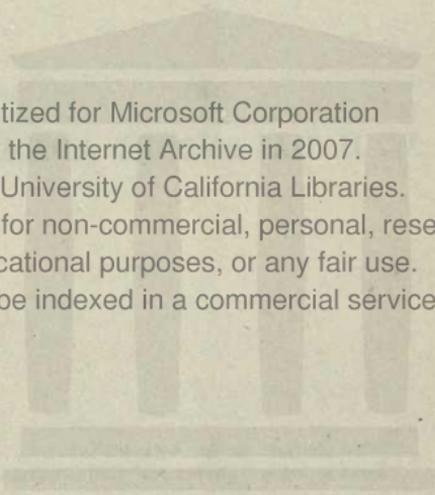
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Preface.



SO long as the boys of Great Britain retain anything of the old traditional spirit, so long will they take a pleasure in the perusal of narratives of "action and adventure." And it is well that they should learn to admire—though not with an exaggerated admiration—the coolness of nerve, the presence of mind, the steady resolution, the fearlessness of danger, which enable men to accomplish deeds of gallantry, whether "by flood or field." The qualities which distinguish the successful hunter, are those which win renown for the successful warrior. Both must have a keen eye, a firm and ready hand, a healthy frame; and both must have the capability of enduring hardship, the patience to bide their time, adequate fertility of resource, and the mental calmness which no sudden peril disturbs. I do not say these are the *highest* qualities of humanity, but certainly they are foremost in the second rank; and the ancient Greeks regarded them as necessary to their ideal of the perfect man. The hunter is sometimes represented as a bloodthirsty savage, going to and fro in search of what he may devour. No doubt the love of sport may be carried to an excess; but in general the pursuit of beasts of prey is a benefit to society; while it

unquestionably demands, on the part of those engaged in it, the exercise of no ordinary powers of mind and body.

It seems to me, therefore, that a book recording some of the most stirring achievements of men in their prolonged contest with wild animals may be not only interesting but useful—that it will not only amuse but teach. It is something gained when a boy learns to prize and imitate the manly virtues; and such stories as are set forth in the following pages will help the young reader to this valuable lesson. They are all *true* stories, and I have carefully refrained from embroidering them with sensational details. Collected from a variety of sources, they are necessarily diversified in tone and character; but not one of them is unwholesome reading. For the sake of securing a certain degree of homogeneity, I have strung them together on a simple thread of narration, suggested by a boyish experience of my own. Further, they are associated with the chief facts in the natural history of the animals to which they relate; so that, to some extent, my little book may be expected to quicken its reader's interest in zoological studies. But, of course, it is intended to solicit the patronage of the "juvenile public" primarily and chiefly as a record of *Adventures with Wild Animals*.

I may add that it has been prepared as a companion to "The Forest, the Jungle, and the Prairie." Each volume is complete in itself; yet the two are framed on a common plan, and the same interlocutors are introduced in both.

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SCENES WITH THE HUNTER AND THE TRAPPER IN MANY LANDS.

I.

Introductory.

VILLAGE OF FIRBANK—FIRBANK GLEN—THE YORKSHIRE MOORS—DR.
BIRCH'S PUPILS—A LITTLE COMPANY—THE CAVE IN THE GLEN—
HALF-HOLIDAYS, AND HOW THEY WERE SPENT.



FIRBANK is the name of an establishment for young gentlemen, which Dr. Birch has conducted with equal profit and renown for the third part of a century.

It is situated in one of the most romantic parts of Yorkshire, near the little village of Firbank ; which, because a wealthy landed proprietor lives in the neighbourhood, has the good fortune to be connected with the thriving market-town of Elmwood by a branch line of railway—more, be it said, to the advantage of the inhabitants of Firbank than to the gain of the Company which works the line.

Though in this way possessing all the conveniences of ready access to a large centre of population, Firbank is as

secluded a place as you could wish to find in a summer's day ramble. It is planted on the very edge of the Yorkshire moors, rising from them with a tolerable ascent, and looking down upon a well-wooded vale, through which a copious "beck" tumbles along in many a whirl and eddy. There is no village within half-a-dozen miles of it; and Elmwood is twenty-five miles distant. News from the outer world reach it but slowly; and its little community remains quite apathetic under political conditions which raise the nation generally to a pitch of uncontrollable excitement. A slight stir is visible about noon, when the daily post arrives; otherwise, the only sensations of the place are derived from the "doings" at the Hall, the escapades and frolics of Dr. Birch's pupils, and the movements of an occasional guest at the village inn, attracted to this remote and tranquil nook by the picturesqueness of its scenery, or the sport for rod and line afforded by the neighbouring streams.

And certainly one might do worse than spend a day in Firbank Glen,—that strange wooded ravine which cuts into the moorland, like an oasis in the Sahara, or a bit of Eden in this work-day world. The sides are richly clothed with brushwood and stunted oaks, which, near the summit, give way to tall green firs. In the shadowy depth flows the brawling stream, taking a restless and wandering course,—now foaming against projecting promontories, now whirling round gnarled tree-roots, now leaping over a ledge of rock. Here, when you have wandered about half a mile from the school, you find yourself in the completest solitude; and poetically-minded pupils have been prone to resort to a small cave which, partly by nature and partly by industrious hands, has been dug into the grassy bank. It is pleasant enough to sit in this ferny hollow and listen to the waters as they gurgle by, to the birds as they sing fearlessly and

merrily among the green tree-tops. And it is pleasanter still to gather a posy of the wood flowers that blossom so abundantly in the silent shades—to delight in “the sweet azure of bluebells, and recognize in pearl-white blossoms spangling the grass an humble type of some starlit spot in space.”

Ascending the glen northwards, you come to the perennial basin from which the stream derives its source; and climbing the rugged acclivities of the hollow, you emerge upon the moorland edge, lying all fresh and green under the smile of a summer sky. Even in the hottest noon, how fresh a breeze pours over the wide open tract! And how fine a sense of fragrance rises from the heathery sward as the wayfarer presses it with impatient foot! Away to the southward stands the clump of wood which marks the site of Firbank Hall, with the gray tower of the village church rising just beyond them; farther to the south-west, a keen eye can distinguish the haze that floats upward from the chimneys of Elmwood. To the east stretches the purple moorland, extending to the brink of the rocky cliffs which withstand, unmoved, the storms of the German Ocean.

And what excursions the Yorkshire moorland in this district opened up to the adventurous pedestrians of Dr. Birch's establishment! Gymnastics at that time had not crept into the undeserved favour and unwholesome notoriety they have acquired elsewhere. Instead of running “one hundred yard races,” like professionals, or leaping over bars and hurdles, Dr. Birch's young gentlemen adhered to the old English games of cricket, and football, and prisoner's base, or hare and hounds; or they started for a vigorous perambulation of the country in search of the picturesque. They would mount to the highest point of the moor, from which they could look across to Whitby, with the gleaming sea beyond it. Or they struck to the westward, and visited Danby Beacon, famous

for the wide landscape which it commands ; and thence they proceeded to the remains of an early British village : a series of pits, divided by a stream into two parts, with tall stones and tumuli all about—memorials of a far-off age, when Britain was a lonely island in a dull gray sea.

Then there was Danby Castle, a noble, massive building, even in its decay, with rowan and ash trees springing from the broken walls, and azure harebells smiling on the ledges. The boys were never weary of exploring its recesses ; and their imagination loved to people the battlements with archers and men-at-arms on their guard against the wild freebooters who so often came down from the Scottish border. It is said that a queen of England once held high state in the castle—namely, Catherine Parr, who, after the death of Henry VIII., married Lord Latimer, the then owner of Danby.

Dr. Birch's boys were mostly of Yorkshire birth, and very proud were they of their glorious county,—

“ A kingdom that doth seem, a province at the least,
To them that think themselves no simple shires to be.”

Their love was wisely encouraged by Dr. Birch himself, who was constantly stimulating them to a thorough knowledge of its characteristics by offering prizes for sketches of Yorkshire scenery and essays on Yorkshire history and Yorkshire worthies. So they knew all about its great rivers—the Tees, the Swale, the Ouse, the Wharfe, the Don ; about its wolds and vales, its fells and gills, its purple moors and dark-green woods ; its great cities—York, with its stately minster, busy Leeds, thriving Halifax, sunny Doncaster ; its castles—as those of Middleham, Richmond, Pickering, Barnard, Bolton, Pontefract ; its beautiful churches and its famous abbeys—Whitby, Kirkham, Fountains, Rievaulx,

Bolton. They had explored, moreover, much of its romantic sea-coast, with its long stretches of lofty rugged cliff, its bold promontories, its sweeps of firm, smooth sand, and the bays of Filey, Robin Hood, Whitby, and Runswick.

But we must turn our attention to Dr. Birch's school. We do not propose to indulge in any sketches of school-life, or to describe any incidents in the career of its pupils, thinking that both subjects, of late, have been somewhat overdone. But we must introduce the reader to a few of the "young gentlemen," in order to explain how this book came to be written.

The captain, or *dux*, not very long ago, was one Francis Seymour,—now an officer in one of Her Majesty's Indian regiments, then a lad of seventeen; good-tempered, frank, cheery, with an athletic frame, a prepossessing countenance, and considerable mental powers. He was popularly known as "the poet," from his partiality to verse-making and his love of poetry. He was also distinguished as a story-teller, and knew every legend and tradition of the country for miles around.

His lieutenant and *fidus Achates* was Frederick Fisher; inferior, perhaps, to Seymour in natural powers, but of a more laborious and patient disposition. He was a great reader: and it was believed by the little boys that he had read almost every book under the sun. Having a tenacious memory, he had accumulated a really considerable stock of information, and his schoolfellows referred to him as others refer to a lexicon or a cyclopædia. He was very fond of long walks; in the course of which he collected ferns and wild plants, insects and birds' eggs, and noted the habits of animals with wonderful accuracy of observation.

Always hanging about these two leaders were four or five

of the steadier lads of the school,—being kept together by a certain similarity of tastes, and by the fact that they all lived in the county-town, where they constantly mixed together in society.

There was Sholto Douglas, a lively youth, much given to fun and out-of-door sports, but by no means deficient in ability.

There was Edward Vernon, a thoughtful boy, with a strong aptitude for study and a natural quickness of observation, who wanted only more steadiness of purpose to become a first-rate scholar.

There was Alfred Mountjoy, a boy in most respects like the average school-boy, but very affectionate, and of a fine open disposition.

We must not omit Walter Beauchamp, a modest, gentlemanly lad, who scarcely did himself justice, owing to his retiring habits. Those who knew him well, however, knew that he had that in him which would hereafter acquire distinction. Everybody liked him, for he was a thorough gentleman; and boys are excellent judges of the "real thing."

Last, but not least, in the little company, was Charley Lambert, popularly known as the Fat Boy, from his supposed resemblance to a certain conspicuous character in "Pickwick." He *was* fat, certainly, with a broad, good-humoured face, like a full moon; short, stumpy legs, and an aldermanic rotundity of stomach. Of course, he was left behind when Seymour and his companions took their long pedestrian excursions; Lambert could not conveniently climb hills, or descend rugged banks, or leap ditches and fences. His mode of progression was a steady, easy walk, and he preferred as level a road as he could find. Douglas declared that he did not *walk*, but *waddle*, an aspersion which Lambert always resented with becoming indignation. He took

refuge from the jokes of his tormentors—and, unfortunately, boys are very great tormentors—in a quiet corner of the schoolroom, or in an angle of the playground, where he amused himself by reading, of which he was very fond, and strengthening his frame the while by banqueting on such dainty viands as he could procure in the village-shops of Firbank. Thoroughly good-humoured and gentle, he was a favourite even with those who teased him most; and he could always rely on the kindly protection of Fisher and Seymour, whom he worshipped with all a schoolboy's devotion.

Now it came about that, as the summer-time approached, a few years ago, Fisher, Seymour, and their companions fell into a habit of resorting, in the holiday afternoons, to the little cave in the glen of which I have already spoken. As Douglas said, "They could not be always walking and leaping and running;" and Lambert declared that the weather was too warm for unnecessary exertion. I think the habit was encouraged by Fisher and Seymour, because it gave them an opportunity of raising the intellectual standard of their companions, by bringing them acquainted with the best books of the best writers. They took it in turns to read aloud,—answering freely any questions which were put to them, and taking care that their selections were judiciously made, and of such a character as to keep alive the attention of their auditors. In this way they went through Byron's "Childe Harold," and a good deal of Wordsworth, some of Shakespeare's finest plays, Froissart's *Chronicles*, Froude's "History of England," and similar works of genius. And very pleasant the boys found it, sitting about the entrance to the little cave, with the birds singing above them, and the waters flowing beside them, and the sunshine glinting through the trees and bushes, while they listened to noble bursts of poetic fervour or to the stirring narratives

of the deeds of heroic men. The circle of listeners was frequently very large, for, as Douglas said, "the readings in the Cave of Wisdom were free gratis and for nothing;" but I think Seymour and Fisher enjoyed them most when none attended except their more immediate friends and followers, on whose sympathy they could fully rely.

Seymour was wise enough to know, however, that boys can easily have too much even of a good thing, and he was "cudgelling his brains" to introduce some variety into their afternoon occupations which might prevent his companions from growing weary, when one day Lambert suddenly broke out with—

"Oh! I say, weren't those jolly stories you fellows told in the railway-carriage!"

"The railway-carriage!" said Vernon; "what do you mean?"

"To think you don't remember!" exclaimed Lambert. "What! have you forgotten our precious adventure in the snow, when we came back this half?"

"Of course not; I am not likely to forget it. And now I know what you mean—these tales about tiger-hunts and lion-hunts—"

"And bears, and all the rest of them," said Lambert; "well, weren't they jolly!"

"Capital!" remarked Mountjoy; "but you can read them for yourself, if you want to do so, in the book which Dr. Birch got printed and published.*"

"As if I didn't know that, when my copy of it has been thumbed and fingered till the leaves will hardly hold together! But what I say is, they were stunning stories, and I wish there were more of them!"

* See "The Forest, the Jungle, and the Prairie," published by Messrs. Nelson and Sons.

"An idea has struck me!" exclaimed Seymour; "why should we *not* have more of them? I have not exhausted all *my* stock, and I am sure that Fisher has no end of jolly tales collected in that precious manuscript volume of his!"

"I am quite ready to do my part," answered Fisher; "and as we have some excellent books of travel in the school library, we might each of us prepare a contribution or two towards the general fund of amusement and instruction; for if we intersperse our stories with bits of information respecting the habits of the animals we are talking about, we shall not only be entertained but instructed."

"Sagely spoken!" said Douglas. "And as I agree *in toto* with the honourable member who has just sat down, and with the honourable member who preceded him, I beg to move that our 'Readings in the Cave' be suspended until further notice, in consequence of the production of a series of entertainments by Messrs. Seymour, Fisher, Vernon, and a talented company, to be entitled—what?"

"'Scenes with the Hunter and the Trapper,'" said Seymour, laughingly.

"Excellent! Brilliant! Delightful!" resumed Douglas. "A series of entertainments, to be entitled 'Scenes with the Hunter and the Trapper in Many Lands,' warranted to make the public's blood cr-r-r-e-eep, and the public's hair to stand on end!"

After a little further discussion, it was unanimously agreed that the following Saturday should witness the commencement of the series, and that the subject should be the Tiger.

"An afternoon with a tiger!" said Douglas, as the little party broke up; "imagine my looking forward to it with positive pleasure!"

II.

About the Tiger.

THE TIGER DESCRIBED—TIGER-HUNTS—THE BENGAL TIGER—NARRATIVES OF ADVENTURE—STORIES FROM THE JUNGLE—ABOUT THE PANTHER.

HE boys assembled at the cave on the following Saturday afternoon, according to agreement. Seymour was appointed chairman, and proceeded to explain the purpose for which they had met. He then stated that the subject of conversation was the Tiger, and that he proposed to offer a few introductory remarks before calling upon their friend Fisher for a "hairbreadth escape" or a "thrilling adventure."

The tiger, he said, as everybody knows, is a very splendid specimen of the *Felidæ*, or Cat family; though he was not the kind of cat which one would desire to treat as a domestic pet. There could be no doubt as to his handsome appearance; his coat, of a bright orange-yellow, was richly variegated with stripes or bars of black; and his eyes shone like balls of fire. He was famous for his swiftness of foot and fierceness of temper: men, when they wanted to characterize a cruel, vindictive disposition, spoke of it as "tigerish." Shakespearian readers would remember the force and frequency of the great poet's allusions to this crafty and ferocious lord of the jungle. Romeo, in his extremest agony, speaks of "the time and his intents" as

“ More fierce and more inexorable far
Than empty tigers or the roaring sea.”

Queen Elizabeth compares Richard III. to this savage beast—

“ The tiger now hath seized the gentle hind.”

And in *King John*, the Cardinal warns the King of France against the duplicity of the English monarch—

“ France, thou mayst hold a serpent by the tongue,
A chafèd lion by the mortal paw,
A *fasting tiger* safer by the tooth.”

In size the tiger is generally inferior to the “chafèd lion,” but individual examples have been known to surpass the so-called King of Beasts, measuring as much as fifteen feet from the nose to the tip of the tail.

He has a muscular, robust, well-proportioned body. Hence his nimbleness would surprise our friend Lambert; and when he is pursuing or pursued, he covers the ground with wonderful celerity. He has been ascertained to clear fifteen or twenty feet at a single leap. When hunting for prey in the lower Himalayan valleys, he bounds from crag to crag like the Alpine chamois; he springs boldly across the most tremendous chasms; though sometimes, indeed, he miscalculates the distance or over-estimates his strength, and failing to reach the opposite side, is dashed to death in the abyss below!

Like all of his tribe, he possesses an extraordinary tenaciousness of life; and it is this strong vitality which makes tiger-hunting dangerous. Even if the hunter be sufficiently confident in his presence of mind and skill as a marksman to allow the tiger to approach within such a distance as to make sure of a shot between the eyes, the danger he incurs is still very great. A bullet in the head does not always check the raging animal in his charge. Instances are on

record of tigers which have pursued their furious career for some distance after receiving a mortal wound. A Madras sepoy was once measuring a tiger that had just fallen to the ground, and lay, to all appearance, dead. But the animal contrived, even in his death-agonies, to lift his paw and deal the unfortunate soldier a blow which fractured his skull.

These prefatory remarks I may, perhaps, be allowed to conclude with the fine lines in which William Blake, a great poet and artist, has celebrated the wonderful organization of this splendid animal :—

“Tiger, tiger, burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Framed thy fearful symmetry?

“In what distant deeps or skies
Burned that fire within thine eyes?
On what wings dared he aspire?
What the hand dared seize the fire?

“And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
When thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand formed thy dread feet?

“What the hammer, what the chain,
Knit thy strength and forged thy brain?
What the anvil? What dread grasp
Dared thy deadly terrors clasp?

“When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile His work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?”

Seymour then “called upon” Frederick Fisher to favour “the audience” with an illustration of the carnivorous propensities of the tiger. Fisher immediately began a narrative, for which, he said, he was indebted to an interesting book by an old Indian officer.

MAN AND THE TIGER.

An Indian officer* was stationed for several years in a remote part of our Indian possessions, on the Mysore frontier, and near the great many-crested range of the Western Ghauts, whose rugged flanks are richly clothed with mighty forests—wildernesses which the foot of man



CHOOSING A VICTIM.

has never trodden—solitudes never disturbed by human voice. There the tigress loves to feed her young, and issuing with her savage partner from their lair, she scours the smaller jungles of the plain, and strikes terror into the

* Major W. Campbell, 'The Old Forest Ranger.'

hearts of all its humbler inhabitants. Some idea of the havoc committed by these animals may be gathered from the fact that, according to official returns, in one district, three hundred men and five thousand head of cattle were destroyed during three years.

While confined to the forest, the tiger is comparatively harmless. There, feeding principally on deer, he rarely encounters man, and when the solitary hunter does encounter the 'grim tyrant of the woods,' an instinctive fear of the human race bids him retreat. But in the open country he becomes dangerous. Hunger rouses his fellest passions, and he seeks his prey even under the herdsman's eyes. Still he shrinks from attacking man, unless incensed or urged to desperation. But let him once taste human blood, and the spell is for ever broken. His awe of man is loosened; his nature seems changed; he deserts the jungle, and haunts the very doors of his victims. He lets the cattle pass unheeded, to carry off their driver; and from that time forth the tiger becomes a Man-eater.

A notorious old tigress, says our military authority, which I assisted in killing some years ago, used to lie in wait near the ford of a rivulet daily crossed by travellers, and after carrying off several letter-bearers she became so dreaded, that the road which passed her haunts was deserted. For years she had frequented the same covert; repeated attempts had been made to destroy her; she had been caught in nets and pitfalls, but always escaped; and at last she became so cunning as to baffle the most experienced hunters of the district. In the course of a tour through the province, our officer, accompanied by a friend, encamped close to the scene of her depredations. Their shikarees, or beaters—as we should call them—always on the quest for

information about tigers, heard of her, and most fortunately hit upon her trail next morning. It was traced right into a small but impenetrable clump of brushwood on the banks of a stream, and this was so effectually surrounded by the hunters, as to render the animal's escape impossible. The officer and his friend, on their elephant, arrived at the spot, and beat the thicket, inch by inch, wherever it was practicable; wading through masses of overgrown creepers, and tearing down the trees which impeded his progress, without, however, discovering the tigress's retreat. Finding that she was not thus to be dislodged, the elephant was withdrawn, and showers of rockets and other combustibles were flung into the covert, while the Englishmen planted themselves on a tree which commanded a good view of the whole clump.

It was soon a sheet of flame, and the heat became so intolerable, that they were constrained to abandon their post. One of the daring hunters had already reached the ground; the other was in the act of dropping from a branch, when the tigress leapt from the fiery furnace, lashing her sides with her tail, and howling furiously. They discharged their rifles almost simultaneously, and broke her leg by a rifle-ball. Fortunately she did not charge, for they were both in her power. The smoke seemed to stupify her, and creeping into a date-bush, there she lay concealed, and received several shots without attempting the least resistance. This tigress showed, both in appearance and disposition, all the marks of a true man-eater. Her skull bore the traces of great age; her body in size did not exceed that of a panther; and her lean gaunt figure seemed diseased by the human flesh on which she fed.

Another instance is recorded by the same writer of a man-eater obstinately confining himself to a small patch of jungle until it was burnt down around him. 'We could see

him, completely exposed, sitting on his haunches encircled by fire; we could hear his hoarse roar rising above the crepitation of the flames; his glaring eyeballs rolled from side to side, watching the rockets which fell thickly round him; the intense glare of the light seemed to dilate and expand his form, and kindle his brilliant colours into a wonderful brightness. At last the heat became intolerable; the flames scorched him. Uttering a roar that startled even the most veteran sportsman, he sprang with one tremendous bound over the blazing barrier, and dropped dead the instant he alighted. In both these cases rockets were profusely employed, though without effect; but, in general, tigers may be forced from the strongest coverts by the use of fireworks.'

The muscular strength of this formidable animal seems out of all proportion to his size. A bullock, says Major Campbell, was killed by a tiger near his encampment, on the banks of the Tumboodra, in a field fenced round by a hedge of prickly pear about six feet high. On going to the spot, he found the carcass of the bullock, partly devoured, on the outside of the hedge; not a branch was ruffled, and the only clue to account for its removal were the deeply impressed footprints of a large tiger, where he must have overleapt the barrier with his prey in his jaws. The impossibility of the bullock having been conveyed thither in any other way, was the only proof that an animal weighing not more than 600 pounds could have exercised such tremendous strength. This is due to his anatomical structure. The mechanism of his fore leg is very beautiful; its girth is upwards of two feet, and it is a mass of elastic muscle and sinew. The jaw, the neck, the shoulders, convey the same idea of surpassing strength combined with wonderful agility.

The following are given as the dimensions of an average-sized tiger:—

	Ft. In.
Length from point of nose to point of tail.....	9 5
Length of tail.....	2 10
Height, from heel to shoulder	3 2
Extreme length, from shoulder to point of toe.....	3 11

There is some confusion in the use of the word 'tiger.' In many parts of India, and in Ceylon, leopards and



THE TIGER IN THE HIMALAYAS.

panthers are called tree-tigers; and English sportsmen are sometimes summoned by the natives to 'kill a tiger,' only to find that the animal in question is one of the less formidable *felidæ*. Mr. Acland relates that a party of officers once went out from Cuttack to shoot. Their men were beating the

jungle, when suddenly all the wild cry ceased, and a man came gliding to the spot where all the 'sahibs' were assembled, to tell them that a tiger was lying asleep in his den close at hand. A consultation was instantly held; most of the party expressed a desire to return to Cuttack, but Captain Blake—let us call him—insisted on having a shot at the animal. Accordingly, he advanced very quickly until he came to the place, where he saw—not a tiger, but a large leopard, lying quite still, with his head resting on his fore paws. He went up close and fired, but the animal made no movement. This astonished him; and on examination he found that the supposed 'man-eater' was already dead. One of his companions had bribed some Indians to place a dead leopard there, and then speak of it as a 'tiger asleep.' It may be imagined that Captain Blake did not see the joke!

["Do tigers climb, like other felidæ?" asked Beauchamp.

"No," replied Fisher; "perhaps because the prey on which they feed is not of an arboreal habit. They possess the power, I fancy, but have no call to exercise it."

"It may be on account of their great weight," rejoined Seymour. "What an exertion of muscular force would be needed to drag so heavy a bulk up an Indian tree! By-the-by, I think I remember a powerful passage in Shelley, which may here come in as an illustration, though I am not sure that I can give it correctly. A ship is sinking; two tigers, confined between-decks, have burst their bonds, and plunged into the wide world of waters, where a sea-snake has grappled with one of them in deadly contest. Now, says the poet"*—and here Seymour, in his excitement, leaped

* The reader will be disposed to cavil, perhaps, because we have represented a lad of seventeen as quoting Shelley. But many lads of seventeen do read and appreciate Shelley. Nor is there any reason why they should not read so much of his works as is contained in Moxon's edition of the

to his feet, and recited the impassioned lines with emphatic force :—

“ The foam and the smoke of the battle
 Stain the clear air with sunbows ; the jar and the rattle
 Of solid bones crushed by the infinite stress
 Of the snake’s adamantine voluminousness ;
 And the hum of the hot blood that spouts and rains
 Where the gripe of the tiger has wounded the veins,
 Swollen with rage, strength, and effort ; the whirl and the splash
 As of some hideous engine whose brazen teeth smash
 The thin winds and soft waves into thunder ! the screams
 And hissing crawl fast o’er the smooth ocean-streams,
 Each sound like a centipede. Near this commotion,
 A blue shark is hanging within the blue ocean,
 The fin-winged tomb of the victor. The other
 Is winning his way from the fate of his brother,
 To his own, with the speed of despair. Lo ! a boat
 Advances ; twelve rowers with the impulse of thought
 Urge on the keen keel ; the brine foams. At the stern
 Three marksmen stand levelling. Hot bullets burn
 In the breast of the tiger, which yet bears him on
 To his refuge and ruin.’

There’s a glorious picture, boys, which only a painter of great genius could realize ! The foaming and churning waters strewn with wreck—the awful struggle between the tiger and the sea-snake—the expectant shark—the swift-cutting keel and the levelled muskets of the marksmen—and that other tiger, who, with three balls in his breast, still rushes on to refuge and ruin—what a scene might be made up of these elements, and if well-painted, how it would thrill the gazer !”

“ Bravo, Seymour,” shouted the lads, as he threw himself

‘Minor Poems.’ There is much in the poet’s writings to deplore ; but much more to admire, and ‘numbers of passages might be adduced,’ as Robertson remarks (‘Lectures and Addresses,’ p. 63), ‘steeped in a flood of earnest desire to see this earth regenerated, and purified, and the spirit of man mingling with the infinite Spirit of Good.’ A boy with a healthy mind and generous heart will readily discern where Shelley errs.

back in his seat, apparently surprised at his own enthusiasm. Fisher again resumed his reading :—

An incident which occurred in the Mahratta country is curious as showing how a wounded tiger will single out the man who fires at him. A tiger was found in a small patch of jungle, near camp, by a party of shikarees who were out hunting the boar. They surrounded the place, and fired away with their matchlocks till sunset, without doing much harm. The tiger, slightly wounded, was lying in the middle of the thicket, and there he remained, responding to each shot by a roar that deterred every one from approaching near enough to take deadly aim. Well, when they could no longer see the muzzles of their long barrels, they determined to watch round the cover all night, and in the morning, if the tiger was not yet dead, to make him devour a few more bullets. It was growing very dark, and somewhat cold. One of the shikarees determined to cheer himself with a whiff, but when the *chillum* had just begun to glow brightly, a rush was heard among the bushes, a roar rang in their affrighted ears, and the tiger leapt in upon them. The unfortunate smoker was smashed by a blow which fell, dull, heavy, and crushing, as the stroke of a sledge hammer, and away sped the tiger far into the deep darkness of the night. It would seem that the tiger mistook the incandescent chillum for the flash of a matchlock, and rushed to revenge himself on his adversary.

[“And now, boys, I think I have played out my part. Seymour, I call upon you for the next story.”]

“Yes, Seymour, no excuses; fire away, old fellow,” were the shouts which endorsed Fisher’s suggestion, and Seymour good-naturedly hastened to comply.]

THE MAN-EATER.

Transport yourselves in imagination to the banks of the great river Cauvery, which, beneath a hot Indian sun, flows darkly and sluggishly through the rank jungles of Mysore.

There, once upon a time, you might have seen an old dismantled mud-fort, whose crumbling walls were washed by turbid waters. Amongst the shallows, with outstretched necks and vigilant eyes, waded the snow-white egret and the stately crane. On the oozy sand-banks basked the alligator's scaly length, and above the reeds hovered the Brahminey kite, uttering its querulous note, as the setting sun's slanting beams gilded its quivering wings. Herds of lazy buffaloes trooped homeward from the pasture, a sun-burnt urchin, planted on the back of the most docile, shouting shrill objurgations to his charge, whose only reply was a hoarse and meditative grunt. The turtle-dove cooed among the mango-leaves, and the sharp cry of the wild peacock echoed through the copse. And under the shade of the drooping banyan-trees reclined the graceful figure of many a Hindu girl, listening well-pleased to the wild and plaintive song of her companions.

Soft and pastoral the scene, as any which Arcady could have presented in the golden age, though so unlike in the attributes of form and colour. Soft and pastoral the scene, except, indeed, that ever and anon a loud startling cry would ring upon the breeze, and before it had utterly died away, find an answer in the opposite quarter. A strange and eery sound, such as man only utters at moments of urgent peril; the shout of the Mysore woodsman, endeavouring with the spell of the human voice to scare the tiger from his path.

On such an evening, as the sun was sinking in a cloud

of gold and purple, Rung Row, the priest of a certain Mysore village, pursued his path along the river-bank in search of a convenient spot for his evening ablutions. Musing, let us suppose, on high and holy themes, the Brahmin strode along, with eyes fixed upon the glowing heavens, and scarcely noticing the lowly salutations humbly offered by the Ryots whom he encountered.

At a bend of the river, a few hundred yards from the village, its waters nestled in a dimpling bay, fringed with glossy aloe-bushes and bordered with soft and glittering sand. It was a favourite spot with the Brahmin, and had Naiads ever flourished on the Cauvery, thither I am sure would every Naiad have resorted. For so bright were the river-waves, so rich the encircling verdure, so bold the sweep of the over-arching boughs which almost hid

'The summer-heaven's delicious blue—
So wondrous wild, the whole might seem
The scenery of a fairy dream !'

SCOTT.

Uttering a prayer at every step, the Brahmin waded into the river, and commenced the ceremony of ablution by pouring water from a small brass vessel over his shaven crown and well-oiled skin.

Hark! what sound was that? The Brahmin's ears were closed by the cold water that poured over them, or the rustle in the bushes would assuredly have alarmed him. Unsuspicious of danger he did not raise his head, or he might have seen two bright-green orbs hungrily glaring at him through the branches of a neighbouring aloe-bush. Alas! For him no more the prayer or the rite—the mystery or the revel! His hour was come, and the terrible man-eater of Shikarpoor had marked him for his prey. Stealthily she glided through the brushwood, and dragged

herself noiselessly along the sand, until the river-marge was reached ; then, with a roar and a rush she sprang upon her victim, crushed in his skull to the brain, and clenched her murderous teeth in his throat. A moment more, and with the dead body in her grasp, she was bounding away to her secret lair.

Many a poor Ryot and woodsman had already fallen victims to this terrible beast, but their fate had created no concern ; they belonged to the vulgar herd, for whom the great ones of the earth have little care. But when a peasant boy, who had witnessed the closing scene of the tragedy, ran into the village, screaming *Bagh! Bagh!* and made known the dreadful fate of the Brahmin, the anxiety and the consternation were indescribable ; men went about in an agony of grief, and women tore their hair and beat their breasts. The officials and the priests, the women and the Ryots, were alike agreed that Rung Row's fate must be avenged, and the career of the man-eater summarily terminated.

It happened that two English officers—let us call them Mansfield and Burton—had arrived a day or two before in a neighbouring village. Their fame as mighty hunters had preceded them, and it was generally believed that some supernatural power guided their death-dealing weapons, so that they never missed their aim. To these a deputation of Brahmins and armed peons, and noisy musicians, repaired in solemn state, and humbly implored their co-operation in an expedition against the terrible man-eater. Mansfield and Burton—sportsmen to the backbone, and true Englishmen in their love of dangerous adventure and hazardous enterprise—willingly acceded, and having made some necessary preparations, proceeded towards the scene of the Brahmin's catastrophe. It was nearly sunset when they arrived, and an attempt to track the man-eater's trail

having proved unsuccessful, the Englishmen postponed the campaign until the next morning. As soon as it was dawn, the Englishmen were roused by their attendants. They quickly mounted, and, preceded by an elephant and its *mahout* or driver, set out in quest of the tiger.

After traversing some open country, they penetrated into a deep obscure valley, clothed with fresh verdure, and watered by a perennial stream, which in the fiercest summer never ran dry. As it plunged into the bosom of the hills it grew narrower, and finally terminated in a romantic glen, not unlike those which are the glory and the pride of the Scottish Highlands. Here, one of their attendants—Bhurmah, a noted Baghman or tiger-slayer—discovered the fresh footprints of the animal they were in search of. Mansfield and Burton immediately mounted the elephant, accompanied by a trusty shikaree, named Ayapah; the various attendants were ordered to take up the most favourable positions for guarding every point of escape; and, as a further precaution, a native horseman was posted on an ascent which overlooked the surrounding country, with instructions to keep the tigress in sight if she broke away.

Then, at the *mot d'ordre*—

["The what?" said the Fat Boy, sleepily.

"The word of command," retorted Douglas, in an angry tone.]

Then, at a signal from the *mahout*, (continued Seymour), the elephant advanced, crashing through the intertangled branches as a ship ploughs through the bounding waves. Yet, like the course of a ship when beaten back by contrary winds, the elephant's progress was slow and irregular; he was impeded by masses of prickly shrubs and bushes, and climbing parasitical plants, so densely matted together that even his immense bulk could scarcely open up a path. But

the Englishmen were as patient as they were ardent. Hour after hour passed away, and every corner, but one, of the wooded cover was examined. In this the brushwood was less luxuriant, but high spear-grass shot up to a considerable height. The elephant was urged forward. Suddenly a monkey, who had watched the whole scene with observant sagacity, was observed to spring from tree to tree, moping and mowing, grinning and chattering, and pointing to some object that stole through the long grass waving below him.

'Look, Sahib!' cried Ayapah, from the back of the *howdah*.

'Push on the elephant!' shouted Mansfield, 'the beast is yonder, and trying to escape us.'

Well enough did the lordly elephant know that his game was at hand, and flapping his ears, with glistening eyes and curled up trunk he strode forward at a rapid pace.

'There is the trail!' exclaimed Ayapah, pointing to fresh footprints on the side of the ravine.

'Shall I cross?' asked the mahout; but before he could receive a reply a wild shout, caught up on every side, proclaimed that the tiger had been sighted, and away went the elephant through bush and brier, over the ravine, and towards the point from whence the shikar cry had first proceeded. The rockets now blazed all around, but the man-eater had been hunted before, and was not to be checked by these pyrotechnical displays. The scouts still pointed forward, and, before the elephant had forced a passage through the jungle, a shikaree, watching the plain, waved his turban and uttered the well-known whoop, which announced that she had 'broken cover.'

'She has beaten us,' cried Mansfield; 'the daughter of Sheitan has beaten us, and is off to the hills as fast as she can scour!'

They had now reached the open plain where the horse-

man had been posted, and where the cowardly Hindu might now be seen apparently urging his horse in hot pursuit of the man-eater, but prudently determined that he would not overtake her. Not that he had much cause to apprehend such a result in the hilly country, the pace of the tiger outstripping that of most native horses. As soon as the man-eater had disappeared over the brow of a hill, the sowar wheeled round his horse and made towards the English officers, brandishing his spear as if he were returning from a successful combat. 'Inshallah!' he cried, 'she did not wait till my spear could reach her; she fled like a dove before a hawk!'

'And well for you,' said Mansfield sarcastically, 'that you did not come to close quarters with her. But did you mark the tigress? Was she in sight when you gained the top of the hill?'

'What could your slave do?' replied the sowar, in a tone of humility; 'could he outstrip the lightning?'

Mansfield turned from the timorous braggart in disgust, and addressing the shikarees, in a few emphatic words urged upon them the necessity of pushing forward at their utmost speed to take up the man-eater's trail.

'That fellow,' he added, 'has been of little service as a marker, but we may track her up again. She cannot have gone far. A hundred rupees for the man who follows her up to her lair!'

A native would sell his hopes of the future for money, and the pleasant sound of rupees rousing them from their dependency, they eagerly recommenced the chase.

Scattering themselves over the country, they inspected the soil with the earnestness of gold-diggers. Some time elapsed before any discovery rewarded their exertions, but at length a young villager, who had been scrutinizing a sheep track, suddenly halted, and gave the signal of success. On

running to the spot, all were convinced that the footmark he had discovered was that of a tiger. But when the veteran Bhurmah came on the scene he contemptuously pronounced it to be at least three days old!

["What a swindle!" ejaculated Mountjoy; "now I remember—"]

"Never mind your reminiscences at present," said Douglas. "Go on, Seymour; I call this 'thrilling!'"

The quest was recommenced with somewhat less eagerness than before; but Bhurmah, turning away from the *ο πολλοι*—excuse the bit of Greek, boys—struck off in a different direction, towards a noisy little mountain-stream that tumbled over the craggy rocks, spluttering and foaming, like a child at play.

'Down to the vale this water steers;
How merrily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
And flow as now it flows!'

WORDSWORTH.

Into this he dived, and for awhile was seen no more; but soon his head re-appeared above the bank, and he raised an exultant shout, which was answered by a hundred voices and ten hundred echoes.

'That is Bhurmah's signal,' cried Mansfield, 'and may be depended upon. Bravo, old fellow, you deserve a medal, and shall have it!'

["A medal?" here interrupted Beauchamp, inquiringly.

"The British government rewards the native who slays a tiger with a medal, and few medals are better deserved; for in many parts of India this ferocious beast is a terrible curse."]

Well, on joining Bhurmah, he was found inspecting the margin of a small pond.

'She has stopped here to drink,' he said, 'and as the sun has not yet dried the moisture of her footprints she cannot be far ahead.'

Shikarees and peons, sowars and Englishmen, all followed up this new trail with breathless eagerness, rejoicing to find it more and more distinct as they advanced. It was carried to the summit of the hills, and thence over a considerable extent of rugged table-land. A flock of goats fed leisurely among the rocks on the mountain-side, and their herdsman sat watching them like a statue, as if some sudden spell had congealed him into stone. For the sun poured out his hottest rays on that open plain, and the little gray fox basked in the burning light, and the wolf slouched by, with lolling tongue, indifferent to the presence of man. The scanty vegetation wore a brown, faded, and scorched appearance; the date-trees, planted here and there, hung their heads as if stricken by a fatal blight; the soil gaped in wide chinks and cracks; the air seemed heavy, though the sky shone without a cloud; the god of fire moved abroad, and all nature was blasted by his presence!

Here the trail was suddenly lost, and the hunters looked at each other in wonderment and dismay.

Mansfield cast around an inquiring glance. Ah, the goats have seen an enemy! Look, how they start, and now—see!—they scramble hurriedly over rock and crag. ‘My rifle, Ayapah; there she goes!’

Ay, the man-eater was once more in view. Burton threw forward his rifle, and instantly fired, although the tigress was nearly three hundred yards distant. The bullet fell short of its mark.

‘Too long a range, friend,’ said Mansfield, ‘for a sure shot. We must push on and get nearer. She can never keep up that tremendous pace under such a sun.’

‘Sahib,’ said Bhurmah, ‘may thy servant speak. It will be better for us to remain quiet. She is making straight for *her house*—the ravine that lies yonder, below us. There will she lay up. I have tracked her thither before now.’

'No doubt you are right,' rejoined Mansfield, as he watched the tigress with his glass. 'She is nearly blown. Ay, now she looks back; I can see her open jaws; her tongue is lolling a foot out of her mouth, and white with foam. We have her now; she has disappeared under the bank, and must stand to bay. But oh, for two hours more of daylight!'

'She has chosen a regular stronghold,' said Bhurmah, 'and will die hard. I have known a tiger hold out for a whole day against three elephants in that very place, and, be sure, the man-eater of Shikarpoor knows the strongest part.'

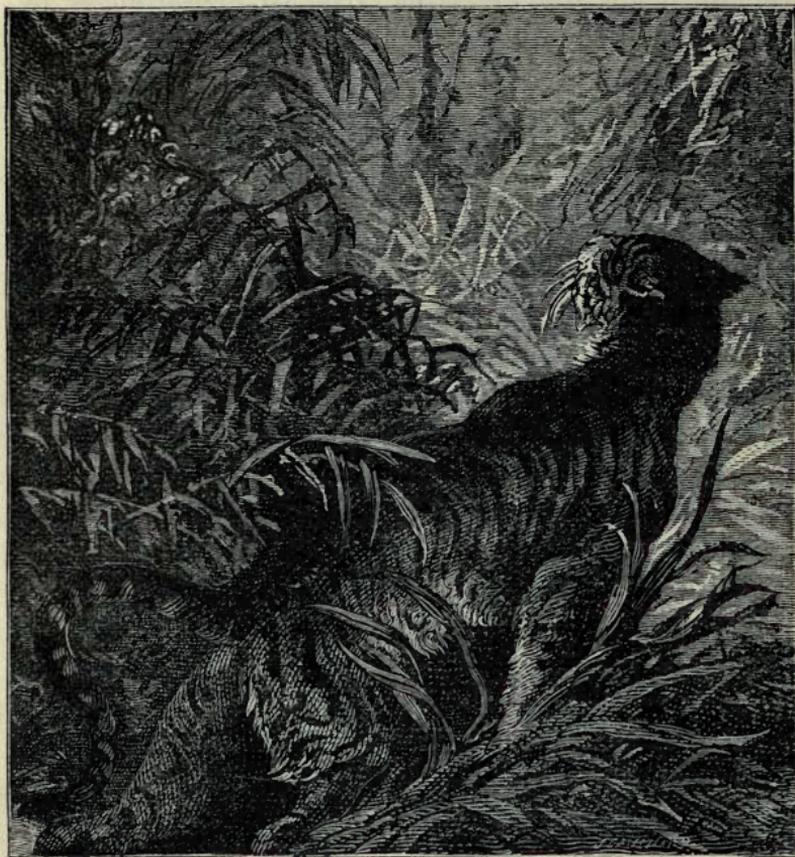
'She shall not beat us,' exclaimed Mansfield, rising and motioning to the mahout. 'She shall not beat us, even if I set fire to the whole jungle, and burn her out of her lair. Come on!'

'The bushes are still green,' quietly observed Bhurmah.

By the time the tigress's cover had been completely surrounded the sun was setting, and shadows gathered rapidly over the evening sky. There was no time to lose. Bhurmah mounted the howdah that he might guide the mahout at once to the spot where he expected to find the tigress, for he knew every inch of ground, and on this occasion he was not mistaken. The experienced shikaree directed the elephant to a clump of bramble bushes which flourished on a high ledge of almost perpendicular rock. To penetrate further was impossible. Pointing upwards to an opening in the thick high grass, through which a heavy animal had evidently forced its way, he exclaimed,—

'There is her den!' And a low growl among the bushes proclaimed that he had not erred.

It was a famous fastness—a spot where half a dozen resolute men might have defied a battalion of the best infantry in Europe. In front rolled a mountain-torrent;



“ THERE IS HER DEN ! ”

behind rose a precipitous cliff; around grew a thick barrier of prickly and intertangled bush. There was no mode of access, no path by which an elephant could approach. Only one chance of success remained, and, the elephant being withdrawn, Mansfield and Charles Burton posted themselves on a rocky ledge out of the tigress's reach if she burst from her lair, and directed their attendants to pelt her with rockets from the opposite height. But it was all in vain. The rockets set fire to the thin dry grass, but the bushes

would not kindle, and the man-eater resolutely refused to expose herself to the deadly rifles of her enemies.

Night came on, and, weary and dispirited, the Englishmen were compelled to retire.

For three whole days, however, they continued their chase. It was known that, during the night, she had again issued from her stronghold; but the surrounding country was traversed for leagues without discovering any sign of her whereabouts. Englishmen, happily for the honour of the Red Cross, do not readily abandon any object which they have heartily taken up, and the two officers, with their shikarees, relaxed not one whit in the ardour of their search.

On the fourth morning, whilst Bhurmah and his shikarees were exploring some covert in the neighbourhood, two herd boys sat watching their buffaloes in the valley where the pursuit had first begun. They cared little for wild beasts: had not the English sahibs driven the terrible man-eater from that part of the country, and for the rest, the old bull of the herd, as long as they kept by his side, would effectually protect them. So, heedless of the coming peril, they sauntered along, picking berries and sporting childishly, until, woe's me! they had wandered a considerable distance from the herd.

It is seldom, I think, that we have any presentiment of approaching danger. These boys were playing in careless glee, and yet the destroyer was close upon them. She had crept so stealthily from bush to bush, that her heavy breathing first gave warning of their imminent peril. The fierce eyes of the tigress glared with fire. One of the boys turned round: he uttered a shriek of terror; he screamed forth, 'Bagh!' But scarcely had the sound passed his lips ere the tigress was upon him, and had clutched him in the fell grasp of her ravenous jaws. His brother fled to the nearest tree, and climbed it with speed; from its summit he saw

the tigress hasten back with her bleeding prey to her lair in the jungle. As soon as she was out of sight, he made for the village to give the alarm ; and in less than an hour Mansfield and his shikarees, guided by the trembling herd-boy, were on their way to the scene of this sad catastrophe.

When they reached it, and saw the ground covered with blood and brains, the boldest 'held his breath for a time,' and Mansfield, as he drew his rough hand across his eyes to hide those tears which his manhood strove to conceal, and which yet did so much honour to that manhood, vowed not to relinquish his pursuit of the man-eater until he had avenged the death of the poor Hindu herd-boy.

'Ask him, one of you,' said he, addressing a *peon*, 'if he would like to come with me on the elephant, and see that accursed tigress die.'

The natives were lost in astonishment at the condescension of a *Burrah Sahib*—or great gentleman—in offering to mount a poor naked outcast boy on the same elephant as himself, and at first shrunk from the perpetration of so appalling a sacrilege. But Mansfield insisted ; he was reluctantly obeyed ; Burton had taken his seat in the howdah, and Mansfield was about to follow, when the elephant, weary of kneeling so long on the hard ground, gave expression to his annoyance by an angry roar. Before he had time to rise, the buffaloes, which had been peacefully grazing round the edge of the jungle, lifted their heads, snorted, and made a simultaneous rush towards one point.

'Bagh ! bagh !' shrieked the terrified child, flinging himself down into the bottom of the howdah.

'And so it is, I declare !' exclaimed Mansfield, leaping to the ground. 'She has taken the alarm already. The large rifle—quick !'

Ayapah thrust it into his eager hand. Instantaneously

he raised the weapon, took aim, and fired. 'That hit her !' he calmly observed, as he dropped the discharged weapon into the hollow of his arm, and stood for a moment to watch the effect of his shot.

The tigress, who was stealing along at a distance of full two hundred yards, uttered a short angry roar, and dropped on her knees. When she rose, one fore leg hung dangling from her shoulder, and, so crippled, she shrunk into cover, pursued by the buffaloes, bellowing at her haunches.

To the bystanders such an exhibition of skill seemed something miraculous, and they regarded the *Burrah Sahib* with reverential awe. Old Bhurmah himself could hardly believe his senses when he heard the soft *thud* of the bullet, and perceived the brute drop at a distance so far beyond the range of his own trusty matchlock. And the poor little herd-boy clasped his hands in gratitude, when he saw that his brother's murderer was disabled from further flight, and doomed to an inevitable death.

Reloading his rifle, Mansfield took his seat in the howdah, Bhurmah climbed up on the crupper, and the stately elephant marched to the final encounter.

A trail of blood guided them to the bush where the tigress lay concealed, licking the blood from her shattered shoulder, and growling ominously at the approach of her assailants. Mansfield bade Burton be ready and be cool, as he would wait for him to take the first shot. They were now near enough to observe the bush agitated, as if the man-eater was collecting herself for a rush, and a low muttered roar gave forth a note of warning.

'Keep him steady now, she is coming !' said Mansfield, addressing the mahout with serene composure. Charles Burton held his breath in his excitement, as he cocked both barrels of his rifle, and half raised it to his shoulder.

‘Do not hurry, boy,’ cried Mansfield; ‘take it coolly.’

The branches crashed, a brindled mass glittered through them, and the tigress leaped forth. Fire was in her glaring eyes—every hair on her body stood erect—her flanks quivered—her tail lashed her foaming sides. With a deep growl, she arched her back and lowered her head for a spring.

‘Now!’

With the speed of thought followed the flash of the rifle, both barrels being discharged almost simultaneously, and the tigress staggered back with two balls in her breast. She recovered herself, however, and was in the act of essaying another charge, when a shot from Mansfield’s unerring rifle crashed into her brain. The natives soon arrived on the spot, and, exulting over the downfall of the destroyer, invoked the blessing of Heaven on the head of the invincible *Burrah Sahib*—the illustrious *Bagh-mar*—the redoubtable slayer of wild beasts!

[Fisher now turned to his inexhaustible budget, and offered the following summary of interesting facts :—]

A recent writer observes that tigers may be divided into three groups : first, those leading a wild and retired life in the jungle recesses, feeding solely on game, and proving helpful in some degree to man by keeping down the numbers of the deer and nylgai that feed upon his crops. In the second class may be placed the cattle-lifters, which dwell in the neighbourhood of the pastures and pools frequented by oxen. These animals generally consume an ox in about five days ; but if fired at when returning to their partly-eaten prey, they will usually strike down a fresh victim : while the consumption of a tigress and her cubs is at least an ox a night. Thirdly, we come to the fierce, truculent brutes which, having once tasted man, are thenceforth possessed with a craving for human flesh. Sometimes these creatures

infect an entire district with terror, until they are destroyed by some European sportsman; for they are too wary and too dangerous to be frequently shot by native shekarries, though they may be occasionally destroyed by strychnine.

But wolves and panthers in India are apt to turn man-eaters after they have once tasted human blood; and a man-eating panther is even more dangerous and ferocious than a man-eating tiger. He is nimble in his movements, and displays more courage when attacked. Being of smaller size, he is more difficult to hit; and he can climb trees, which the tiger cannot do unless they have a sloping trunk. In 1858, one of these creatures devastated the northern part of the Scoúí district, and killed nearly a hundred persons before he was shot. He did not eat the bodies of his victims, but merely lapped the blood from their throat. His mode of attack was to steal into a house at night, and strangle some unfortunate sleeper; or he would climb the platform from which the villagers guard their fields at night, and drag down the unsuspecting sentinel.

["Positively, Fisher," exclaimed Beauchamp, "you make me shudder. I shall have eery dreams to-night!"]

"It seems to me," observed Lambert, "that a hunter in India is a public benefactor. A man killing half-a-dozen of these horrible brutes saves no end of human lives, you see, and deserves a gold medal from the Queen's own hands!"]

The tiger hunts in a different manner from the panther. Generally he seeks some convenient spot where he can lie in ambush; and then, as the wayfarer passes by, out he springs, and strikes him to the ground. A few days later, if you passed near the spot, you would see just such a sight as Captain Forsyth saw at a place called Motinálá:—

'I was walking ahead of my followers,' says this gallant and successful hunter, 'when I came on the remains of a

poor wanderer who had evidently not long before been killed by a tiger. He was a religious mendicant; and his long iron tongs, begging-bowl, hollowed from a skull, and cocoa-nut hookah, were scattered about in the bottom of the dry bed of a stream, where he had been resting on his weary march,—together with tresses of his long, matted hair, and a shred or two of cloth. The bones were all broken to pieces, and many of them were missing altogether. A drover had been taken off near the same spot about a week before, so that it was not without some misgivings that I wandered off the road through the long grass to look for red deer.'

I will borrow from Captain Forsyth a brief description of a successful

TIGER-HUNT.

One morning he was engaged in tracking wild animals along the brink of a stream, to which, in hot weather, all those inhabiting the country-side were in the habit of resorting. At length his attention was called to the very perceptible excitement of a number of Hanuman monkeys, who were gesticulating and raging, and were 'swearing' among themselves like the mob of an Italian city. This was a sign that a tiger was stealing along under the trees they inhabited; and his course could be followed up by the running fire of abuse and insult which was taken up by one group of monkeys after another. Captain Forsyth was thus able to pursue the beast for several miles by means of the violent indications of his monkey-allies. Reaching a narrow peninsula, round which the brook circled, he dashed straight across it; and, breathless and heated, contrived to get in front of the tiger, and to secrete himself behind the trunk of a tree before he came up.

It was early morning, but the gray light penetrated through the thick screen of foliage, and glimmered softly

in each columned avenue. Captain Forsyth stood still as death, watching the terrible animal's approach.

On he came, in a long, slouching walk, with his tail tucked down, and looking exactly like the guilty, midnight murderer he is. It seemed as if his conscience, like Macbeth's, were troubled by his misdeeds; and, as he moved along, he looked fearfully behind him, or up at the monkeys with a kind of beseeching glance, as if entreating them not to betray whither he was going. He was travelling under the bank opposite to Captain Forsyth's position, in the deep shadow of the overarching trees; but when almost in a line with the captain, in the faint radiance of the newly-risen sun, he came out into the middle,—a picture of terrible beauty, with his velvety step and undulating movements, the firm muscles working through his loose, glossy skin, and the fell, tawny eyes blinking in the light over a row of ivory teeth!

'He passed,' says Captain Forsyth, 'within about twenty yards of me, making for a small ravine that here joined the river from the hills. I let him get to the mouth of this before I fired; and on receiving the shot he bounded forward into its cover, a very different picture from the placid creature I had just been looking at, and with a roar that silenced the chattering of every monkey on the trees. I knew he was hit to death, but waited until the shekarries came up before proceeding to look for him; and we then went round a good way, to where a high bank overlooked the ravine in which he had disappeared. Here we cautiously peeped over, but, seeing nothing, came farther down towards the river; and within fifty yards of where I had fired at him, I saw a solitary crow sitting in a tree, and cawing down at an indistinct yellow object extended below. It seemed like the tiger; and, sitting down, I fired another shot at it; but it

never stirred to the thud of the ball, while the crow, after flying up a few feet, perched again, and cawed away more lustily than before. We now went down, and found the tiger lying stone-dead, shot very near the heart.'

[Here Fisher stopped reading, and the boys commented among themselves on the narrative they had just heard. As Lambert said, it was not very exciting, but it showed that the captain was a capital marksman. Vernon was much interested by the account of the monkeys chattering in their impotent anger as the tiger slunk through the forest, and evidently looking upon him as the enemy of their race. At last Beauchamp begged for "a little more" from Captain Forsyth's book; and Fisher resumed his reading—in the course of which, it should be explained, he frequently condensed or abridged the original, and even introduced his own words.

The narrative he chose was descriptive of the destruction of a notorious and very formidable man-eater.]

PURSUIT OF A MAN-EATER.

In the spring of 1862, Captain Forsyth devoted several days to hunting down a famous, or infamous, man-eater, which was reputed to have devoured upwards of a hundred human beings, and, by the terror he caused, had completely stopped all traffic along certain roads. The scene of his operations was a triangular space of country between two rivers, the Mórán and the Ganjál, some thirty to forty miles wide at its base. Here he had positively interrupted the labours of the contractors engaged in constructing a railway in the Narbadá valley; the men would not work, they were so afraid of the creature's depredations. Having pitched his camp in the pleasant shelter of a magnificent mango grove, the captain was laid up for some days by a sprained

tendon. In the interval sensational news was constantly arriving of whole families of tigers waiting in the river-beds to be killed; and, at length, that the man-eater had pounced upon a man and a boy on the high-road about ten miles away.

The captain, by adopting some severe remedies, was able in a few more days to resume his quest of the man-eater; but not until he had been inundated with wonderful stories of the fearful size and appearance of the monster,—of its belly pendent to the ground, of the white crescent blazoned in the centre of its forehead; of the horrible composure with which he would detain a party of travellers while he rolled in the sand, and after a careful inspection picked out the fattest; of his power of transforming himself into a virtuous-looking woodcutter, and calling or whistling through the woods till an unsuspecting prey approached; and how the spirits of all his victims rode with him on his head, warning him of every danger, and directing him to the suitable ambush for waylaying an unfortunate traveller.

Such superstitions as these, ridiculous as they may appear, are a proof of the despair and dread which the ravages of the tiger excite. What an illustration they afford of the panic which spreads everywhere, when no man feels that his life is safe for a moment, and the whirr of every quail or peacock which starts from the adjacent brake seems the rush of the ferocious animal that will strike him down.

Captain Forsyth's camp was daily besieged by all the best shekarries of the country, together with the land-owners and many of the ryots. Villages were entirely deserted; men lived in barricaded houses, and left them only when compelled by necessity, and then in large bodies, shouting and beating drums, as if they were marching

against a hostile army. This condition of things had lasted for a twelvemonth, so that the country was being slowly depopulated.

It was through this desert Captain Forsyth rode on his trained elephant, with baggage-elephants in front and rear, and accompanied by a guard of police with muskets, and shekarries with their matchlocks.

Here and there he came upon traces of the man-eater, but no recent ones; while small cairns, erected at intervals, showed where a traveller had perished.

At length he reached a spot where one of a party of pilgrims had been carried off the day before; the blood-stained grass, and several such relics, still told of the tragedy, and pointed out where the tiger had dragged the corpse into a watercourse, and left its mangled remains. To wait for him to return to his horrid feast was useless, as experience had made him cautious, and he never ventured back to his 'kill.'

All the rest of the day—a day of burning heat—the searching-party beat the jungles of the Morán river; the trackers working in a panic of terror under the trunk of the captain's elephant, and covered by his rifle at full cock. Returning to camp at night, one of the men detected the great square footprints of the creature they were hunting down. Early next morning, the captain carefully beat the neighbouring watercourse, but unsuccessfully. As he was sitting down to breakfast, however, some men arrived with the information that about a mile and a half from camp the man-eater, that very morning, had carried off one of their companions out of the midst of their drove of bullocks as they were starting from their night's encampment. Taking with him a supply of food and a bottle of claret, the captain mounted his elephant and started in pursuit.

Before long he succeeded in starting the monster from the lair where he was devouring his unfortunate victim; but the grass was so thick and long that he could not obtain a shot. All that day, however, he steadily kept up the pursuit, following the footprints through a difficult country, and allowing him no rest.

At night the captain slept in a tent which he had ordered to be pitched on the other side of the Ganjál. Then, on the following morning he resumed the chase; until at length he got the tiger shut up within a dense cover of tamarisk and jaman, surrounded by the river. After a short rest, this cover was beaten out, and the indefatigable captain obtained a couple of shots, which told on the tiger. Immediately the brute turned, and with loud roars charged him; but a shot fired within twenty yards toppled him over into the water-course. Once more, but more slowly, he picked himself up, when the sportsman's elephant, being badly handled, spun round, and, 'with a loud, worrying noise,' the tiger leaped on to its back, which he lacerated with his fierce claws. At length the elephant paused for a moment in its wild gyration, the captain turned round in the howdah, and, seizing the opportunity, put the muzzle of his rifle to the tiger's skull, and with the large shell it carried, blew it into fifty pieces. Then the elephant indulged in a wild dance over the prostrate body of its foe, and the man-eater of the Mórán paid the penalty of his misdeeds.

["Hurrah!" shouted Douglas; "I am glad the horrid cannibal was at length destroyed. I think when I am old enough I shall go to India, and earn the gratitude of its natives by hunting down every man-eater."

"It is to be feared your single gun would never accomplish such a Herculean task," said Seymour. "I should recommend you to enrol a company of tiger-hunters,—a

hundred or so at the least. With these at your command, Douglas, you might do something great. But, certainly, it would seem to be the duty of the Government to encourage the extinction of so destructive an animal.”]

The British Government *does* offer a reward (remarked Fisher) for the head of any tiger; but many of the native Indian princes do not wish to see the animal rooted out, on account of the sport it affords. As if the lives of their people were not of infinitely more importance than the amusement of a few luxurious sovereigns! However, every tiger shot in the chase lessens the number of the poor man's enemies.

During his recent visit to India, the Prince of Wales enjoyed a brief experience of tiger-hunting. In Nepaul the native Government had gone to great expense in order that he might see the sport on a sufficiently grand scale. All the best elephants for fighting or sporting, and an array of some five thousand camp-followers and porters, constituting quite a little army, were provided.

The number of tigers killed shows how successful were the efforts of the Nepalese Government. One of the hunting parties—for there were several—went out in charge of Mr. Moore, magistrate of Bareilly. In beating across a grassy plain, they started a noble tiger, which made at once for the jungle; but Mr. Moore fired at it, and brought it down. As they closed on in pursuit, the tiger turned on the elephants, sprang on the head and side of a Mr. Robinson's, placing one claw on his rifle, so that he could not fire, and the other on the howdah door, tearing the mahout's leg. The elephant swung round, the howdah door flew open, and the tiger fell to the ground; but again he sprang at the elephant, clawing it cruelly, until it was kicked off by the terrified beast. Then, without a moment's delay, it leaped

on the head of Colonel Ellis's elephant, and was tearing down the mahout, or driver, when Colonel Ellis, leaning down over the howdah, coolly fired, with the muzzle almost touching the tiger,—which dropped dying on the ground, but not until it had lacerated the man's knee and leg. An English surgeon dressed the man's wounds on the spot, and the injured elephants were sent back to camp. Another tiger was started and killed half an hour afterwards. Indian sportsmen, it is said, make it their boast to stop a tiger before it can injure mahout or elephant; but on this occasion the grass was so long, and the animals charged so suddenly, that it was scarcely possible to do so.

If I may be allowed to digress from the tiger for a few moments, I would observe that the Prince of Wales apparently found more excitement in the capture of a wild elephant than in tiger-shooting. The mode of taking elephants is peculiar to Nepaul. Trained elephants, famous for their valour in the fray, are kept on purpose; and when a herd of wild ones have been marked down in the jungle, hunters go out with an army of beaters on swift pad elephants, and endeavour to break up the herd, or to close on them, so as to give time for the fighting elephants to come up and engage the wild champions,—which they do until the latter are exhausted, or have been hobbled with ropes while involved in the combat. News came that a very savage old 'tusker' was in the woods about seven miles away, and Sir Jung Bahadoor, the Prime Minister of Nepaul, made arrangements to have him watched for the Prince of Wales. The following morning, about eight o'clock, the Prince started, with his suite, and Sir Jung on horseback, riding at first through a most beautiful forest towards the scene of action. The path, winding under the shade of noble saul, peepul, and mango trees, interlaced by colossal

creepers and climbing-plants, was guarded at intervals by soldiers, all the way. At ten o'clock, the party, led by Sir Jung, riding boldly and swiftly down the river-beds, across torrents and watercourses, came to a halt, and information arrived that the old male-elephant was only a few miles distant, and was descending from the wooded hills into the plain below.

The Prince, who was well-mounted on a spirited Arab, fortunately resolved to remain on horseback instead of mounting on a pad elephant, as Sir Jung proposed. The fighting elephants were sent for, but as these huge creatures think 'more haste the worse speed,' an hour elapsed before the word to mount was given. Then another 'rattling canter' brought the Prince to the brink of a broad river, where a torrent foamed over a stony bed, issuing from a wooded gorge in the neighbouring mountains; and it was hoped the elephant would choose this route, so that he might be encountered and overcome in the open. The horses were sent back, and the Prince of Wales seated himself on the hill-side. Soldiers were sent up the ravine. In half an hour Sir Jung jumped on a man's back, and was carried down the hill and across the ravine to ascertain the cause of the delay. He soon returned with the news that the elephant had broken out, and was coming down another ravine, which the party had traversed before they passed the river. 'Mount, and away,' was the order; and this time everybody gave the reins to his horse, and tore along at full speed. It was wonderful how the horses kept their feet, considering the sudden checks at deep nullahs, or watercourses, filled with boulders, stumps, fallen trees, and similar obstacles.

On reaching the other side of the ravine the party dismounted; and Sir Jung showed great anxiety lest the

elephant should come down ; in which case, he said, no man's life would be worth a pice. The Prince, Lord Alfred Paget, Prince Louis of Battenberg, and others clambered into a tree, where a halt was made. Others were obliged to seek similar shelter, and another long delay ensued.

Messengers now came in with tidings that the elephant had crossed higher up, and was making for a deep swamp. All descended ; remounted their horses ; and the Prince and Sir Jung leading, dashed off once more, careering alongside of the pad elephants, which were being urged at full speed in the runaway's track.

In about half an hour the party emerged from a wood on the plain of burnt reeds and grass, above which undergrowth towered the monster elephant, his tail straight out, his proboscis curled up. He was still running, but evidently fatigued.

With loud shouts and regular English 'view halloos' the horsemen broke after him with a rush, while the pad elephants came trumpeting up in the rear ; the drivers standing on their backs, holding on with one hand, and beating them with sticks and mallets in the other. The wild 'tusker' stopped short, surveyed the advancing horsemen, and then rushed at the nearest with incredible speed. 'Fly for your lives ; look out for the Prince !' shouted Sir Jung ; and, in a second, prince, peer, and commoner were scouring through the grass and reeds as fast as their horses could carry them. These charges were again and again repeated, for the elephant's runs were short, and he gave up speedily ; but he came very near Lord Suffield and Mr. Rose on one occasion, and unpleasantly near to the Prince, and others also. All this time the fighting elephants made no sign, and in spite of the exertions of the horsemen and the pad elephants, the wild one, who had one enormous tusk and the stump only

of the other, broke away into a marsh, where he coolly lay down in a pool of water. The Prince dismounted, and, with his party, waited till the fighters came up. 'Jung Pershaud,' the most famous of these, at last made his appearance, rushed into the swamp, and immediately engaged his enemy. The combat was brief; for the wild 'tusker,' vast as he was, could not prevail against the prodigious bulk of the victor in a hundred fights. He turned and fled, and Jung Pershaud was unable to overtake him. The pursuit on horseback was renewed, and after a most extraordinary chase the wild one was driven out of a wood by volleys of insulting language! He then advanced into the open to engage Bijli Pershaud, the second fighting elephant, and met his conqueror. Bijli defeated him utterly, knocked him over, battered him against a tree, and finally so beat him over the head that he was easily hobbled, and declared a prisoner. It was then discovered he had only one eye; and Sir Jung proposed that he should be set at liberty, if the Prince wished, after his tremendous tusk had been sawn off. Finally, he was moored to a tree, and his head secured; and there he was left, guarded by elephants; his tusk, a noble piece of ivory, being brought in, and presented to the Prince at camp fire.

And here ends the story of the Prince of Wales' elephant-hunt; after which digression, I think, said Fisher, you will be glad to return to the tiger.

["Well," said Douglas, "I call that better sport than hunting a poor fox or a little hare."

"There is danger in it, at all events," remarked Beauchamp; "and I suppose an element of danger is necessary to the full enjoyment of sport."

"Don't be philosophical," interrupted Douglas; "come, go ahead with the tiger!"

“India must be a splendid place for the sportsman,” said Vernon.

“Not *all* India; many parts are as free from wild animals as these Yorkish moors. The North-Western Provinces, however, which lie between the Ganges and the Soane, abound in almost every variety of game. The district I mean is described by Mr. Watkins as a table-land of old red sandstone, rising on the north-west towards the slopes of the Vindhya range, and on the south falling abruptly to the valley of the Soane. In its vicinity lie the great cities of Ghazepore, Benares, and Allahabad; and as these are connected with its outskirts by railways, the shekarry or hunter may here shoot tigers in a jungle till towards noon, and at night repose amidst all the comforts of civilized life. If he would extend the range of adventure, let him seek the central highlands south of the Nerbudda, which he can also reach by means of the iron horse and the iron road. Here, in these two districts, he will find tigers, bears, wild buffaloes, swine, deer, panthers, antelopes. In the rugged, rocky solitudes he may expect bears, or he may light upon a leopard surprised outside its favourite cavern or rocky lair. The forests echo with the yelping of wild dogs. Legions of snipe and wild fowl arrive in October and November from the frozen wilds of Central Asia, and settle on the swamps; while in the autumnal stubble-fields, in the neighbourhood of villages and the hill-sides, abound the ordinary game-birds of India. After nightfall, among the cultivated lands, and by day in the pasture-tracts, the black antelope or ‘black buck’ tempts the sportsman’s rifle. On wooded slopes the nyghau or nilgae is found; together with the chikara or Indian gazelle, the spotted deer, the four-horned antelope, the barking-deer, the hog-deer, and other varieties of the cervine race unknown to us in England. Then, to

sum up the hunter's bill of fare, there are wolves, wild pigs, porcupines, wood and green pigeons, ortolans, the mighty bison, and the broad-snouted 'magar,' or crocodile. Could the most enthusiastic sportsman desire more! Yes,—the tiger, the prince of wild animals; and in the jungles of Mirzapore he prowls insatiate.

"From Dr. Fayerer's book on the 'Royal Tiger of Bengal,' I have put together some notes, which I hope will interest you; or, if you like, they may be deferred for another afternoon."

"Oh no!" said Beauchamp; "let us have them now."

"Yes," cried Vernon; "for in our class we have to get up an essay on the tiger, and I rather reckon your notes will just prime us full of information."

"Go on, Fisher," said Seymour; "if we are a little late this afternoon, I will ask Dr. Birch to excuse it."

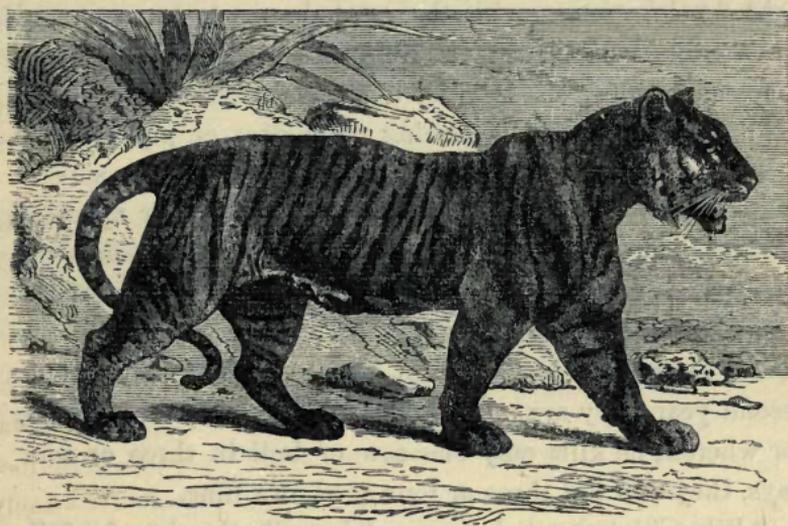
Thus encouraged, Fisher resumed:—]

The Royal Tiger (*Tigris Bengalica*) is the only species of the kind. He ranges over all the warmer parts of Asia, and is found even in Java and Sumatra; but nowhere does he display so much fierceness, nowhere is he so finely developed, as in Bengal.

The peculiarities of the tiger's structure are: his muscular strength in the neck, chin, and fore-arms, and his formidable canine teeth. I need not tell you that his feet, like those of a cat, are armed with cruel claws which he conceals at pleasure, and cushioned with soft pads which enable him to move along noiselessly. His senses are acute,—that of smell being the dullest. The bony framework is very firm and compact; and is equally well adapted to secure agility, speed, and strength. As a whole, he is, of course, nothing more than a cat,—the 'King of Cats,'—with an excess of

power and ferocity. Often, at night, the traveller is roused in his tent by the tiger calling to his mate in the neighbouring jungle, with just such a growl and yell as their congeners make, on a smaller scale, as they steal along the house-tops of an European city.

It has been well said that the ferocity, stealthiness, and blood-thirst of the cat reach their climax in the royal tiger. Persons who have examined him after he has been shot,



THE ROYAL BENGAL TIGER.

and his skin stripped off, have remarked his curious resemblance to the frame and fore-arms of an athlete. The muscles of his arm and shoulder are but modifications of those found in man and other mammals; modifications required by his predatory life. The withdrawal of the claws when he is moving along the ground is provided for by a wonderful mechanism of elastic ligaments and muscles. In this way they are prevented from being worn or blunted by contact with the ground. Instinct teaches him to take

special care of these, his principal and terrible weapons. Trees are frequently seen in the jungles scored with long vertical fissures to the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, where tigers have sharpened and cleansed their claws.

A tigress has a litter of from two to five cubs once in three years, and she is known to watch over them with the greatest care and affection until they are full-grown. It is during this period that she is the most savage. She will fight for her young with the most desperate courage, and when robbed of them is terrible in her fury. As soon as they can eat flesh she kills for them, and teaches them to do so for themselves by practising upon deer or pigs; she is then very wanton and bloodthirsty, killing often for amusement, and not from want. Notwithstanding her affection for her young, she will abandon or even devour them when hard pressed by hunger,—which puts to the proof, as we know, even the strongest human affections. When the young ones leave their parent, which they do about their second year, they are more destructive than the adult tiger; for whereas he kills only one cow or bull in three or four days, they will kill three or four cows at a time.

["What," interrupted Vernon, "is really the size of a full-grown Bengal tiger? I saw a couple of tigers in a menagerie, but they were not much larger than Newfoundland dogs."

"Perhaps they were not full-grown," remarked Seymour.

"The keeper said they were."]

The extreme size of a full-grown male hardly exceeds ten feet—that is, from the nose to the tip of the tail; that of the tigress varies from eight to ten, or, in very rare instances, eleven feet. I am speaking, however, of the Bengal tiger, the largest variety of the species.

The appetite of the tiger is not very fastidious; but his favourite prey are cattle, deer, and wild hogs. He steals in the darkness to the neighbourhood of a village, or 'gowrie,' where cattle feed, and springs upon some unfortunate bullock, which he drags into some secluded covert. Having satisfied his appetite, he retires to his lair in the thick grass or jungle, and sleeps off his abundant feast. In North and Central India he is accustomed to drag the creature on which he has pounced to the nearest stream, lie down all night by it, devouring it at intervals, sleeping during the following day; and then, at dusk, quitting his place of banquet. He rarely travels less than fifteen, and frequently as many as thirty miles in a night. His attack consists of a stealthy advance till within short springing distance; then, with a rapid rush and a terrible roar, he strikes his prey to the ground, seizes it at once by the throat with his cruel fangs, holds it down until nearly or quite dead, and then drags it away. A fine expression in Milton's 'Comus' describes the fierce, wild yell of the tiger as he makes his fatal spring:

'Howling like tigers at their prey.'

We have already heard something about man-eaters; and I think it has been stated that he does not, naturally, possess a love of human flesh, though he readily acquires it. At first, that dread of man which seems innate in all animals distinguishes the tiger; and the natives, aware of this fact, will gather fruit, and cut grass, and watch their flocks, without alarm, in the immediate neighbourhood of a tiger's covert. So long as he can obtain a supply of other food, he will not injure man. Even when one of their cattle is struck down, they will hasten to the spot, and often drive the tiger from his victim by shouting and clashing sticks

upon the ground. So great is their confidence, that they will lead the huntsman right up to the animal's reedy hiding-place.

This does not prevent them from regarding him, as they do the cobra, with the reverence of superstition. Just as the North American savages avoid mentioning the name of the wolf, so do they shrink from referring directly to the tiger, using a variety of euphuisms and periphrases, lest his spirit should haunt them or do them mischief after death.

But when once, through any accident, the tiger has tasted human blood, then, as you have already heard, he becomes a confirmed cannibal.

You will not be surprised at the dread in which the man-eater is held, when I tell you of the loss of human life annually caused by tigers in India. In the Mundlah districts, in 1856 and previous years, the average yearly number of victims was between two and three hundred. The Reports of the Central Provinces show that in 1866-67, 372 persons were killed by tigers; in 1867-68, 289; in 1868-69, 285. So you see, Douglas, that your tiger-killing volunteers might do good service. Again: in Lower Bengal, it appears from the Government Reports that 4218 persons were killed by tigers in six years, and in the same period a total of 13,400 by other wild animals, chiefly leopards and wolves.

Dr. Fayrer quotes a letter written to him by a gentleman from Nayordunka in July 1869:—'Cattle killed in my district are numberless; as regards human beings, one tiger in 1867-68 killed respectively 27, 34, and 47 people. I have known it attack a party and kill four or five at a time. Once it killed a father, mother, and three children; and the week before it was shot it killed seven people. It wandered over a track of twenty miles, never remaining in the same spot two consecutive days; and at last was destroyed by a

bullet from a spring-gun when returning to feed at the body of one of its victims—a woman.'

Dr. Fayrer points out that many persons recover who have been wounded by tigers. They don't often kill on the spot; nor do they, unless they are man-eaters, drag their victim's body to any great distance. Their usual process—and even when not fatal it is by no means an agreeable one—is to give a bite or two on the head or shoulder, two or three shakes, and then, after dragging the poor wretch a few yards, to drop him. Of course, he will have been wounded sorely by the terrible fangs, and have had a limb crushed; but as neither the animal's fangs nor teeth are poisonous, a wounded man, if rescued in time, frequently recovers. Dr. Fayrer gives several cases, but as they are not pleasant reading, I will trouble you only with one:—

'Baltes Singh, Rajput, aged thirty, was brought into hospital, mauled by a wounded tiger. On the front of the left shoulder was a deep flesh-wound, and on the back of the shoulder a superficial lacerated wound, two and a half inches by one inch. There were three fang-wounds in the left flank; one in front large enough to have admitted two fingers at least, penetrating into the abdomen; two wounds behind led down to the abdominal cavity, but did not injure the bowel. He had also one or two slight wounds over the ribs. Under cotton-wool dipped in carbolic oil, the wounds rapidly healed; the man is now able to walk about, and there only remains a superficial wound, which is healing.'

This, I need hardly tell you, is the medical report, written in true medical style.

["It seems to me," says Beauchamp, "that there is more pain than pleasure in hunting tigers!"]

"You must recollect also," replied Fisher, "that the victim cannot always be rescued, and that when rescued

his life cannot always be saved ; so that the danger is really very great."

"We frequently read in Indian newspapers," remarked Seymour, "of sportsmen being killed by tigers. If they went out only for pleasure, or the sake of killing, I don't know that I should sympathize with them very deeply ; but it is fair to remember that many English officers are animated by a generous desire to free some terrified district from the ravages of a man-eater. And if they are stricken down in the course of so noble an enterprise, I should be disposed to call them heroes."

"Can you tell us about Tippoo Sahib's toy-tiger?" inquired Beauchamp ; "I have read about it somewhere."

"Tippoo Sahib," said Seymour, "was Sultan of Mysore ; and his hatred of us English was so intense that he caused a toy-tiger to be made for him, worked by machinery, so as to represent it tearing a British soldier to pieces."

"I am glad to think," said Douglas, "that Mr. Tippoo met with his deserts. Was not his capital Seringapatam ; and did not our soldiers take it?"

"Yes ; it was besieged, stormed, and captured by the British, under Sir David Baird."

"Tigers don't make nice pets," resumed Fisher ; "but Eastern princes have loved to keep them in cages, as adding to the wild fierce splendour of their courts. Sometimes they are tamed when young, and trained to fight in the arena with buffaloes, elephants, and other animals. But I must hasten to finish my notes, of which, I fear, you must really be tired out and out.]"

Tigers, says Mr. Atkins, are sometimes found in very unusual localities. Thus, one was shot in the streets of Benares at the time of the assassination of Lord Mayo, the Viceroy. How it got there nobody knows. The Government regarded

the affair with much suspicion, because an old legend told that a great convulsion would occur when a tiger should be killed in the streets of Benares. In the spring of 1875 another was slain in the very heart of the city of Gorakpore. This was a wild one; and when the magistrate was informed of its appearance, he, thinking it was only a leopard, took his rifle, and, joined by the head of the city police and others, sallied forth to kill it. He fired, and the tiger immediately charged; stepping quickly on one side, the tiger struck down the head of the police, who stood behind, with a blow so heavy that he died on the spot.

Europeans and natives, compelled by their avocations to frequent the jungles, are frequently brought face to face with this formidable animal, when least expecting it. On such occasions a bold bearing and a loud shout will generally cause him to turn tail, unless he should be a man-eater, or in a vicious mood; for tigers, like men, have their fits of temper. 'It is the greatest folly,' says Mr. Atkins, 'in such a *rencontre* to flee, as the tiger then loses his instinctive dread of man, and with a few bounds and one blow of its paw probably fractures the runaway's skull. At other times the circumstances under which the creature is met preclude any other action than an immediate shot. A case was related to us (and reference to almost any book on tiger-hunting would confirm such a piece of good luck) where a sportsman was seated on the ground behind the usual screen of leaves, on the look-out for deer which were being driven towards him, when, to his surprise, two tiger cubs came out gambolling before him, and went by into the jungle. A few seconds afterwards the tigress appeared, listening to the shouts of the beaters, and looking out for her cubs. A slight noise was made by one of the shekarries who were with him, and in a moment the tigress stared him in the

face. He saw there was no help for it, and deliberately fired at her with a smooth-bore gun (the only weapon he had with him), at the same time leaping aside as quickly as he could. To his great delight he found he had slain the animal outright.'

The usual mode of killing tigers in the North-West Provinces is thus described:—

As soon as information reaches the camp of the hunters that a tiger has been tracked in the neighbourhood, the native shekarry of the district is sent for, and directed to choose a suitable place for a *hankwa*, or tiger-drive, and to procure a victim. The latter is almost always a young buffalo bull,—because a smaller animal would be carried off by a leopard, while a larger buffalo would be declined by a tiger. It is securely fastened to a stake in the tiger's supposed track, while two or three villagers who have accompanied the shekarry ply their axes in fixing *charpoys* (or bedsteads) in trees around the points where it is supposed the tiger will effect his exit. Poles are also cut and tied along the front of these *machauns* (or shooting platforms), which are further masked with screens of leaves.

The little band then hurries out of the jungle, as wild beasts begin to move at dusk, and sends word to the neighbouring villages that men and lads are wanted for a beating party next day.

Early next morning the shekarry, with one or two wary companions, cautiously steals into the jungle to see whether the victim has been killed. If, on his return, he reports 'a kill,' the sportsmen, who have been waiting anxiously, immediately set off for the 'machauns,' and ascend them with all the speed and with the least noise possible. These charpoys are raised about ten feet from the ground, so as to

be just out of the reach of a tiger were he to stand on his hind legs and attempt to get in. Baffled in this attempt he might spring up,—but then, in all probability, he would bound over, without injury to any one; whereas, were the machaun higher in the tree, he might land among their occupants, which would prove in the highest degree awkward for them.

Some eight or ten of the bravest villagers now post themselves in trees to the right and left of the sportsmen.

These are the *rokhs*, or stoppers, whose office it is to turn back the tiger if he essay to dash past them, instead of taking the path leading to the machauns. The least noise is generally sufficient; a 'hish!' or a single knock on the tree with an axe; indeed, unless he be a more than usually resolute animal, a leaf dropped before him is quite enough to scare.*

Meanwhile, the shekarry, with the men and lads who have volunteered to act as beaters, some fifty to a hundred in number, make their way to the back of the spot where the tiger is supposed to be resting. Spreading out in a semi-circle, these men advance, beating tom-toms vigorously, and shouting wildly, so as to terrify effectually all the game within that particular patch of jungle. First, perhaps, a wild boar will rush out, then a hyena, then a bear,—all of which are permitted to pass on. A shot would prevent the tiger from approaching the machauns, and would make him rush past the stoppers, or double or charge the line of beaters, when a grievous accident, or even death, might be the result. If all goes well, a tiger, or it may be a couple of tigers, trot past the machauns, and are received with a warm volley from their occupants. 'The circumstances

* We owe these particulars to an article in *Fraser's Magazine* on 'The Royal Bengal Tiger,' (February 1876).

attending the slaying of each tiger differ but little save in exceptional cases; like the slaughter in an Homeric battle-piece, only the actors can remember the exact mode in which they slew their foemen.' Finally, the beaters arrive; the sportsmen descend; the prey is slung upon bamboos, and escorted to the encampment with the sound of tom-toms and universal rejoicing.

Occasionally, a sportsman has a carcass dragged under some suitable tree in a locality where a tiger is known to be concealed; and then clambering up to a convenient height in the branches, he waits with exemplary patience until the tiger slinks by in the shadow of the night. Then, a well-aimed shot, and he may sing *Io triumphe!* This, however, is a precarious as well as a tedious method, and English tiger-hunters have seldom the requisite patience.

The natives in the Mirzapore district erect curious conical mounds of earth, about one and a half or two feet in diameter at the base, and tapering to about six inches at the apex, over the spot where any human being has been killed by a tiger. These mounds are carefully whitewashed, and decorated with flowers and strangely-wrought earthen vessels. To touch these mounds is a sacrilegious act; and annually, on a certain day, the people of the neighbouring villages resort to one of the most tragic of these memorials, worshipping before it in order to appease the spirit of the departed, and prevent his pursuing them in the form of another tiger. For as the Red Man of North America believed that in the hunting-grounds of the future he would be accompanied by his faithful dog, the Hindu seems to think that they will be haunted by the formidable tiger!

The feline nature of this king of cats is sometimes shown

in his demeanour towards a terrified victim—that is, a victim tied up as a bait, when the sportsman is planted in the tree above it; for, in other conditions, you would have little chance of examining the monster's playful cruelty. But, when not pressed by hunger, he seems to derive as much pleasure from tormenting his victim as a cat does. He gambols around the buffalo as if enjoying his alarm; and when the affrighted animal in mad despair feebly attempts to butt at his remorseless foe, the tiger takes a flying leap over his head, and resumes his cruel pastime on the other side. At last, as if he had succeeded in whetting his appetite, he crushes the skull of his victim with one blow of his powerful fore paw, and soon begins his bloody meal.

Captain Forsyth refers to another feline peculiarity—one to which I have already alluded; the tiger's cat-like serenades at night.* On one occasion he was encamped in a forest near Mátin, and after darkness had descended on the scene he heard a peculiar long wail, like the drawn-out mew of a huge cat, rising from a river-course about a hundred yards below his tent. Presently, from a mile or so higher up the river came a deep tremulous roar; which had scarcely died away before it was answered from the rear of the camp by another pitched in a yet deeper tone, peculiarly startling in its suddenness and proximity.

All these were repeated at short intervals, as the three tigers approached each other along the bottoms of the deep dry watercourses, between and above which the camp had been pitched. As they drew together the noises ceased for about a quarter of an hour; and Captain Forsyth was dozing off to sleep again, when suddenly arose the most fearful din near to where the tigress had first sounded the love-note to her rival lovers—a din like the caterwauling of midnight cats

* Captain Forsyth, 'The Highlands of Central India.'

magnified a hundredfold. Then came short pauses of silence, followed by outbursts of this terrific shrieking and moaning, gradually dying away as the tigers retired along the river-bed.

And here I beg leave, said Fisher, to terminate my notes upon the *Tigris regalis*, gratefully acknowledging the attention which you have been pleased to accord to them.

["*Plaudite, pueri!*" cried Seymour; and immediately a loud clapping of hands resounded through the cave.

"Bravo, Fisher," Seymour continued; "I know a great deal more about the tiger now than ever I knew before. I am inclined to respect him as not only king of cats, but king of beasts, and I am very thankful he is not an inhabitant of our Yorkshire moors."

"Yes," remarked Beauchamp, "we may well be satisfied with the less formidable character of our English 'game.' A fox is a better neighbour than an elephant; and hare-hunting is safer, if less exciting, than tiger-hunting."

"Fancy Lambert," said Douglas, "sitting perched up in a tree, waiting to 'pot' a tiger! Or fancy him pursued by one—no, the thought is too terrible!"

"You would make no better figure than myself," said Lambert; "but, of course, you *must* have your joke."

"Now, Seymour," interrupted Fisher, "I think it is your turn to discuss the subject."

"Well," said Seymour, "I think you must all be pretty well tired of tigers and tiger stories; the latter are about as plentiful as the former. However, 'lend me your ears,' and I will narrate to you Lieutenant Rice's wonderful escape:—]

A WONDERFUL ESCAPE.

Lieutenant Rice and a comrade, named Cornet Elliot, had pursued and wounded a tiger, which, escaping through the

jungle, was quickly out of sight. By the drops of blood that issued from his wound, and his broad foot-prints, they contrived to track him—though not without difficulty—through a dense clump of thorn bushes and high grass for about three hundred yards, keeping all the men together in a body, and they themselves undauntedly leading the way. Nor was this an easy task. It is impossible for an Englishman to understand what is meant by an Indian *jungle*, or the difficulty it presents to the traveller with its intertangled brushwood, its inextricable lianas, its parasites hanging from every branch, its slimy pools of stagnant water, and its close, feverish, reeking, malignant atmosphere. In due time, however, they got clear of the maze, and entered an open country, where all trace of the tiger was lost. Rice and Elliot then pushed on a few paces ahead, in order to examine the ground minutely before it should be trodden by the feet of their numerous attendants. But while thus engaged, a loud roar broke suddenly on their ears, which proceeded, as Lieutenant Rice imagined, from a small ditch a few paces to the right.

At this time Cornet Elliot was stooping on the ground, busily examining it for traces of the lost animal's footprints. After the roar came a tigress, bounding forward with terrible velocity, and making straight for Lieutenant Rice. He had barely time to discharge both barrels of his rifle, at only two or three paces' distance, into her chest, when either the shots or the smoke made the beast swerve past him, and dash straight at Elliot, springing actually upon him before he had time to get ready his rifle. The next instant he fell backwards under the tigress, which held him down with her formidable paws.

Fortunately, the shekarries preserved their presence of mind, and quickly handed to Lieutenant Rice his spare loaded guns. Rice immediately fired a couple of shots at the beast's shoulder, as she stood over the unfortunate

Elliot, but with little effect; for she at once commenced dragging him backwards by the upper part of his left arm, which she had seized in her jaws, down a gentle declivity, towards the ditch where she had first lain concealed. The ground was very uneven, being covered with boulders and fragments of rock, so that it was dangerous for Rice to fire again, lest he should hit his friend instead of the animal.

While borne onward in this fearful manner, Elliot had fainted. The tigress continued growling, all the time looking fully at her pursuers, who followed at about ten paces off, watching to get a good shot at her head, and so conclude the struggle. At last, after aiming twice or thrice in vain, Lieutenant Rice observed his opportunity, his rifle blazed, and instantaneously the tigress dropped dead, with a ball through her brain.

Elliot was now rescued from his terrible position. He had recovered his senses, and asked for a draught of water. It is almost needless to say that he was sorely bruised and bitten; his left arm was crushed; and his whole body bore marks of the recent encounter. When the tigress first sprang at him, he had warded off her tremendous paw with his up-lifted musket, and thus saved his head from a blow which must have been fatal. The stock of the rifle was marked with her claws, while the trigger and guard were crushed completely flat.

[A brief pause ensued; and as the twilight was drawing in, Seymour declared that it was time to return to Dr. Birch's. The boys therefore took their way home, discussing the stories which had afforded them so much entertainment.

Next week the cave was again filled with an attentive audience.

"I remember," said Seymour, "another tragical tiger story, if you were not content with 'horrors' last Saturday. It is

told by an assistant-surgeon of an East Indian regiment, who, with a newly-joined ensign,—a tall, well-made, active young Scotchman of eighteen or nineteen,—proposed to inaugurate a brilliant Indian career with a tiger-hunt.*]

A TRAGICAL TIGER STORY.

Some two hours before daybreak they started from their camp, the doctor and the ensign upon their ponies, their attendants upon foot. They were followed by two shikarees carrying their rifles, of which they had four between them; while their guide, a village Nimrod and a 'mighty man of war,' led the array along a narrow path which struck through the forest towards a distant range of hills. On their way they passed a native village, where their party received an accession of beaters, provided with tom-toms (or drums), bullock-horns, and other means of creating a terrible clang and crash to rouse the tigress from her lair.

When within half-an-hour's ride of her supposed feeding-grounds, they began to travel cautiously and in silence, even the natives desisting from their usual din. The path they had been following led them upwards along a mountain-slope until it reached the summit of a sort of ledge, which, densely clothed with jungle, stretched for some distance in front of them, varying in width from 50 to 200 yards. Here our adventurers turned to the south and kept along the level, the descent on the left gradually assuming a precipitous character, while on the right the steep wooded peak seemed to soar far above the sun-kindled clouds.

Sun-kindled clouds! yes; for as they traversed the craggy plateau the orb of day leaped suddenly above the eastern horizon, flooded the scene in golden glory, and

* Captain Bulger, 'Sporting Adventures in Many Lands.'

aroused the whole jungle-world into life. Just as if some enchantment or magic spell had been broken, which hitherto had held all things motionless and in silence. Birds of rare plumage and strange voices wheeled rapidly in the 'blue serene,' or flitted from tree to tree; a thousand mysterious sounds seemed to unite in one grand choral-harmony to welcome the coming day.

' Each brilliant bird that wings the air is seen ;
 Gay, sparkling loaries, such as gleam between
 The crimson blossoms of the coral tree
 In the warm isles of India's sunny sea ;
 Mecca's blue sacred pigeon, and the thrush
 Of Hindustan, whose holy warblings gush,
 At evening, from the tall pagoda's top :—
 Those golden birds that in the spice-time drop
 About the gardens, drunk with that sweet food
 Whose scent hath lured them o'er the summer-flood ;
 And those that under Araby's soft sun
 Build their high nests of budding cinnamon :
 In short, all rare and beauteous things that fly
 Through the pure element, here calmly lie
 Sleeping in light, like the green birds that dwell
 In Eden's radiant fields of asphodel.'

The travellers paused to admire the wondrous panorama that, touched with a thousand magical hues, lay spread before and around them—a mountain-landscape in which the beautiful, the sublime, and the terrible had each their part. Their musings, however, were interrupted by the guide, who asserted that the tigress—a beast of fame, for she had tasted human blood—lay concealed in a thorny jungle at the further end of the level, where a bright musical burn 'wimpled' through the intertangled shrubs, and descended with many a leap to the valley beneath. Accordingly, they dismounted. Their ponies were entrusted to the gorawallahs, or horse-keepers, who led them into a place of security; while the shikaree and the beaters pro-

ceeded to place themselves around the jungle, so as to drive the tigress from her lair.

The two attendants who remained with the doctor and his friend advised them to climb into suitable trees, and there await the moment when the man-slayer should make her appearance. But our adventurers, with the pride of youth, rejected such counsel as timid and unsportsmanlike; and, as they had before them an open space of ground destitute of all vegetation except some tall grasses, they conceived that they should sight their enemy in time to take a sure and steady aim.

The rocky ledge on which they were stationed measured about fifty yards in width. On one side the ensign posted himself, on the other the doctor. Now as the tigress, it was supposed, would neither venture to plunge down the precipitous descent on the left, or to climb the rocky slope on the right, she would necessarily pass between our two heroes, and so expose herself to a double fire.

After some minutes of eager expectation, they heard the crack and rattle of a rocket, which was directed into the thorny hiding-place of their enemy. It failed, however, to awaken any responsive growl. Another, and another, and another; yet no sign of the tigress. She must have quitted her lair! Hark! a fifth rocket—and now a short, sharp, angry growl, which sends the blood coursing rapidly through each hunter's veins. The crisis is at hand; they cock their rifles, and with straining eyeballs seek to penetrate the leafy screen of the jungle.

And now the whole mob of beaters, having discovered her place of concealment, broke the stillness with a most unearthly clash of sound—shouting, and blowing horns, and beating tom-toms—so that were Echo as tender a nymph as the Greek poets fabled, she would have swooned in alarm!

No marvel that the tigress would not confront such an appalling tempest, which 'sounded more like the howling of a legion of fiends than a disturbance produced by human agencies.'

As soon as the old shikaree discovered her lurking-place, he saluted her with a whole volley of rockets, and out she crashed from the thicket with a frightful roar, lashing her brindled sides with her tail in the open glade, within sixty or seventy yards of our adventurers' stations, as if she knew their proximity, and meditated an instant vengeance.

The glade was hidden to a certain extent from the view of the beaters, and though the old shikaree knew the man-slayer had broken cover, he could not see her; so he continued flashing occasional rockets into the dense jungle, while his legionaries desisted not from their fiend-like uproar.

And now, for a moment or two, the tigress seemed uncertain in what direction she should proceed. During this pause, the doctor could see his comrade several times raise his rifle to take aim, but on each occasion he withdrew it from his shoulder without firing, as if the animal were too distant for a certain shot. Presently she began to move towards his covert. I never remember, says our traveller, to have been so excited as at that moment; my heart beat so loudly that its palpitations might have been heard; all my blood seemed to have rushed in a torrent of fire to my brain; and yet of what transpired I was condemned to be a passive spectator. Slowly and stealthily, with a cat-like tread, the huge sleek glistening brute crept along, apparently bent on slinking away unobserved, until she approached within twenty yards of the ensign's position. Then he raised his rifle; a crack, and a loud report; and immediately

he emerged into the open with his second weapon in his hand. With a dull heavy thud the shot rang against the breast of the tigress, and she, with an awful roar, dashed right at her daring enemy. Rapid as was her charge, the ensign's movements were equally swift; he fired again, striking her a second time, but not with sufficient effect to arrest her onset. Almost at the instant that the report of his last shot startled the echoes, the fearful beast was upon him, and with a short sharp sigh he fell to the earth, in the fatal grasp of the tigress, and motionless beneath her body.

For a moment his friend stood panic-stricken at so deplorable and unexpected a catastrophe. He was recalled to his senses, however, by the urgent need there was of rendering immediate assistance to the unfortunate ensign. Though alarmed at the possible danger of missing the tigress or of wounding his friend, if, indeed, any life still throbbed in the senseless body, he raised his rifle, and fired. Unfortunately, the shock had discomposed his nerves, and his bullet struck a bush fully two feet above the tigress without disturbing her. The doctor seized his other rifle, which the faithful shikaree at that moment handed to him. Again he fired; again he missed his aim. Flinging away the useless weapon, he grasped a large hunting-spear, and, without thought of the rashness and possible peril of the procedure, he rushed forward to the attack. What was his surprise to find that his comrade's aim had been true enough—there lay the tigress and her victim—the destroyer and the destroyed—and both were dead!

It is unnecessary for me to say more. The remains of the young ensign were removed to the camp. On examination, it appeared that his death must have been instantaneous, for the heavy paw of the tigress had crushed in his

skull. It was the last tiger-hunt in which the doctor took a part, and for years it remained a cloud upon his life:—

'One fatal remembrance, one sorrow that throws
Its bleak shade alike o'er our joys and our woes,
To which life nothing darker or brighter can bring,
For which joy has no balm and affliction no sting.'—MOORE.

[At the conclusion of this affecting narrative the boys indulged in their usual comments and expressions of approval. Fisher observed that the force of the tiger, when he made his leap upon his victim, was almost incredible; its effects were appalling; a strong man in his grasp was shaken like a reed. And not only man, but even the Indian buffalo, which is borne down by the ferocious beast, and carried off in his reeking jaws like a puppet.

It is this extraordinary energy, doubtless, that has induced the Eastern nations to select the tiger as an emblem of regal power. A half-barbarous people is always inclined to deify force, to worship physical strength, and to associate with it all their notions of supremacy. The swiftness of the eagle's flight, the generous courage of the lion, will recommend them to the admiration of the healthier and nobler races of the West; but the Oriental, with his innate thirst for blood, and his instinctive adulation of despotic cruelty, turns from the lion and the eagle to the sleek, beautiful, agile, vigorous, but fierce and rapacious tiger. A tiger's head, blazing with diamonds and precious stones, adorned the throne of Hyder Ali and Tippoo Saib, and, at the capture of Seringapatam, fell into the hands of the British. A tiger's skin is often worn as the peculiar costume of sovereignty.

With the usual discursiveness of boys, some of the auditors in what Douglas styled the Cave of Adventure now proposed to take up the subject of the Wolf. Others were in favour of the Rhinoceros; and Douglas waggishly suggested

the Sea-Serpent! But Seymour and Fisher desired to make these afternoon gatherings useful as well as amusing, and felt that it would not be methodical to allow animal after animal to be taken up, without regard to their proper zoological or scientific position.

"No, boys," he said; "one thing at a time: we have not yet exhausted the tiger. Let us take another journey from this shady Yorkshire glen to the Indian jungle. What say you, Douglas?"

"Well," said Douglas, "we have heard a great deal about killing tigers, but nothing about catching them alive."

"Catching them alive!" cried the Fat Boy; "you don't mean to say that such a ferocious beast is often captured living, except when a mere whelp?"

"I do, though," rejoined Douglas; "and the way the natives catch him in Oudh—Oudh, you know, the great province annexed to our Indian Empire by Lord Dalhousie—seems to me very ingenious. They mix up a kind of bird-lime peculiarly tenacious and adhesive, with which they plaster thoroughly the broad leaves of the *prauss* tree. These leaves they spread in great quantities about the neighbourhood of the tiger's supposed lair, and then, armed with their guns, they secrete themselves at convenient points, and wait for his appearance. In due time he comes, rolling his eyes to and fro in quest of prey, and little suspecting the ambuscade that has been prepared for him. Soon one of the leaves clings to his paw. Like all felines, he loves a clean paw, and accordingly he tries to get rid of the adhesive plaster, but in his exertions he covers himself with the preparation—head, whiskers, body, and tail—prauss leaves and bird-lime all over! When half blind and thoroughly exhausted, he easily falls a victim to the hunters, who cripple him, perhaps, with a shot or two, and then festoon him with stout rope."

"I should like to know what that bird-lime was made of!" exclaimed Mountjoy; "there's lots of rabbits on the common."

"What! turn poacher, Mountjoy?" said Seymour; "no, that would never do."

"Then," continued Douglas, "I've read of a trap for killing tigers which is jolly clever. I think it is called the 'spring-bow.' Well, you make an immense bow, some eight or nine feet long, and string it with good stout gut line. The path by which the tiger leaves his lair is usually a very narrow one, and on each side of the path, opposite one another, you drive into the ground two firm posts. To each of these fasten one end of the bow, and get ready an arrow dipped in deadly poison. Insert a blunt stick between the bow and the bow-string, to extend the latter, just as if you were going to discharge it; and between the end of the stick and the inner side of the bow, drive a long wedge, to whose thick extremity you have bound a long string and stretched it—the string, I mean—right across the tiger's path. Now place your arrow in the bent bow, and see what will come of it. Why, out from his cover prowls Mr. Tiger; goes straight up against the wedge-string; the wedge and the blunt stick drop out, and away flies the poisoned arrow straight into the tiger's heart."

"Thanks for your description, Douglas," said Seymour; "but I should imagine the bow was liable to frequent mishaps. The string might relax, for instance, and then the plot would fail. The Hindus, however, wage war against the man-eater in a score of ways. They kill a bullock, make incisions in the carcass, gather some red berries which grow in the jungle and are peculiarly poisonous, pound them to dust, and rub the powder very plentifully into the said incisions. The tiger finds the prey, and begins to devour it.

In a few minutes the poison spreads through all his veins, and he is stricken to death by a consuming fire.

“Then another manœuvre, and one which requires no ordinary degree of pluck to carry out, is to build a stout cage of bamboo, with wide intervals between the reeds, transport it at nightfall to the depths of the jungle, and, armed with a well-tempered *tulwar* — or sword — ensconce yourself within it, and *wait*.

“In due time the tiger sallies forth, and his organs of smell conduct him to your ambuscade. He flings himself against the cage, which, however, you have securely fixed between a couple of trees, and with greedy teeth and ferocious claws endeavours to seize upon you. Keep cool, and bide your time. See, now he presents his breast towards you, and with a firm thrust you drive your *tulwar* into his body—up to the very hilt—and, mortally wounded, the beast lies down to die, or crawls back to his cover, where, the next morning, you may claim his carcass as the reward of your daring.”

“If the tiger *did* overturn your cage,” said Vernon, “you would be in an awkward position.”

“True,” answered Seymour, “but no gallant deed can be accomplished by the mind that always weighs possibilities. ‘If,’ ‘but,’ and ‘might,’ are the coward’s words; no brave man, no hero ever gives heed to them. Had young Durosier thought of either, he would not, perhaps, have been killed, but then his memory would never have been held in immortal honour.”

“Who *was* Durosier?” inquired Vernon.

“Don’t you know the story? Well, I will tell it to you, for every boy *ought* to know it.*

* Miss Pardoe, ‘Episodes of French History.’

ANECDOTES OF DUTY DONE.

“At one of Napoleon’s battles, this young officer, named Durosier, was in attendance on the emperor at the moment when it became necessary to despatch an order to one of the generals of division, and he volunteered to carry it, though the service was one of imminent peril.

“The emperor gave him his instructions, and added :—

“‘Spare neither yourself nor your horse, sir,’ said he sternly ; ‘there is not a moment to lose, and return at once to report to me that my order has been obeyed.’

“Away, amid the storm of shot and shell, galloped the brave young fellow, and in less than a quarter of an hour was again in the emperor’s presence.

“‘You have done well, sir,’ said Napoleon, when he had received his report, ‘you have a clear brain and a stout heart, though still so young. I give you a captain’s rank, and attach you henceforth to my person.’

“‘It is too late, sir,’ murmured the young soldier.

“‘Too late, Captain Durosier,—and why?’

“‘Sir, they have hit me,’ and as he spoke, he threw open his coat. The blood was streaming from a wound in the chest. ‘All will soon be over, but I have done my duty—*Vive l’Empereur ! Vive la France !*’

“He reeled for an instant in his saddle, and then fell back heavily into the arms of an officer who had sprung forward to assist him. Durosier was dead.”

“The anecdote,” said Fisher, “is an interesting one ; but I can match it with an English example. My hero is a private of the Buffs. In one of our Chinese expeditions—the last, I believe—some Sikhs and this private of the Buffs fell into the hands of the Chinese, were brought before the authorities, and commanded, if they would save their lives,

to perform the *kotoo*. The Sikhs accordingly grovelled in the dust, but not so our stout English soldier. He felt that he represented England, and though death stared him in the face, he declared that he would not prostrate himself before any Chinaman alive. Straightway his head was stricken off, and his body thrown on a dung-hill. I remember that the incident suggested an eloquent little ballad, whose concluding verses I may quote to you :—*

' Yes, honour calls !—with strength like steel
 He put the vision by.
 Let dusty Indians whine and kneel ;
 An English lad must die.
 And thus, with eyes that would not shrink,
 With knee to man unbent,
 Unflinching on its dreadful brink,
 To his red grave he went.

' Vain, mightiest fleets, of iron framed ;
 Vain, those all-shattering guns ;
 Unless proud England keep, untamed,
 The strong heart of her sons.
 So, let his name through Europe ring—
 A man of mean estate,
 Who died, as firm as Sparta's king,
 Because his soul was great.' "

Fisher's anecdote and quotation proved very acceptable, and a desultory conversation upon heroes and heroism ensued, until Lambert recalled the boys to their original subject by the apt inquiry,—

" What has all this to do with tigers ?"

" True," said Seymour, " and now I will tell you another story about a Man-Eater."]

* Macmillan's Magazine: 'The Private of the Buffs,' by Sir F. H. Doyle.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF ADVENTURE.*

My authority for the following story is Captain Shakespear, who on his way from Belaspore to Bhundurah, had occasion to halt at a village called Doongurghur. He found that the village had recently been desolated by a couple of man-eating tigers, who had killed a great number of the inhabitants. Burning with love of sport, he resolved upon a campaign against these two destroyers, a resolve which was hailed by the surviving villagers as worthy of the magnanimity of a *Burrah Sahib*.

The last victim of the men-eaters had been the Byraghee, or holy man, who officiated at the temple of the village. When informed of this sacrilege, the rajah had hired five native shikarees to recover the body of the holy man from the tiger's lair, but affrighted at the stories which were poured into their ears at Doongurghur, they fled the scene. Nor was this much imputation on their cowardice, for these poor fellows were armed with matchlocks only, and the tigers from their fastnesses kept so vigilant an outlook, that not a man could move in the jungle or the forest except in the heat of the day, without their seeing him.

Captain Shakespear started with his shikarees at once for Doongurghur. After marching about two and a half miles, he found two natives with matchlocks, one up in a tree, the other concealed at its foot. Addressing them, he asked, 'Have you heard any tidings of the man-eaters? What are you hunting, that you sit up yonder?' They replied that they were lying in wait for the chikura, or ravine deer, the gazelle of Arabia, and that as to the tigers they knew nothing of their whereabouts. Taking one of their weapons as he rode along, he fell to flattering its workman-

* Capt. Henry Shakespear, 'Wild Sports of India.'

ship and praising its unerring aim: 'Come,' said he, 'you and I are brothers. You are a shikaree, and so am I, you must come and help me to kill these tigers.' The man went, and his companion followed; but sooth to say, both showed a manifest reluctance. In a short time, however, the whole procession arrived at Doongurghur.

There spread the beautiful lake for which it was so famous—a lake serene, and still, and cool—with broad water-lilies floating like swans upon its unruffled surface. The village clustered on its shore, but seemed abandoned to silence and desolation. Not a sound was audible; life seemed to have fled from the accursed place. At length, a chuprassee of the rajah, and two men and a boy, being the only family that had remained, issued from the huts. The elder man was the kullal, or wine-maker and wine-vender of the village, but, like Othello, his occupation was gone. He had the most to lose in the way of property, and accordingly had remained when all the rest had fled or been killed. His eyes were like a ferret's, and he had maintained his courage by liberal potations of fiery drink.

Having supplied his shikarees and attendants with a plentiful supply of food and tobacco, Captain Shakespear prepared for action. He resolved, if possible, to shoot the tiger from a tree, since he had no elephant at his disposal.

One of his small body-guard, or naicks, thereupon volunteered to look out for a suitable tree—near a tank of shallow and muddy water that had been constructed at the foot of the neighbouring mountain—and there to tie up securely a small bullock, about twenty months old. Having taken with him one of the captain's double-barrelled guns, the three villagers, and another shikaree, he started in the noontide heat of the day, when the tiger loves to repose in the shade of his jungle lair.

About three hours afterwards, the naick returned in a state of great alarm, saying that he had not completed the trap, for the shikaree, he was afraid, had been carried off. The man was just below the tree, cutting wood, and collecting leaves to screen the shooter in a kind of bower, but that he had suddenly disappeared.

Captain Shakespear ordered his shikarees to get his rifles, intending to attempt the recovery of the unfortunate man's body. On arriving at the spot, he heard the spotted deer give utterance to the shrill bark which denotes their alarm at the approach of a beast of prey. But in vain did he search for any trace of the supposed catastrophe, and it turned out the next day, that he had fled, panic-stricken, to his own village, some three or four miles distant.

Returning in the direction of the ambuscade he had ordered, he found that all his people had secreted themselves in the screen or bower—the *mechaun*, as the Hindus call it—which they had constructed, and were looking intently down into a ravine beneath. To Captain Shakespear's inquiries they responded: 'The Bagh is just below us!' He looked with equal curiosity into the ravine, but could see nothing through the dense brushwood that clothed it. The sun had set, and it was nearly dark. The captain, therefore, judged it advisable to return to his camp, where all was made secure for the night. The horses and cattle were confined within the narrowest possible limits; the carts piled up outside them as a rampart; and large fires kindled at every twenty yards. Over and above the regular sentry of dismounted troopers, the servants were told off, and these furnished four more sentinels, so as to afford a relief every two hours. Having completed these preparations, Captain Shakespear retired to his couch, with his rifles, ready loaded, placed ready to his hand.

All through the night the hurgoors—these are the baboons of Hindustan, and, when on their hind legs, stand five and a half feet high—chattered and hooted incessantly among the trees, up to the very verge of the encampment. These animals, which dwell in the mountains with the tigers and panthers, never allow them to move without following them, and by jumping from branch to branch of the trees, over their heads, they give warning of the tiger's approach. The horses also were very restless during the night, but the blazing fires and vigilant sentries prevented the tigers from making any attack.

It will readily be understood that owing to these circumstances Captain Shakespear waited eagerly for the dawn, and as soon as 'rosy-fingered Aurora'—hem!—peeped forth in the eastern skies—

["I suppose," said Beauchamp, "you mean, as soon as it was morning."

"Precisely," replied Seymour, "but I thought you would prefer the more poetical expression."]

Well: as soon as it was morning, he roused his people, and they all started for the place where the young bullock had been fastened up. The Kullab, or Doongurghur wine-maker, acted as guide. Scarcely had they gone two hundred yards before they heard the roar of their enemy. The poor villager, the father of the only surviving family at Doongurghur, exclaimed, 'Wuh hai—that is he! that's the tiger who owns my village.' Captain Shakespear replied, 'If you run, you are a dead man; keep close in my rear.' Placing in the front the head shikaree, Mangkabe, who was gifted with remarkable powers of vision, the party proceeded, until they reached some rocks from which the poor calf could be seen. There he lay, apparently dead. But where was the tiger? See, something moves! Surely it is the tail of some large

animal. And now, the whole body, with its glittering painted hide, is plainly discernible. He has emerged on the open, and between him and his assailants not a leaf, not a blade of grass intervenes; but within gunshot stands a single forest-tree, without a branch on it for thirty feet from the ground.

Captain Shakespear was aware that in attempting to gain the tree he would probably be discovered by his furious foe, but the risk must be incurred. Stealthily he glided forward, keeping the trunk of the tree between himself and the tiger, who was so intent on the poor calf, that he did not notice his adversary's approach. Captain Shakespear then watched his opportunity, and the beast exposing the white of his belly and chest, took a deliberate aim, and fired. His shot proved effectual, and in a few minutes one of the man-eaters of Doongurghur had ceased to exist.

The victorious tiger-slayer returned to his camp, refreshed himself with a cup of tea, and ordered his admiring attendants to bring in the body of his victim. He proved to be of immense bulk and extraordinary muscular power; extreme length, ten feet eight inches, of which the tail was only three feet three. The head was very large, and every limb was stout and thickset.

Thirteen quarts of fat were obtained from this lusty animal, of which the mokassee, or renter of the village, begged a pipkinful. 'Of course,' replied Captain Shakespear, grimly; 'it is the fat of your own villagers.' At this ghastly, but not unverified joke, the mokassee laughed the shadow of a laugh.

Fatigued with the day's exertion, and a sleepless night, our gallant hunter retired to his couch at an early hour, after cautioning the duffadur to have a line of fires kindled, and the sentries posted as before. He was also warned



A TRAGICAL INCIDENT.

that another man-eater was still lurking in the neighbourhood.

But scarcely had the Captain enjoyed an hour's rest, than he was aroused by a shout from the duffadur, that the tigress had carried off one of the troopers. Leaping out of bed, he seized the large single two-ounce rifle, kept loaded with powder only for the purpose, and fired it off in the

air. The darkness was intense; no fire was burning in the camp, save one or two embers near the spot where the trooper had been seized, but which had proved perfectly ineffectual to scare away his assailant. Captain Shakespear huddled on his clothes with all possible speed, and seized his rifle; some of his attendants were soon ready; and the villagers, with flaring torches, rushed into the camp. The duffadur pointed out the direction in which the tigress had escaped. He had been standing within five paces of the man who was seized. In fact, he was relieving the sentries, and the trooper was putting on his belts to go on duty. A dry ravine, bare of bramble and brushwood, ran up to the camp, and had afforded the bloodthirsty beast the means of stealing on her victim unperceived. Then she sprang on the man's chest, seizing him by the mouth, and pressing him so closely that the poor fellow could never reply to his name. Leaping into the ravine, the Captain followed it up rapidly, in the belief that his only chance of recovering the man was to gain the base of the mountain, some five hundred yards distant, before the tigress could carry him there. He heard—or thought he heard—a sigh, and pursued in that direction. But his generous exertions proved fruitless, and he was compelled to return.

You will easily imagine that for Captain Shakespear there was no more sleep that night. So tragical an event was not to be easily forgotten. He could not dismiss from his mind the thought of his poor soldier's untimely fate—his sudden agony—his terrible death. When the daylight came, he resumed his search, nor was there any difficulty in following up the man-eater's trail. The tigress had dragged the trooper's body across the ravine, and his comrades recovered his sword-belt, his turban, trousers, and other fragments of his dress.

Leaving the villagers to pursue the animal's track, the Captain inquired if there were no mountain-path by which he might be intercepted. The mokassee ordered one of the natives to guide him to the water, a spot where she had killed and devoured four or five people. He started, and mounted a ledge of rock, in the hope of catching her before her return, but in vain. After waiting a while, he returned towards the spot where he had left his followers; and seeing some crows perched on a tree, came up to the place where lay the mutilated corpse of the unfortunate trooper, just at the time that it was discovered by the duffadur and villagers. She had eaten off one of his legs only up to the knee. They had passed within fifteen yards of the body in the night. The Captain informs us, in his published narrative, that he expatiated at some length to the Mussulmans—Moslems—or Mohammedans—I wish there was one recognised form of describing the followers of the Crescent—upon the worthlessness of the body when deserted by the soul; and he informed them that he would just as soon be devoured by tigers or jackals as interred in the stateliest mausoleum—

["Oh, what bosh!" exclaimed Mountjoy; "one would rather die in one's bed, I think, than be crunched to death by a tigress!"]

Yes; and I daresay Captain Shakespear in his heart was of the same opinion; but he wanted to persuade the Mussulmans into allowing the man's body to remain where he was sure the tigress would return to devour it, and he could get a shot at her. But his rhodomontade fell upon deaf ears. All nations and all sects love to bury their dead decently, and the Indians carried away the body and interred it.

Our hunter, however, was determined to kill the tigress, and accordingly ordered a mechaun, or screen, to be con-

structed in a tree near the shallow water where she was accustomed to bathe herself, and a young bullock to be bound to a stake within gunshot as a bait for the trap. The preparations completed, he and his shikarces took up their positions in the mechaun. Scarcely had they waited half an hour, when down came the tigress at her wonted stealthy pace. Evidently she was of the same species as the male; short and thick—the regular mountain-tiger—her tail did not touch the ground. She was the smallest full-grown beast the Captain had ever seen. His blood boiled within him, he says, that so small a tigress should have killed and carried off his poor trooper. There was some sort of excuse, he adds, naïvely, for the big lusty male, with his broken teeth, killing men; but for this active fiend, made like a panther, and not much larger than one, for her to adopt man-slaying was unpardonable.

The reason she had not kept to the sandy ravine was now very evident. She was neither large enough nor strong enough to drag the man except on the hard ground; so, when pursued, she had hauled him along the bank, and within a few yards of the *nullah*; the easiest path to the spot at the base of the hill where she had intended to devour him at her leisure. In front of the concealed sportsman spread the ravine, which she now dropped into, crossed, and, fixing her gaze on the bush where she had left the body, glided along till she reached a large forest-tree, about sixty yards from the mechaun. Then she caught sight of the calf, which, under her gaze, stood paralyzed, like one under a spell.

By degrees the tigress brought first one eye, and then both, round the side of the large tree, and fixed them on her prisoner, and thus they looked at one another for at least twenty minutes. The Captain devoutly wished that he was

on foot, for he felt certain that he could put a ball between her eyes. But the sun was shining on both barrels of his rifle, and to move a finger would have scared away his enemy. One of the natives unable to brook so long a suspense *did*, at last, scratch his leg with his right hand. The action, slight as it was, proved sufficient. The tigress retreated into the ravine, and ascended the opposite bank at the same deliberate and stealthy pace.

Though he feared that his chance was gone, the Captain seized his rifle, and, as she cleared the heavy bushes, fired. The shot went through her belly, but did not instantaneously kill her, and she contrived to drag herself away among the rocks. For a time her lurking-place remained undiscovered, and the Captain returned to his camp somewhat disconsolate; but before he left Doongurghur, her dead body was discovered, and the neighbourhood relieved from all further apprehension on account of the once-famous and much-dreaded man-eaters.

["Such is my story, boys."

"And a very good story, too," said Beauchamp. "What a terrible scourge the tigers must be to those parts of Hindustan which they infest! I do not wonder that our Government offers rewards for their destruction."

"Captain Shakespear," said Seymour, "from whom I have borrowed the story just told to you, describes a peculiar method of tiger-hunting, which is quite new to me. He says that the native shikarees, in districts where pools of water lie among the jungles, dig holes about six feet square and three feet deep, within a few paces of the margin of the water. The mould removed from the pit is thrown up around its outer edge, like a bank. On this bank the shikaree rests the barrel of his matchlock, and when the beast is drinking, he shoots him—sometimes at but a few

feet from the muzzle of his matchlock. As the water recedes, the hunter digs a fresh hole, so as to keep tolerably close to the water's edge. In this way, not only tigers, but wild hog, mulghai (the blue cattle), sambur or red deer, and other animals are slain during the hot months of March, April, and May. For tiger-shooting, however, such a stratagem is very dangerous; if the shikaree miss his aim, I would not give much for his life!

"One more story I will tell you, boys, if you are all agreeable."

"Of course we are," cried Douglas; and "Decidedly so," shouted Vernon and Mountjoy.

"Then, 'lend me your ears'—'I will a tale unfold.' Captain Shakespear happened, on one occasion, to receive information of four tigers having resorted to a deep ravine within a few miles of the cantonment where he was stationed. A native officer under his command owned a female elephant, and a tiger-hunting expedition was therefore resolved upon. They tracked the beasts to a very thick sendbund, or date-grove, which, from the number of bones of bullocks and deer scattered about, was conjectured to be their stronghold. The jungle was very dense, and the captain's native friends, who had vainly persuaded him to mount the elephant, at length got into the howdah themselves, and commenced beating. The captain posted himself up in a tree, for it was very difficult to see from the ground, and they agreed to beat up to him. He knew the tigers must be within thirty or forty paces of his post; and his men had scarcely put the elephant to beat, when he heard a tremendous roaring. The elephant ran away, upset the howdah against the branch of a tree, and flung the people who were in it almost on the top of the tigers.

"One rushed by the captain, who shot him in the hind-

quarters, but did not recover him. On the day following, they again beat for them, without the elephant, and after beating for a long time unsuccessfully, sent word to Captain Shakespear that the tigers could not be in that part of the jungle. He had posted himself within eight yards of a small water-course, and was on foot; so he desired the natives to beat the jungle up to him, though under an impression that really there were no tigers in it. Scarcely had he done this, when a large male bear rushed out close by him, up the bed of the water-course. He did not see his watchful enemy, but as he came abreast, he suddenly scented him, and came round to the point. The captain shot him between the eyes, plump into his brain, and he sank—a mass of black hair.

“At the report of the rifle, out leaped a tiger, almost over the fallen bear, which was not above eight yards from him; and Shakespear discharged his other barrel behind the shoulder. The natives followed up the wounded beast, but did not succeed in discovering his hiding-place. At sunset, our persevering sportsman and his attendants resumed their stations by the water-side, but no other victory rewarded their rifles; the bear and the tiger were their only prize.

“You see, boys, what tenacity of purpose and fixity of resolution the tiger-hunter must needs possess. A wavering, unstable, irresolute man would never succeed in the jungles of Hindustan; instead of slaying the tiger, the tiger would slay *him*.

“*Moral*.—In the jungles of life and the world, go on boldly, patiently, courageously; do not lose heart; do not be disquieted by small difficulties; and remember, unless you conquer the obstacles that lie in your path, they will assuredly conquer *you*. Do you remember Goethe’s noble lyric—but, of course, you do not—translated very finely by

Carlyle, who has aptly called it 'the marching-music of humanity'? Let me endeavour to recall it. I committed it to memory as a constant incentive to labour, a spur to my flagging energies, and whenever I repeat it, surely it stirs my heart like the sound of a trumpet!"

"Let us hear it, Seymour. I know," said Fisher, "you pointed it out to me when you were reading 'Wilhelm Meister'—not a boy's book, by the way—but I have not your faculty of remembering poetry."

Seymour then recited Goethe's noble lyric, which we give here *in extenso*, for the benefit of our readers:—

"The future hides in it
Gladness and sorrow:
We press still thorow;
Nought that abides in it
Daunting us—

Onward!

'And solemn before us,
Veiled, the dark portal;
Goal of all mortal:
Stars silent rest o'er us—
Graves under us silent.

'While earnest thou gazest,
Comes boding of terror,
Comes phantasm and error;
Perplexes the bravest
With doubt and misgiving.

'But heard are the voices,
Heard are the sages,
The works and the ages;—
Choose well, your choice is
Brief, and yet endless.

'Here eyes do regard you
In Eternity's stillness!
Here is all fulness,
Ye brave, to reward you;
Work, and despair not!"

The young poet spoke the lines with noble force and emphasis, but we must own they somewhat soared above the capacity of most of his auditors. They rewarded him, however, with a burst of applause, for they could not be insensible to the earnestness of his delivery, and were both proud and fond of their *dux*.

"Of all the adventurous spirits whom England has sent forth to wage war against the beasts of prey, not one, perhaps," said Fisher, turning to his inexhaustible volume, "can surpass in resolution, daring, and intrepidity the famous tiger-hunter, Lieutenant Rice. In five successive campaigns, occupying altogether about three hundred and sixty-days, and though always hunting on foot, he succeeded in destroying no less than sixty-eight tigers, three panthers, and twenty-five bears, without counting those which he wounded more or less severely.

"From the published narrative of his exploits I have already quoted. It is replete with stirring incidents, and such perilous situations as might well make each particular hair on the reader's head stand erect with horror, like 'quills of fretful porcupine.' I propose to give a further sample of Lieutenant Rice's book."*]

A STORY FROM THE EAST.

It is in the thickets, he says, and especially among the clumps of willows in the marshy localities, that the tiger is generally met with, because in these places he finds the cool shelter of which he has need during the heat of the day and after a night of marauding. It is difficult to discover him, but fortunately various inhabitants of the jungle

* Lieutenant Rice, 'Tiger-Shooting in India.' It should be stated that we have not thought it necessary to follow the lieutenant's language very closely.

make it their business to indicate his presence. Among these may be particularly mentioned the peacocks and the monkeys. The former utter an alarm-cry, which no tiger-hunter can mistake, when the beast, quitting his lair, has begun to move. This watchfulness on their part is to be explained by the fact that the peacocks also prefer the shelter of the thickets during the day, and frequently fall victims to the young tiger, who, as soon as he quits his mother, tries upon them his 'prentice-hand,' climbing the trees like a cat.

During the day, too, the vigilance of the monkeys, who while slumbering in the trees at night are often surprised by the panther, or the serpent-boa, is never at fault. Like the peacocks, they make no mistake as to the species of the animal which steals through the jungle. Be it a kid or a wild boar, they do not stir; but if it be a tiger or a panther, they utter the peculiar cry destined to put their companions on their guard. So that when making your way through the woods, if you see an ape tranquilly seated on the ground, you may rest assured that you will meet with no dangerous animal.

A particular bark of the jackal also indicates at night the presence of tigers. When an old jackal can no longer hunt by himself, or when he has been expelled from the troop to which he formerly belonged, he attaches himself to the service of a tiger, whose scout he becomes, and who, in return, abandons to him the remains of his banquets. It is thus that a tiger has frequently been conducted to my bivouac by a jackal, who redoubled his barkings to indicate the presence of my horses or cattle to his royal master; while the latter, to the terror of all the inmates of my little camp, prowled around it for several hours waiting an opportunity to attack. In such a case, one must not fire at

the tiger except with sure aim and close at hand, for if he is not mortally wounded, he becomes furious, and his ferocity, increased by the obscurity, knows no obstacle and disregards all danger.

My month's furlough, which I had spent in my first campaign against the tigers, was nearly at an end, and up to the 22nd of April I had killed, says Lieutenant Rice, none but bears, when I pitched my tent at the gates of Jaat, a small town of some importance from its iron-works. The day was fruitlessly spent in beating the surrounding thickets without making any discovery, and yet, on my return to the camp at sunset, I had hardly begun my evening repast before I was disturbed by a violent clamour. It proved to have originated in the forcible abduction by a tiger of a young shepherd when leading his flock back to the town. Thirty of the inhabitants, furnishing themselves with weapons and noisy instruments, immediately started in pursuit of the ravisher, in the hope of forcing him to abandon his prey. It was too late; when they overtook the beast, he had partly devoured the poor shepherd-lad, who had been surprised close to my tent, where I was supping tranquilly, suspecting not the frightful catastrophe that was being consummated within a few paces. This tiger, who had for a long time desolated the surrounding country, was known under the name of the 'Man-Eater of Jaat.' He had been frequently hunted, but always unsuccessfully, because, during the day, he found an inaccessible retreat in the ancient pits of the iron-mines. I made a compact with myself that I would not forget him.

On the following day, the 23rd, I had visited a village named Dowhetpoora, about six miles from Jaat, when a man came to inform me of the covert of another tiger, who had carried off several oxen. We promptly assembled about

thirty beaters, and directed our steps towards the indicated *locale*, whose appearance immediately inspired me with the liveliest hopes. It was a fine ravine, well provided with water, and clothed with willows and aquatic plants, between two lines of cavern-pierced rocks. I posted myself at the end of the defile, on the point of a crag, while my beaters, in a compact body, attacked the other extremity, raising a deafening noise. Soon a magnificent tigress made her appearance, but as she attempted to clear the thicket, I rolled her over with my first shot, killing her with two or three others, to the inexpressible joy of every owner of cattle. In the evening her splendid skin was carried to my tent.

In the following June I resumed the campaign in company with my friend, Lieutenant Little; we went direct to Jaat, and, on the first day, killed a bear.

The following day, when about to start on an exploration of the country, tidings were brought us that the man-eater had just carried off an unfortunate woman engaged in cutting grass. The tiger had regularly hunted her, as if she had been a kid. He had stealthily glided towards her; then with one tremendous bound had reached and seized her, as a cat catches a mouse. Some neighbours who had seen the affair from a distance, had vainly endeavoured by their shouts to frighten him from his victim.

This sad event produced a lively excitement in the whole population. Numbers immediately offered to accompany us in pursuit of the sanguinary destroyer. Well-armed for the most part, they were also furnished with drums, horns, and other instruments of 'sound and fury.' The tiger's trail was easy to follow, for the bushes through which he had dragged his victim were loaded with fragments of her clothes, and covered with hair and gouts of blood. Each of us was in-

spired by the sight with rage and horror. We advanced slowly, because the path was dangerous, from the height of the grasses and the density of the wood. At last, after a two miles' journey, we found the corpse of the poor woman at the mouth of one of the long galleries that penetrated the deserted mines. Fortunately, her death had been instantaneous, her skull having been broken by the tiger's powerful jaws. We proposed to enclose the beast in his cavern, but as many attempts of this kind had been unsuccessfully made, the people who accompanied us wished, without delay, to bear back the mutilated corpse.

Pursuing our campaign with various success, we arrived at a village near the fort of Ruttenghur, where, as we had been informed, a tiger had recently made havoc among the herds. We were guided to the ravine in which he usually lurked, and were picking our way along the rocks, when we suddenly caught sight of him about three paces below us. He was lying down; but, on hearing us, turned his head and confronted us with a terrible look. He was very fat and very old. Little and I simultaneously fired; the tiger made a spring, and disappeared in the thicket. Drops of blood enabled us to track him for some distance; then they completely disappeared in the surface of a rock which preserved no impression.

Proceeding a little further, we encountered a herdsman, who assured us that he had seen nothing; and the tranquillity with which his goats browsed among the herbage was a sufficient confirmation of the truth of his statement. We retraced our steps, and soon one of the natives who accompanied us indicated by a signal the entrance to a cavern whose base we had passed unnoticed. Immediately we ordered the beaters to fall back to such a distance as would ensure their safety; then, depositing close at one side our

spare guns, we knelt on a ledge of rock three or four paces from the cavern's mouth. It was the only point from which we could get the range of the tiger, whose eyes we could perceive shining like two lamps in the deep obscurity of the cave. We agreed to fire together, at the signal of 'One! two! three!' given by one of us. We took steady aim; I repeated the magic words, and the air rang with the loud report of our muskets.

As soon as the smoke had cleared off, we could see our enemy lying stiff and rigid on his back, and on our nearer approach discovered two holes just above his eyes, from which two rills of blood escaped. Thrusting our heads, at last, into the very mouth of the cavern, we perceived that though the entrance was narrow, the spacious interior afforded sufficient room for the tiger to move about easily.

While we exchanged congratulations on our success, one of the animal's paws moved lightly, and I wished to fire again to make sure that he was dead, but Little opposed me, as he was unwilling the skin should be needlessly injured by another hole. It was agreed, in consequence, that I should shoot him in the head, at the point where our knives would make the first incision when we began to strip him of his splendid hide. Our beaters, who had now rejoined us, gathered round, exulting over their fallen foe. Raising my gun I fired carelessly, without even bringing it up to my shoulder, when, lo! the dead suddenly came to life, uttered a frightful roar, rose on his hind legs, and seemed about to spring upon us. There was a general panic. At a single leap, Little, who was remarkably agile, gained the summit of the rock, and, with his gun loaded, stood ready to discharge a final shot at the animal as soon as he appeared in the open. For myself, whose discharged muskets were lying scattered on the ground, I dashed

through the crowd of beaters, upset two or three one upon another, and finished by falling prone upon the ground myself. Some of the natives climbed up the trees like apes ; others fled on all fours without looking behind them ; and all the time the tiger growled so furiously that I thought he was rending to pieces the victims he had seized upon.

However, he either had not been able or had not dared to issue from his lair ; his rage exhausted itself in impotent growls and convulsive movements. I sprang to my feet, seized a gun, scaled a small tree which was conveniently placed, and from thence discharged in succession twelve shots at the monster, who finally rolled over, and lay completely motionless. He was really dead ; but his skin, which we immediately stripped off, was riddled. As yet we were but novices, and this little adventure, which might have had fatal consequences, served for our instruction. It taught us never to spare a few holes in the skin of a tiger when it was necessary to make sure of his death.

We returned to the camp at Neemuch with the skins of four tigers and one bear. We prepared for a longer campaign in the following summer, for it is only in the dry season that the chase is practicable in India.

In 1851, Little and myself, after various excursions more or less successful, returned to Jaat, where I had to fulfil the promise which I had made to myself.

On the evening of our arrival, we assembled a crowd of beaters, and before dawn, were on the march towards the covert of our old acquaintance, the man-eater of Jaat. My plan consisted in finding out the entrance to the pits of the mines at the hour when the animal, returning from his nocturnal excursion into the plain, regained his asylum. This time we could dispose our men at a distance, for the tiger, at so early an hour, would have but a single thought on the

slightest alarm, namely, to seek safety in his lair. The accuracy of my calculation was promptly verified. The drums, horns, and pistols had scarcely begun to blend in a tremendous clamour, when we saw from afar the man-eater approaching in a straight line towards the place where we had posted ourselves, conveniently screened by some bamboos and tall shrubs, my companion in the rear, and myself a little in advance. I allowed him to get within two paces of me, and then brought him to the ground; two more shots completely finished him. Messengers immediately started to convey the good news to the town, and the dead tiger being suspended by its four paws to a pole, which my beaters carried triumphantly on their shoulders, we marched in procession to the sound of drums and cymbals, and at the gates of Jaat were received by the whole population. In the midst of the general acclamations which hailed our victory, the women laid nosegays of fresh flowers at our feet, and recited verses in honour of the tiger-slayers. I confess that this little fête delighted me hugely.

That the slain animal was really the dreaded man-eater, was proved by an inhabitant of a neighbouring village, who, the year preceding, had dealt him a blow on the head with a club, just as he seized his brother by his side, and carried him off to the jungle. He showed the mark of the wound which the club had inflicted. And, to conclude, from that time we heard no more sad stories of accidents in the vicinity of Jaat, and the terror caused by the man-eater entirely subsided.

On the 26th of March, while still in the neighbourhood of the town, I escaped a great danger. I had posted myself on a ridge of rocks. A panther which I had wounded disappeared in the coppice above my position, and a few minutes later, I suddenly caught sight of her on a point

which projected over me; she was about to make a spring. I had only time to jump into the branches of a young tree which flourished a few paces below me, when the panther followed me with a tremendous leap. Fortunately, Little, who was always composed, had observed her, and as she made her flying leap, rolled her over with a ball through the head, so that she fell at the foot of the tree where I had taken refuge. It was an admirable shot, and probably saved my life, or at least preserved me from a cruel laceration.

Some moments afterwards we killed the largest tiger we had yet encountered. He measured eleven feet eleven inches. In the evening we prepared his skin and that of the panther's—an operation which demands great care, and must be performed within twenty-four hours of the animal's death.

["And now," said Fisher, "we will bid farewell to Lieutenant Rice and tiger-shooting."

"The lieutenant was a plucky fellow," remarked Douglas, "and I don't wonder tiger-shooting proves so attractive a pastime; its excitement must be immense."

"A little too much of it," said Lambert, "for *my* taste. I don't care for the excitement of being eaten, limb after limb, by a 'magnificent tigress.'"

"Come, Fisher, one more story," cried Vernon.

"Well, boys," replied Fisher, "I thought just now you had had nearly enough of the tiger; but here, in this manuscript volume of mine, which you so often laugh at, I dare say I have jotted down another anecdote or two, if you really wish for more."

"Oh, go on," said Lambert; "these tigers are splendid fellows for making good stories."

"Yes; and I consider it rather jolly," said a boy called

Haworth, "sitting here in this cosy little cave and listening to such first-rate narratives. That is a capital book of yours, Mr. Fisher."

"When I was putting it together, I little thought how useful it would prove."

"Now then, Fisher," said Seymour, "fire away!"]

A DAY IN THE JUNGLE.

Once more, then, we transport ourselves to the rank jungle of Hindustan on a tiger-hunting expedition.* The leading characters are Mansfield and Burton, with whom you have already been brought acquainted, and a certain Doctor M'Phee, a North Briton and a phlebotomist. The usual native attendants accompany them, bent upon 'deeds of high emprise.' They have killed a fine fat buck, as a preliminary to the day's sports, and wounded a doe. At the time I begin my narrative, they are endeavouring to track the latter to her hiding-place by the drops of blood which have welled from the poor creature's wound.

Charles Burton had been entrusted with the important office of tracker, and, proud of the responsibility, he set off at a rapid pace; whilst the Jemidar, or native officer, considering so easy a trail unworthy of his powers of penetration and marvellous sagacity, followed in the rear of the party, occasionally breaking a small twig, or tying a knot in the long grass, to serve as landmarks on their return.

In this manner they pursued the trail for more than a mile, through tangled masses of bamboo, and tigrish-looking patches of long grass, which rose far above their heads, and where the skulls and half-picked bones of deer showed that the forest-tyrant had occasionally selected them for his lair.

* Major Campbell, 'The Old Forest Ranger.'

Too much excited by the chase to think of any possible danger, and deaf to the prudent remonstrances of canny Dr. M'Phee—as wary and as long-headed as most of his race—Burton pressed forward rapidly, and ventured at last into such eery nooks—such grim-looking depths—that the Doctor appealed to Mansfield to protect his companion against his own temerity.

‘ Oh, Captain Mansfield,’ said the Scot, ‘ I wish you would speak to that daft laddy, and no let him drag us any further through sic awfu’ places—it’s just a wilful tempting of Providence. I tell you, sir, we’ll be made tiger’s meat o’ before we get out. I see the tracks of the horrid brutes, back and forret, as thick as rabbits in a warren. Hech, sir, it seems to me an unchristian act to gar a decent body risk his precious life in sic uncannie places, just for the sake o’ a wounded deer.’

‘ Forward, forward ! ’ shouted Mansfield, quite as deaf as Burton to any hints of probable danger—for both of them were of that order of temperament which peril only stimulates and inspires—‘ forward, forward ; we have nearly run down the doe. See, the drops of blood are larger and quite frothy, a sure sign that she is nearly spent. Forward, Charles, my boy ! we are close upon her.’

But his shout was suddenly answered by a terrible growl not ten yards in front of them, upon which the whole party immediately halted, as if the sound had congealed them into stone.

‘ A tiger, without doubt ! ’ muttered Mansfield, setting his teeth hard, and cocking both barrels of his rifle, while the Doctor would have accomplished a hasty retreat had he not been instantaneously arrested.

‘ Hold ! ’ cried Mansfield, seizing him by the collar ; ‘ would you bring the tiger upon us ? Turn your back to

him, and we are dead men. Our sole chance is to fix our gaze steadily on the spot where he lurks concealed, and be ready to pour in a volley if he attempts to charge. If we maintain a bold front, he will, perhaps, think discretion the better part of valour and slip away. Look at Burton. Though a youth, he sets you an example of coolness and resolution you ought to be ashamed not to imitate. Here, stand by my side, and be ready with "Mons Meg;" she will do us good service among the long grass. Come, Doctor, pluck up your courage; I have been in many a worse peril than this, and yet got clear after all.'

But though Mansfield talked thus lightly to rouse his companion's spirits, it was evident from his glowing eye, his firm-set lips and knitted brow, that he realized all the danger of the position, and felt it was a matter of life and death.

'Kamah,' said he to one of his attendants, still keeping his eye fixed on the spot where he supposed the tiger to be planted, 'keep a sharp look out, and try if you can mark him amongst the grass. Steady, my lads,' whispered he, as another deep growl was heard, and that peculiar lashing of the tail which indicated an intention to attack; 'he is determined to fight, I see, and there is nothing for it but a shower of well-directed bullets. Keep cool; do not move an inch; and reserve your fire until he shows himself.'

Mansfield's words were carefully heeded by every member of his little band. The Doctor's teeth chattered, and a cold sweat broke out on his forehead, but he held his ground. As for Burton, he looked as brave men look when they know the die is cast and retreat impossible; paler than usual, perhaps, but with the light of battle in his eyes, and an expression of high resolve on his manly face.

'Dekho, sahib,' whispered the jemidar—'look, sir,' his

fierce eyes glaring with fire, as he gently touched Mansfield on the shoulder, and eagerly pointed towards the spot from whence a rustling sound proceeded. But Mansfield, though he looked with all the anxiety of a man who watches his deadly foe, could discern nothing. The sound, however, was repeated, and he felt that his suspense would soon be terminated.

‘ Now for it, lads ! death or victory ! ’ and Mansfield, as he drew himself up to his full height, and half raised his rifle to his shoulder, felt ready to charge a regiment of Sikhs. ‘ Be steady, and don’t throw away your fire ; there’s life or death in every shot. Ha ! ’ At this moment he caught a glimpse of the tiger’s hateful eye, as he lowered his head for the final spring. Like a sudden thought, his trusty rifle poured forth its deadly contents. A roar—a bound—and the ferocious beast lay gasping at their feet, with a two-ounce ball buried in his skull.

‘ Wallah ! wallah ! ’ shouted the jemidar, with uplifted hands, startled out of his stoical composure by the suddenness of the catastrophe.

Burton and the Doctor were loud in their expressions of admiration, and the latter approached the stricken monster. ‘ Od’s my life, he’s no dead yet ! ’ he shouted, as the dying tiger gasped painfully for breath.

‘ Well, Doctor, ’ exclaimed Mansfield, ‘ what is *Mons Meg* about ? Why don’t you treat your enemy to a dose of the grit-shot ? ’

The Doctor raised his piece with a trembling hand, and pulled the trigger. The thundering report of ‘ *Mons Meg* ’ echoed far and wide through the jungle. The tiger gathered up his limbs with a sudden spasm, and then stretched them out, quivering in the last agony, whilst the frothy blood bubbled from his mouth and nostrils.

As if appalled by his own temerity, the Doctor flung down his gun, and, securing himself behind Mansfield, peeped cautiously over his shoulder.

‘Hech,’ he exclaimed, ‘I believe the grit shot has settled him at last; he’s just about gone! Od, there’s another awfu’ gape, though. Mercy on us! what gruesome teeth; there’s another! Hurra, that’s the last! Hurra, he’s dead!’ and the Doctor began to dance, and to snap his fingers, and to laugh with an almost hysterical wildness, as if the sudden revulsion from mortal terror to triumphant exultation had disturbed his brain.

‘Come, Doctor,’ said Mansfield, ‘compose yourself. Thank God for your life, and load your weapon. As old Cromwell said, “Trust in Providence, and keep your powder dry.” This is no place for idle antics and empty barrels. Look at Burton; he has stood as stanch and unmoved as my oldest trooper before a charge of Sikh cavalry.’

Whilst the sportsmen followed Mansfield’s advice, Kamah searched among the thick grass where the tiger had made his lair, and, after a while, returned triumphant, dragging after him the carcass of the wounded doe, which had suffered terribly from her antagonist’s cruel paws.

‘Ay,’ said Mansfield, ‘I now understand why the brute so boldly confronted us. A jungle tiger is generally glad to steal away from men; but having just stricken down the wounded deer, she was too hungry to abandon her prey without a struggle. All’s well, however, that ends well; so let us get out of this long thick grass as quickly as possible. For aught we know, there may be more of the family in the vicinity.’

‘Od preserve us, Captain,’ cried the Doctor, ‘you don’t say so! More of the family? “Will auld acquaintance be forgot?” I have had enough of Tiger & Co.; and if ever

you catch me plouthering through the jungle grass again in quest of what you call “sport,” may the blood of the M’Phees degenerate into ditch-water!’

Having gained the open ground, Mansfield called a council of war, and it was unanimously resolved, much to the Doctor’s satisfaction, that the sportsmen should return to breakfast, as the sun was already high, and their coolies be despatched to bring in the game.

‘Heaven be thanked for all its mercies!’ ejaculated the Doctor.”

[“That Doctor,” interrupted Douglas, “was but a ‘fause Scot’ to skulk in so cowardly a manner from the post of danger.”

“Well,” said the Fat Boy, “I think he showed his wisdom. I am sure a nice comfortable breakfast must be much better for a fellow than tiger-hunting.”

“That’s just like your sordid way of looking at things,” cried Beauchamp; “you seem to think, Lambert, that one only lives for the gratification of one’s appetites, instead of noble thoughts, high purposes, and gallant deeds. But go on, Fisher.”]

The sportsmen were on the point of turning towards their tents, when a terrible crash echoed among the bamboos, and a shrill scream rang through the air, like the sound of a cracked trumpet.

‘*Huttee! huttee!*’ shouted the jemidar; ‘the elephant! the elephant!’ as he sprang behind a tree for shelter, and beckoned his companions to adopt a similar precaution.

‘Down for your lives!’ exclaimed Mansfield, as he crouched behind a clump of reeds, and cocked his rifle. ‘This must be the notorious elephant that has committed such havoc of late on the verge of the forest; and if we manage to kill him, the victory will be glorious!’

The Doctor could not appreciate the glory, and sincerely wished himself back in his own quarters. But seeing that escape was impossible, he put on as bold a front as his companions.

‘Now, lads,’ cried Mansfield, ‘be cautious, be steady, and the day is our own. Do not move until he shows himself. When I whistle, he will lower his head to listen from whence the strange sound proceeds; then aim directly at the hollow in his forehead, just above the insertion of the trunk, and, when I whistle a second time, fire together. But mind you only discharge one barrel; reserve the other, and dash off, two to the right, and two to the left, so that, if he does not fall, he may find a clear space to make a final rush. Elephants are dull, short-sighted animals; and, if you keep quiet, we shall probably have time to reload before he discovers us; at all events, we shall have our second barrels ready. Now, remember these directions; and you, Doctor, do, like a good fellow, keep your wits about you; our lives depend upon our steadiness, and the least mistake may prove fatal.

‘Eh, lads,’ cried the Doctor, ‘but this is gruesome work!’

For a moment deep silence ‘reigned around.’ Then came another tremendous crash, and the enormous brute, breaking into the open space, flung aloft his ponderous trunk ‘like a knight entering the lists to do battle against all comers,’ and rang forth his harsh trumpet-note of defiance. A mighty animal was he! a mountain of flesh and bone and muscle, full twelve feet high, with enormous tusks, and a little twinkling red eye that shone with the fire of madness.

Brandishing his trunk about, he snuffed the tainted air, and his scream of rage, as he stamped heavily upon the ground, showed that he was aware of the immediate neigh-

bourhood of his enemies, though uncertain in what direction to deliver his headlong charge.

'Now, lads,' cried Mansfield, 'steady, and reserve your fire till the proper time.'

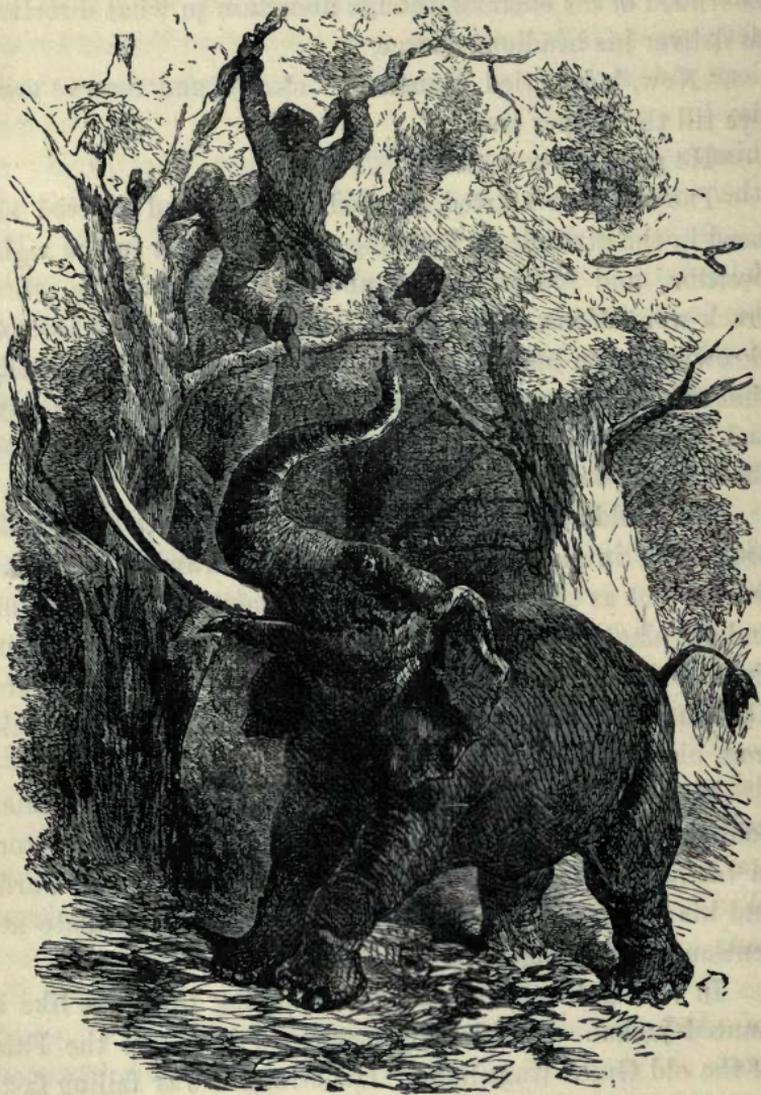
He gave a low whistle.

The elephant started, pricked his ears, and lowered his head in the attitude of listening. He was just in the right position, and Mansfield was about to raise his rifle, when crack went *Mons Meg*, with a loud report, and the Doctor, throwing down his weapon, took to his heels, roaring lustily that the monster was upon him. His nerves had given way, and by an involuntary twitch of his forefinger, he had pulled the trigger when he least expected it.

Mansfield and Burton hastily fired, and both their balls took effect in the head of the elephant, drawing the blood freely; but as they had been fired without any steady aim, and not planted in the correct spot, they only acted as incentives to his rage. Screaming angrily, he rushed forward like an avalanche, as if bent upon sweeping every obstacle from his headlong path.

Mansfield and Burton slipped aside, and fled for shelter behind the stem of a large teak-tree. But the poor Doctor, in his horror and mental confusion, ran straight forward, and his red jacket attracting the elephant's immediate attention, his fate appeared inevitable.

In vain did he wind and dodge among the trees, like a hunted jackal. The destroyer pursued him, like the Fate of the old Greek tragedians. His strength was failing fast, and it was evident that he could not long maintain the terrible chase. The elephant had already projected his trunk to seize him, when he made a sudden turn; the enormous brute dashed forward too far, and for one moment was at fault, apparently uncertain in which direction his intended victim had fled.



A NARROW ESCAPE.

The Doctor took advantage of the pause to begin climbing a tree behind which he had taken shelter. He was already several feet from the ground, and had stretched out his arm to grasp a branch which would have placed him in

safety, when the elephant, suddenly discovering him, bounded forward with redoubled fury, wound his trunk about his legs, hurled him to the earth, rushed upon him where he lay insensible and bleeding, and, kneeling down, plunged at him furiously with his enormous tusks, burying them up to the very root.

It was at this terrible moment that Mansfield, who had followed the chase, springing from tree to tree, in hopes that he might secure a favourable opportunity for planting a death-shot in the elephant's head, came in sight of the catastrophe.

'Heaven have mercy on his soul!' cried he, 'for man cannot save him!'

The elephant rose from his knees, caught up the body of the unfortunate Doctor in his trunk, flung it to a short distance, and stood gazing on it with burning eyes, as if gathering fresh breath before he made a second rush, to finish the work of death by trampling him under his enormous feet.

'No more of this!' exclaimed Mansfield, 'I will put an end to such sanguinary work;' and he raised his rifle as coolly and deliberately as if about to fire at a mark in a shooting-gallery. True to its aim the fatal bullet sped its way, penetrating the eye, and crashing into the brain of the elephant. With one scream of mingled wrath and agony, the monster sank to the ground, and rolled over like a toppling tower.

Burton and the jemidar now came running to the scene of action, and, to render 'assurance doubly sure,' discharged both barrels into the head of the elephant; but he moved not; Mansfield's shot had terminated his career for ever.

'And so,' exclaimed Mansfield, 'poor M'Phee is gone! Pill and potion he will mix no more. Fain could I say with Shakspeare, I could have better spared a better man, for with all his oddities and absurdities, his heart was generous

in the main, and his intellect was clear and penetrating. I feel a pang of remorse at having prevailed upon him to join in a sport so dangerous, and in which he took so little pleasure. But this is not the time to pronounce his epitaph. Kamah, cut a few stout bamboos; we must put together some sort of litter to carry home his body.'

Burton, meanwhile, approached the Doctor's remains to throw a covering over the head and face. 'Thank heaven, he lives!' was his joyous exclamation, as a faint groan reached his ear. 'Lives!' echoed Mansfield; 'this is indeed a miracle;' and tearing open his jacket, the two friends discovered, with gratitude and joy, that though his countenance was pale, and his clothes soaked in blood, the Doctor's body was free from scathe.

It seemed that the elephant, in his rage and distraction, and blinded, perhaps, by the blood which poured from his wounds, had missed his aim, and, instead of transfixing his victim, as he intended, had plunged his tusks in the ground, on each side of the body, thus holding him down, as it were, within the prongs of an enormous pitchfork. Consequently, the Doctor, despite his sorry appearance, had escaped with no other injury than the faintness and bruises resulting from his first toss. A strong dose of brandy, promptly administered by Mansfield, restored him to consciousness, and he soon so far recovered as to admit of his being carried back to camp. Thither the whole party returned triumphant, though with different feelings, in respect to their usual experiences of a Day in the Jungle.

[A desultory conversation now ensued—such mingled chaff, sentiment, and reflection, as school-boys most delight in—terminated by an offer on Beauchamp's part to close their discussion on the Tiger by another yarn; an offer promptly accepted, and redeemed as follows:—]

THE BOY AND THE TIGER.

One fine morning, (said Beauchamp,) a young English officer, in a certain district of North-western India, was engaged 'killing time' by 'shooting game,' attended only by a small Moorish boy—a little fellow about twelve years old, who had charge of his dogs. The boy and his four-footed companions beat the bushes energetically, if not very skilfully; quail and partridge abounded; and though our young officer was no practised shot, his bag promised to be a full one. While thus engaged, a large panther suddenly sprang from the midst of the luxuriant vegetation, and, as if frightened by some unwonted spectacle, took immediately to flight, pursued by the barking dogs, who drove him into a cave on the side of a rocky hill, a few hundred paces distant.

The officer—shall we call him Danvers?—had never before seen any animal of the tiger kind in a state of nature, but his Moorish page was the son of a famous shikaree, and burned with a traditional hatred of the ferocious beast. 'Suppose, master!' he exclaimed, 'I show sahib how to kill that destroyer of the hamlet. I have learned from my father how to manage *burrah shikar* business.'

Young Danvers was by no means displeased with the suggestion. He was as reckless of danger as are most lads just let loose from Eton or Rugby, and he never doubted the skill or experience of his dark-skinned attendant, who, for aught he knew, might have been in at the death of a score or so of *baghs*.

He proceeded, therefore, to reload his gun with some bullets which he happened to have in his pocket.

'Now, then,' cried the shikaree's son, as he directed him to cover himself behind a fragment of rock that lay

directly in front of the cave; 'now, then, I show sahib how to draw tiger out. Sahib then make him eat a great feast of bullets; that proper *shikar* business.' With these words, he actually advanced to the very mouth of the cavern, and while pelting the beast with stones, loaded him with the choicest bits he could recollect of Hindustani slang.

He succeeded, poor fellow! in drawing the tiger out. With a roar of fury he dashed from the cave, sprang upon the thoughtless boy, seized him by the neck, flung him over his shoulder, and swept down the hill like a rush of water. You may imagine the horror and apprehension which seized upon Danvers. He was a lad of mettle, however, and did not lose his presence of mind. To take a steady aim was impossible; but he fired without a moment's hesitation, and undoubtedly hit the beast, for he instantly dropped his victim, who rolled into a clump of thick herbage at the foot of the hill. As soon as the panther was out of sight, Danvers hastened to succour his unfortunate companion, whom he found bathed in blood, and sinking rapidly, though still quite sensible.

Not a moan, not a sigh, did the gallant boy utter, but in a faint tone of voice he asked for some water. Danvers stooped down to collect some in his hat, when a hoarse growl startled him, and looking around, he saw that the panther had returned, and was hurriedly pacing around the bushes that separated him from his prey. As Danvers was young, we need not wonder that he was tempted at first to make his escape; as he was an English boy, we need not be astonished that he immediately repented of the impulse, and clung to his ill-fated attendant. Kneeling by Kheder's side—such was the Moor's name—he tenderly raised his head, wiped his clammy lips and brow, and poured a few drops of refreshing water down his throat. In a minute or two he revived.

‘Bhot atch, sahib—very good, sir!’ he exclaimed; ‘sweet as the rain to the palm-tree is that water to my burning lips. But woe’s me, that you did not kill the tiger! I should have liked to have sent his skin to my father. You will tell him—will—will you not?—that I died as became the son of a famous shikaree. Tell him I was not afraid of the bagh; that I never cried out when I felt his teeth crushing my bones. No; I drove my knife into him twice; see, this is tiger’s blood!’ and a transitory light flashed in his eye as he held up the evidence of his prowess. ‘My father will rejoice when he hears that his son did not disgrace him, but my mother will weep that she has lost me; yes, her heart will turn to water when she hears that I am dead!’

And now, for the first time, the heroic lad gave way, and the hot tears stole down his pallid cheeks. He remained motionless for a few minutes. What were his thoughts? what his hopes, or fears? Suddenly he started up; his eyes glared wildly; the turpid blood swelled his veins into rigid cords; he gasped painfully for breath; a fit of delirium had seized him, and he cried,—

‘Oh, the tiger has seized me again! Save me, *burrah* sahib, save me! His teeth have clutched my throat—I cannot breathe!—Mother!’ He gasped like a person drowning; his jaws became fixed as in a vice; then he stretched out his limbs with a spasmodic gesture, and fell back into the arms of Danvers—dead!

Some moments elapsed before the young officer could recover himself after a scene so painful, and so calculated to produce a painful impression on a youthful heart. But the instinct of self-preservation roused him from his trance. The panther was still prowling around the leafy clump where he and the unfortunate Kheder had found a temporary refuge. Happily, the screen of verdure was so thick

that his fierce eyes could not distinguish the persons of its occupants ; and the panther, like his congener, the tiger, is a wary and suspicious animal. Always apprehensive of a trap or ambush, he will rarely venture to spring upon his prey if any bush or impediment should chance to lie between them.

Still, for upwards of an hour he kept guard upon the covert, and Danvers began to feel the combined effects of alarm, hunger, fatigue, and melancholy. His position, indeed, was peculiarly painful. There he sat, with his musket loaded, prepared to try one more shot if the panther broke in upon his solitude ; the dead body of the unhappy Kheder lying by his side, covered with the leaves which he had hurriedly heaped upon it ; a powerful and ferocious beast pacing to and fro, and effectually preventing him from attempting an escape ; and no chance of succour from his friends, as they were ignorant of the direction he had taken, and the errand on which he had been bound. Seldom has a stronger throb of happiness shot through human heart than Danvers felt when at last the panther grew weary of his watch, and slunk away in despondent mood. He waited until the beast was fairly out of sight, and then started off at full speed for his father's cantonment. His tale was soon told, and a party of natives despatched to bring in the body of the ill-fated Kheder.

[When Beauchamp had concluded, his companions expressed their admiration of the simple but pathetic tale, and Seymour opined that Doctor M'Phee, had he heard it, would have certainly exclaimed, "Hech, sirs, but it's an awfu' gruesome story !"

"I must again resort to my 'ponderous tome,'" said Fisher, "if you would wish to hear further particulars of adventures with panthers."

"That volume," remarked Seymour, "is something like

the bags of gold we read of in Oriental stories, and which the genii rendered inexhaustible."

"Yes," exclaimed Douglas, "the more you took the more there was left. I wish such purses could be found nowadays!"

"Go on, Fisher," interrupted Vernon; "your volume will be finished, I expect, before we grow weary of listening to its stunning contents."

"You might have said 'thrilling,'" observed Seymour; "not but what there is something very expressive in the epithet your fine taste selected."

"Don't chaff, old fellow. When I like a thing, I always call it 'jolly' or 'stunning.' Why, such namby-pamby words as 'thrilling,' 'exciting,' 'affecting,' would not do justice to one's feelings!"

"Well, resumed Fisher, "I will now read you Benedict Révoil's narrative of his doings in the American wilds. He is a great hunter, I must tell you,—a French Nimrod,—and is scarcely less expert with his pen than with his rifle. I shall allow him to tell his story, therefore, in his own words."*]

IN THE NORTH AMERICAN FOREST.

One winter day, he says, I was wandering in the depths of the forests that stretch along the course of the Erie Railway; I was accompanied by two friends, who were excellent hunters. We were all three mounted on native American horses, armed with our guns, and followed by a pack of six dogs. That part of the wood which we were traversing was a jungle of cypress, and cedar, and brushwood; broken up here and there by hollows full of water, which are called *bayous* in Louisiana, and *ponds* in the Northern States. The deepest shadow prevailed in the forest, which appeared to be frequented by numerous animals of every kind. The

* Benedict Révoil, 'Les Chasses,' p. 116, *et seq.*

atmosphere was heavy, the horizon black and misty; but, despite the obscurity, we resolved not to return to our camp until we had killed a deer. Suddenly one of our dogs gave voice, and after a long circuit he brought us in front of a dense cane-brake, rendered perfectly impenetrable by the multitude of lianas interwoven among the reeds. The dogs now halted. For a moment they seemed in doubt, then they followed their quarry around the inextricable bush, with ears erect, eyes darting fire and flame, open nostrils, and rigid muscles. They barked madly and terrifically, and with so continuous a rapidity that they did not stop apparently to draw breath. Echo repeated the clamour, which rolled over the liquid surface of a neighbouring lake, until it was lost in the distance like the merry 'call' of a huntsman's spirit-stirring bugle.

We had followed closely after our dogs, and while putting aside the branches that struck us in the face, carefully held up our horses, lest a false step should bring them and us to the ground.

On the other side of the cane-brake, the dogs had contrived to find a way into its labyrinthine recesses, and we could hear them barking hoarsely in its midst. I begged my companions to let me act at my own discretion, and, throwing off my overcoat, I bound a handkerchief round my head as a protection for my eyes, face, and glasses. Then, taking my gun in hand, after fitting on new caps, I penetrated with great difficulty into the narrow gap made by the dogs. I was careful not to make the slightest noise, and trod as softly as possible through the difficult passage, where no human being had ever trod before. Soon, through this verdurous screen which obscured my sight, I came within two paces of the dogs. One was dashing himself against the trunk of a tree, and gnawing at its bark, while the others raged around him, like so many demons.

I raised my eyes to discover, if I could, the object which had so provoked my dogs. In a few moments I grew accustomed to the shadow, and descried, at about thirty paces above my head, a male panther of the largest species, furiously lashing his sides with his tail, and rolling in their orbits his dark eyes, which glowed like balls of flaming phosphorus.

To take aim, and simultaneously discharge both barrels of my rifle, was the affair of a second; but though both shots took effect, the animal was not killed outright. With his two fore-paws he clung to the branch of a tree, as if he defied death. A few minutes afterwards, his muscles stiffened, his claws abandoned their hold, and he fell at my feet in the midst of the dogs, whom I with difficulty prevented from tearing him in pieces.

My friends now came up, and with their help I rescued my prize, and suspended it to a bough, out of reach.

ANOTHER ADVENTURE.

The panther will sometimes attack man, but this is generally the case when hunger has driven him from the woods, and he has his cubs to nourish. In illustration of this fact, I may tell you of my second encounter with the animal, which took place at Shenandoah, in the State of Virginia.

I had been most hospitably entertained by an American planter, named Pendleton. One evening, after supper, four of us were seated around a table glittering with glasses, and crowned by a bowl of whisky-punch, when suddenly our quiet chat was interrupted by a succession of shrieks from an apartment near the dining-room. Mrs. Pendleton had been seated there with her sick child and nurse, who had just opened the window, when a panther of enormous size

sprang upon the sill, from a balcony that ran all round the house, and prepared to throw herself on the infant's cradle.

The cries of the mother and the nurse brought us immediately upon the scene, but the animal had taken fright, and, before we could learn the cause of the sudden uproar, was far beyond pursuit. The house-dogs were set upon the creature's track, but speedily returned, with their tail between their legs, and their head drooping in shame, as if they had retreated before a too formidable danger.

The next morning, before daybreak, the three Messrs. Pendleton and myself, accompanied by two negroes, and a pack of eight bloodhounds of noble breed, followed the track of the panther through a perfect wilderness of reeds and thorns, until we reached a kind of clearing, in the middle of which lay the half-devoured carcass of a kid. The game had been killed in the night, for it was quite fresh and free from offensive smell.

The snow had been falling for a couple of days, and lay on the ground like a vast shroud, and the imprint of the animal's paws was as strongly marked upon it as is that of a seal on the wax of a parchment-deed. The traces conducted us to the summit of the Paddy Mountains, where a rock cloven in twain formed a kind of natural grotto, in whose recesses prevailed the deepest darkness.

One of our dogs, having thrust his head into the rocky cleft, gave a loud howl, which convinced us that the panther was only a few paces off.

I know not if nature has endowed the dog with more courage in the daytime than at night; but it is certain that the bloodhounds which, on the previous evening, had returned with drooping head, and tail between their legs, from their pursuit of the panther, did not hesitate a moment to

precipitate themselves into the narrow mouth of the grotto, to attack their enemy. Two of them contrived to effect an entrance before their masters could restrain them.

Immediately we heard a terrible howling, followed by the loud yelping cries of the two bloodhounds. What to do we could not decide; but unless we could get out the dogs, it was clear they would be killed. Mr. Rudolph, the eldest of the three Pendletons, ordered his two negroes to force their way into the cavern, and draw forth the hounds by their paws or tail. Jupiter and Adonis (for such were the mythological names of the two blacks) willingly obeyed their master, and, thanks to their courageous efforts, the brave animals were rescued from their peril. One of them had received no injury, but the other had been severely wounded by the panther.

At this moment, the negro Jupiter, who had re-entered the mouth of the cavern, cried out in his simple language,—

‘Oh, Massa Pendleton, the eyes of the panther shine—like—like—oh yes—like two bran-new dollars! Yah, yah, yah!’

Acting on some fresh instructions from their master, the slaves now cleared away all the brushwood and leaves which blocked up the entrance of the grotto, and Mr. Rudolph forced himself into it.

A solemn silence prevailed all around; the very dogs seemed to understand that they must not raise their voices. Two minutes after Mr. Pendleton had undertaken his dangerous enterprise, he returned to us with the intelligence that instead of *one* beast he had discovered *two*! The first was crouching in the depth of the recess; the second was planted on a rocky ledge, as if keeping watch and ward over the entrance.

It was decided by my three hosts that Mr. Rudolph, carbine in hand, should head the attack, supported by his

brother Harry, whose office it would be to hand him another rifle, ready loaded, if the first discharge failed to kill the male panther. Mr. Charles Pendleton and myself were to remain on the *qui-vive*, with our guns in hand ; while the two negroes, who had coupled the bloodhounds, took charge of the leash.

My heart throbbed violently with anxious curiosity as to the details of the drama then being enacted in the bowels of the earth. Suddenly we heard a loud report ; the earth seemed to tremble beneath our feet, as if a mine had been sprung.

Quickly afterwards the two Pendletons reappeared, one carrying his brother's rifle, and the latter dragging by the tail an enormous panther, which measured from tail to muzzle fully five feet in length.

While we were examining this superb animal, the dogs had broken their leash, and two of them, rushing anew into the grotto, began a desperate combat with the other panther, which still remained on its rocky ledge. Fortunately for them, she trembled in a panic of fear, and made no attempt to defend herself, so that they strangled her easily. When this subterranean battle was over, the negro Adonis, who had penetrated in his turn into the cavern, reappeared in the light of day, bringing forth the dead panther, and flinging her by the side of her mate.

A SCENE IN FLORIDA.

I shall terminate these stories about panthers with an episode from an exploration which I had undertaken in the forests of Florida.

One frosty, bitter cold morning, I was hunting, in company with an American friend, on the bank of the St. John river, about fourteen miles from St. Augustine. Our three

dogs had followed up a panther, which, to escape them, had taken to the river, and reached a little island out of musket-range. In accomplishing this feat he had turned on the nearest of his pursuers, seized the dog by the head, and dragging him down under the water, suffocated him. The two other dogs, warned by their comrade's fate, quickly returned to our side.

Quitting his island-retreat, the panther swam across to the other bank, and we wistfully followed him with our eyes, lamenting the impossibility of our crossing the river. Emerging from the water, he sprang upon an adjacent rock, and from thence climbing up a lofty tree, we saw him settle himself in a crouching position on a branch exposed to the sun, that he might dry his superb fur.

Soon, to our astonished eyes, we saw a Carib gliding along the ground. He reached a tree adjacent to that on which the panther had planted himself, and whose branches mingled with those of the other. With admirable agility he scaled its trunk, and was speedily within a few yards of the animal.

Already the panther seemed to be calculating the force and range of his spring; but he hesitated, from a fear the boughs would prove too weak to support both his own weight and that of his daring antagonist. As for the Indian, armed with a pole and a bowie-knife, he calmly awaited the attack of the murderous creature, which raised his paws with evident caution, dug his sharp claws into the tree's smooth bark, and advanced inch by inch, while his emerald eyes glittered with blood-thirsty ardour.

This stirring spectacle held us rooted to the ground, yet a secret instinct warned us that, great as was the peril, the Man would triumph over the Animal. We were unable, however, to refrain from admiring the elegance, vigour, and

suppleness of the panther. The warm breath from his gaping jaws seemed to play on the Redskin's countenance, as, raising his pole, he dealt him a violent blow on the head, to



A STIRRING SPECTACLE.

which he replied with a hoarse, deep roar. And, taking warning, so turned his body as to place his muzzle under a bough which covered and protected it.

Watching his opportunity, however, the Carib suddenly thrust his pole into the creature's open mouth, whereupon the panther drew together his body, and stretched forward a paw, to reach a branch on a level with his enemy. The situation became critical: already his enormous claws touched the Redskin's knee; his heaving breast indicated the vigorous effort he was about to attempt; and my friend and myself would have terminated the horrible strife, had we not feared we might kill the Indian as well as the animal, our guns being loaded with deer-shot.

At this supreme moment, the Carib, making a violent movement, plunged the blade of his knife into the eye of the panther, which, unable either to retreat or advance, held as he was by the weapon planted in the orbit of his eye, gave vent to his impotent rage in long and repeated cries. His fury at length prevailed over his natural instinct of caution: in his indignation, he prepared to leap; but a second blow from the pole overthrew his equilibrium, and he fell upon the bank within range of our rifles. A terrible explosion, caused by the simultaneous discharge of our four barrels,—and the panther ceased to exist.

At the unexpected sound the Carib turned his eyes in our direction, uttering a vigorous *hoop*, which, in his language, is at once an expression of gratitude and a shout of victory. He descended the tree with the nimbleness of a cat, and by a wild dance manifested his joy at being rescued in so miraculous and unhoped-for a manner. With his knife he soon removed the skin, which measured five feet three inches in length, and rolling up the superb trophy he placed it upon his shoulders. We then contrived to make him understand that we should be glad of his company. Accordingly, he swam across the river, and followed us without any hesitation to the town of St. Augustine, where my hunting com-

panion, a friend of the Governor of the State, obtained him a reward for his courage and audacity.

[“A decidedly interesting story,” remarked Seymour, when his friend had concluded; “and sufficiently exciting, I should think, to satisfy even Lambert’s appetite.”

“Impossible!—impossible!” shouted Douglas, laughing.

“I mean his appetite for the terrible and sensational; which is more easily appeased, perhaps, than his craving for raspberry-tarts and apple-turnovers! But you see, boys, it is now half-past five, which gives us just half an hour to get back to the Hall. We must close our little entertainment for the present; but if you are all agreeable, we will resume next Saturday. And I propose that we take the Elephant for our next subject. What say you?”

“Agreed!—agreed!”

“An elephant would have to pack up his *trunk*,” said Douglas, whispering, “before he could get into our Cave of Adventure!”

“No old jokes, Master Sholto, if you please. And now look here, boys: you have all a week before you in which to read up about the elephant; so that I hope each one will be able to tell us something or other about it.”

It is needless to say that on the following Saturday they all assembled punctually, Fisher bringing with him his celebrated volume. He was chosen to open the discussion, and began by reading some notes in reference to the natural history of the elephant.]

III.

The Elephant: His History and Habits.*

ANECDOTES OF HIS STRENGTH AND SAGACITY—HOW HE IS ENTRAPPED
—A SINGHALESE CORRAL—ELEPHANT HUNTING IN AFRICA—
STORIES OF ADVENTURE.



THE ELEPHANT (from the Greek *ελεφας*) is a genus of quadrupeds, (said Fisher,) belonging to the order *Pachydermata*—so called from their thickness of hide—and the section *Proboscidea*—so named from their snouts or trunks. Elephants are the largest terrestrial animals now in existence. They are huge and unwieldy, and their external appearance entirely belies that character for sagacity and docility which they have so long and not unjustly borne. The average height at the shoulder is about eight, but sometimes exceeds ten, feet; and the bulk of the clumsy body weighs about five tons. Remember that a strong man weighs not more than thirteen stone, or 182 lbs., and you may form some idea of the burden—equal to seventy full-grown men—which the elephant has to support on his pillar-like legs. These limbs, however, are well fitted for their Atlantean task. Their construction is peculiarly

* Cuvier, 'Le Règne Animal,' edit. 1834-7, div. Mammalia; Professor T. Rymer Jones, 'Structure of the Animal Kingdom,' *in loco*

solid, each bone resting vertically on that beneath it. Hence, they present such an appearance of inflexibility, that the ancients, and even mediæval writers, believed them to be destitute of joints. 'This absurdity,' says Sir Thomas Browne, 'is seconded by another, that, being unable to lie down, it sleepeth against a tree; which the hunters observing, saw almost asunder, whereon the beast relying, by the fall of the tree falls almost down itself, and is able to rise no more.'* So says Pliny, with that easy good faith which distinguishes his dissertations on natural history:† 'In the island of Scandinavia lives a beast called Machlis, which has neither joint in the hough, nor pastern in his hind-legs; and therefore never lies down, but sleeps leaning against a tree. Wherefore the hunters that lie in wait for these beasts fell the trees while they are asleep, and so capture them.'

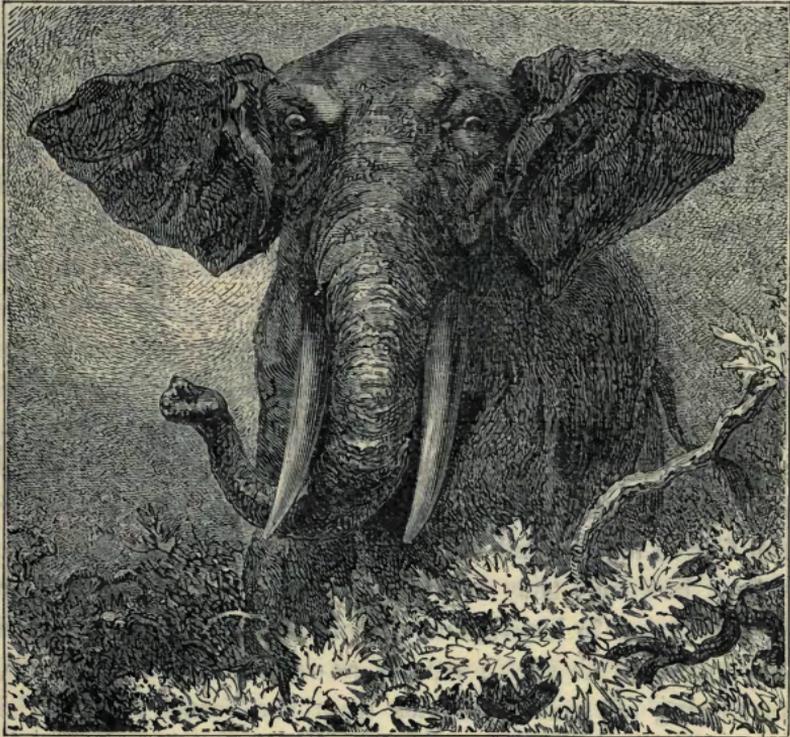
["I have heard," interrupted Douglas, "that it is difficult to catch a weasel asleep; it is easier work, I suppose, to catch an elephant!"]

The elephant does, indeed, repose when standing, or fall asleep, supported against a rock or tree; but his limbs are flexible enough to permit of his maintaining a pace with a horse of ordinary speed, of ascending or descending abrupt declivities, and occasionally indulging in frolicsome gambols. He seldom lies down; and if the keeper of a tame animal finds him prostrate, he immediately concludes that he is afflicted with some disease, and physics him accordingly. It is related of an elephant which belonged to Louis XIV., that for five years he preserved an upright position, supporting himself during his slumbers by thrusting his tusks into two holes which he had hollowed in the stone wall of his den.

* Sir Thomas Browne, 'Vulgar Errors.'

† Pliny, 'Natural History.'

We often hear the sure-footedness of the mule commended. You will be surprised to learn that in this respect he is surpassed by the elephant, which, even with a heavily-loaded *howdah* on his back, will accomplish an abrupt



THE ELEPHANT.

declivity with ease and rapidity. First, he kneels, with his chest and belly on the ground; each fore-foot is then employed in making a hole for itself, into which, gradually and with caution, the hind-legs are in their turn inserted. This process he repeats, and with so much dexterity, that he descends a considerable hill as quickly as a horse.

In lying down, he does not, like other quadrupeds, bring his hind-legs under him, but stretches them in his rear, as a

man does when kneeling; so that, drawing his hind-feet gradually under him, he is enabled to rise almost without a perceptible effort. His pace, when it exceeds a walk, may be compared to a clumsy shuffle, increasing or decreasing in speed without other alteration. He cannot leap or spring like the deer or horse, not only on account of his weight, but because the bones of his shoulders and hocks are not placed at an angle.

Let us now examine this Behemoth of the earth a little more closely. First, mark you his head; its size is not disproportionately large; the neck is short and thick; there are no canine teeth in either jaw, and in the lower one no incisors. The upper jaw has two incisors, more generally known as *tusks*, which, properly speaking, are neither tusks nor incisors; for they do not perform the functions of the latter, and have not the situation of the former. French naturalists, therefore, in allusion to their uses, call them *defenses*. Sometimes they attain an enormous size, nine or ten feet in length, and weighing from 150 to 300 lbs. each. Often, however, they are mere rudimentary tusks, ten or twelve inches in length, and one or two in diameter. These are only used for such purposes as rending climbing plants, or tearing off small branches from the forest trees. The larger *defenses* will loosen the roots of trees, carry timber, pile up huge stones, or pierce the adamantine hide of an aggressor. It is said that a powerful elephant can lift and carry on his tusks a log weighing ten or eleven cwts.

They grow—these *defenses*—upon a species of pulpy matter, like that which forms the teeth of the bottle-nosed whale. They consist chiefly of that variety of dentine called ivory, and their growth continues even when the animal has arrived at a great age.

The succession of teeth in the elephant differs materially

from that which prevails in most carnivorous and herbivorous animals. The young elephant is at first provided with deciduous incisors, which are shed between the first and second year, and are succeeded by the permanent tusks. The molar teeth are developed in succession; the first cut the gum in about two weeks after birth, and are shed about the end of its second year. The sixth, which are supposed to be the last, appear about the fiftieth year of the elephants' life, each new tooth advancing from behind as the former is used. In animals which exhibit this mode of dentition, the grinding surfaces of their molar teeth are placed obliquely, so that if they were to issue altogether from the gum, the anterior portion would be much more prominent than the posterior, notwithstanding that the opposed teeth act upon each other in a horizontal plane.* The anterior portion, therefore, is worn away much sooner than the posterior, and each tooth is abraded to the very stump. They are composed of vertical osseous or bony plates, separately enveloped with enamel, and cemented together by a third substance, called *crusta petrosa*, *cortical*, or *cement*, rather resembling bone than enamel. Each succeeding tooth is a longer time growing, and exhibits more laminæ, than its predecessor.

Elephants, says John Hunter, do not shed their teeth as other animals do that have more than one; for those that possess more than one tooth can afford to be for some time without their teeth. The young tooth consequently springs up in nearly the same place as its predecessor, or exactly underneath it; so that the shedding tooth sometimes falls before there is another to supply the deficiency. But this would never have done for the elephant; if the succeeding tooth had formed in the same situation with respect to the first, the animal must have lived for some time en-

* Professor T. Rymer Jones, 'Structure of the Animal Kingdom.'

tirely deprived of a tooth on one side; or if one had flourished on the same side in the opposite jaw, it must have been utterly useless; and if this process took place in both sides of the same jaw, and in either jaw, the animal would have been wholly deprived of any use in the two remaining.

The largest tusk on record was sold at Amsterdam, and weighed 350 lbs. Hartenfels measured one which exceeded fourteen feet in length. The females seldom have any tusks, and when these appear they are but small, and their direction is rather downwards than upwards.

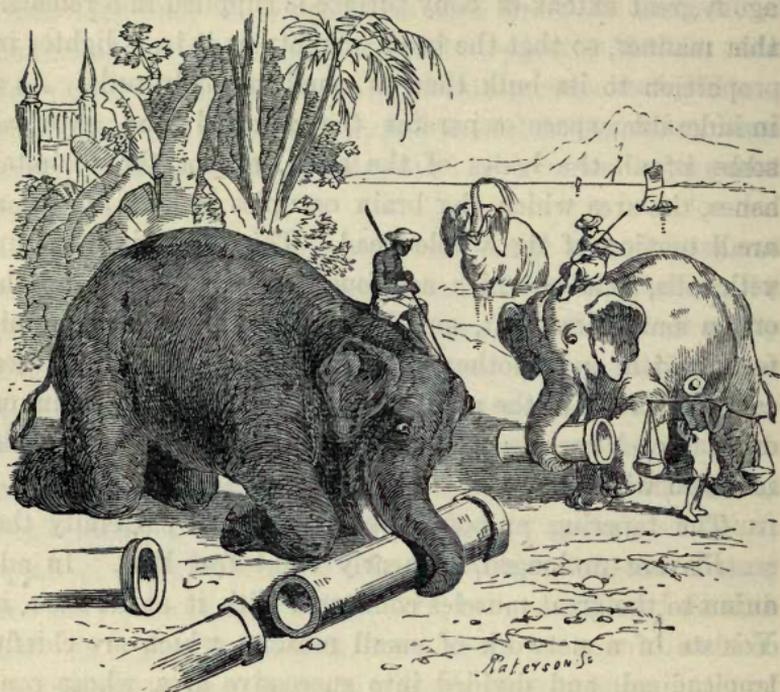
The trunk, however, is the most remarkable, and the distinctive appendage of the elephant. As we speak of the lion's mane, the fox's brush, the deer's antlers, so do we speak of the elephant's trunk. It is essential to his liberty and life; once rendered incapable, he is unable to feed himself. It is equally powerful for defence or aggression; like the genius of steam, it can tear down a tree or pick up a pin; its strength is enormous, its delicacy wonderful, and exquisite is its sense of touch. Endowed with the finest sensibility, it is capable of the strongest or the most delicate work; can raise a heavy cannon, or gather a blade of grass; kill a man, or brush a fly. It conveys the food to the elephant's mouth, and pumps up the enormous draughts of water which, by its recurvature, are turned into and driven down the capacious throat, or poured over the body. Its length supplies the place of a long neck, which would have been incompatible with the support of the huge skull and weighty tusks. A glance at an elephant's head will show how thick and strong the trunk is at its insertion, and that the massy arched bones of the face, and thick muscular neck, are skilfully adapted for working and supporting this potential and wonderful instrument.

A great extent of bony surface is supplied in a remarkable manner, so that the head, weighty as it is, is lighter in proportion to its bulk than is usual in quadrupeds. As a considerable space separates the internal and external tables of all the bones of the skull, except the occipital bones, the area which the brain occupies is, after all, but a small portion of the whole head. This space is filled up with cells, some of which are four or five inches in length, others small, irregular, and honeycomb-like, all communicating with one another, and through the frontal sinuses with the cavity of the nose, and also with the tympanum or drum of each ear; consequently, as in some birds, these cells are filled with air.

The tapering proboscis, to whose very extremity the nostrils are prolonged, is nearly eight feet long. In addition to the great muscles connected with it at its base, it consists of a network of small muscles, which are chiefly longitudinal, and divided into successive arcs, whose convexity is outward, or transverse, and radiating from the internal to the external membrane. According to Cuvier, the number of muscles which have a distinct action is not far short of 40,000.

The elephant's trunk, then, is, in the first place, an organ of smell. Secondly, it enables the animal to quench his thirst in the shallowest waters. And, thirdly, as I have already said, it possesses a wonderful sensibility of touch.

This is due to a curious appendage at the extremity, which has been likened to a finger and thumb. On the upper side is an elongated process, soft, flexible, but strong; and, on the under, a kind of tubercle, or thumb, against which it may be pressed. Thus, if the articles he collects be not worth the trouble of separate conveyance to his mouth, he holds them in his thumb until the finger has accumulated a sufficient quantity.



ELEPHANTS AT WORK.

The elephant makes use of his trunk for a variety of purposes in contributing to his comfort or enjoyment. He picks a leafy branch, and fans himself with it, or drives away the troublesome flies. With his trunk he throws dust over his back—a practice which seems to afford him peculiar pleasure. It expresses his rage or affection; in the former case, emitting through it a loud hoarse sound, which Aristotle compared to that of a trumpet, whence the French *trompe*, corrupted into our English *trunk*. With the trunk, also, when violently angry or in great pain, he will beat the ground. An elephant was once burnt to death in a Dublin menagerie. On examining his carcass, no trunk could be found, and it was supposed to have perished in the fire; but a closer investigation showed that, in the poor brute's

agony, he had driven it two feet deep into the hard ground that made the floor of his den.

Elephants are gregarious, that is, they consort together in large herds, and form a kind of community, governed by some mysterious laws of instinct. The skin is of a deep ash-coloured brown; the so-called white elephants of Siam are actually of a light mahogany hue, or like cream with a yellowish, buttery tint. Their average stature is about nine or ten feet; but some giants of the herd arrive at fourteen feet. Their food is wholly vegetable; and as they are especially fond of the succulent branches and young twigs of various trees and fruits, they are as unwelcome visitors in a plantation as a troop of schoolboys in a garden of ripe fruit.

Having said so much about the structure of this famous animal, I must now dwell at some detail upon his habits. You will remember that he is an inhabitant of the ripe, rich, tropical world, where Nature runs riot in an exuberant fertility; the elephant, however, is averse to extreme heat, and loves the shelter of leafy groves, the cool tranquillity of shady woods; he delights in the grassy glades which open upon running water, and seems to find an exquisite pleasure in bathing and swimming; and, where his colossal bulk is seen approaching, all meaner animals retire in a panic of reverent fear. They remain at a respectful distance until he has quenched his thirst. An African traveller, who was reposing, on one occasion, by the reedy marge of a small pool, was warned of the approach of the elephants by the uneasy symptoms of such animals as happened to be drinking at the time. The giraffe, he says,* began to sway his long neck to and fro; the zebra uttered subdued, plaintive cries; the gnu glided away with a noiseless step; and even

* C. J. Andersson, 'Lake Ngami.'

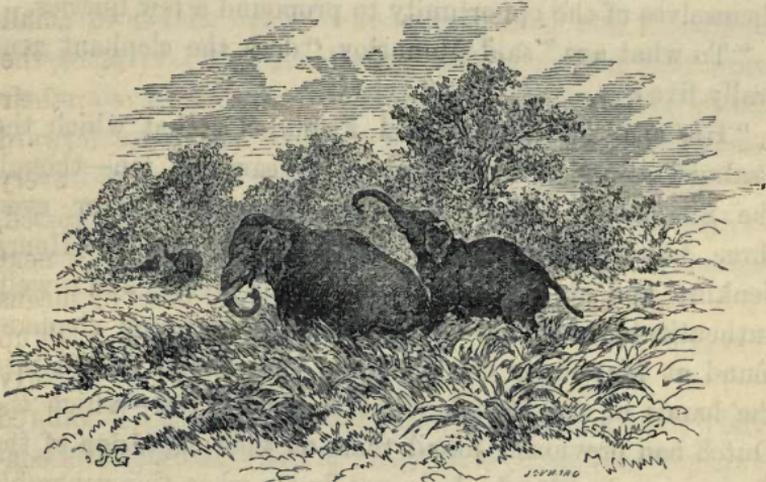
the ponderous and quarrelsome rhinoceros paused in his heavy walk to listen; then, turning round, listened again; and, when satisfied that his suspicions were correct, he cautiously withdrew, venting his terror or his rage by one of his vicious and peculiar snorts.

The wild elephants of Ceylon herd together in small groups or families. In wandering from place to place, the males which are provided with the largest tusks take up their position in the van, like covering-sergeants, move forward with stately tread, and are the first to confront every danger. When a full stream or broad river must be crossed, they lead the way, and select a suitable landing-place; next follow the young elephants, clinging to each other by means of their trunks; while the remainder of the adults bring up the rear. They think nothing of a day's march of forty miles. Having arrived at a well-wooded and well-watered spot, they call a halt, and begin to feed, generally at a considerable distance from the fountains which are to supply them with water. About sunset, they start towards the springs, reaching them between the hours of nine and midnight; when, having slaked their thirst, and cooled their bodies by pouring over them copious draughts of water, they betake themselves once more to their bowery forest-solitudes.*

When they eat grass, it is said that nothing can be more graceful than the ease with which, before conveying it to their mouths, they clear the earth from its roots by striking it on their fore-legs. They are partial to rice, and commit extensive depredations in the grain-fields. Coconuts are a favourite article of diet: they first roll them under foot, to strip off the outer bark; then they remove the fibrous husk, and finally crush them between their

* R. Gordon Cumming, 'Five Years of a Hunter's Life in South Africa.'

grinders, swallowing the fresh milk with evident gusto. The Palmyra palm affords an agreeable variation in their bill of fare; and they seem to know instinctively the season of their ripening. They are altogether fond of sweet food.



ELEPHANTS FEEDING.

In a tame state they are generally fed upon hay and carrots, and each animal consumes daily about two hundred pounds' weight.

Two hundred pounds' weight! Do you not wonder where the herds of wild elephants which frequent the deserts of Africa and the forests of Asia obtain their nutriment? But you must remember the rapid growth of vegetable life in tropical regions, which repairs the destruction caused by the elephant and his congeners. In Africa his food is coarse and comparatively scanty; but in Asia, and especially in Ceylon, where an abundance always prevails, he eats daintily, like a London alderman. He never appears, says Sir Emerson Tennent, to be impatient or voracious, but rather to play with the leaves and

branches on which he leisurely feeds. In riding by places where a herd has recently halted, the traveller will sometimes see the bark peeled curiously off the twigs, as though it had been done for amusement.

[Here Fisher made a short pause, and his auditors availed themselves of the opportunity to propound a few queries.

"To what age," said Mountjoy, "does the elephant generally live?"

"His span of life," replied Fisher, "is that which the Psalmist allots to man—threescore years and ten—though the Singhalese believe that he numbers two or even three hundred years. There is occasionally a 'Henry Jenkins' and an 'Old Parr' among the breed; and a well-authenticated instance is on record of a decoy elephant found at Matmes in Ceylon, when that island passed into the hands of the British—that is, about 1799—which the Dutch had previously found there on their expulsion of the Portuguese, in 1656.* I do not know when this venerable centenarian died, but at any rate he was upwards of one hundred and sixty years old."

"I have heard," remarked Seymour, "that dead elephants are rarely met with."

"No," exclaimed Douglas; "like Sam Weller's postboys, and donkeys, and old wife's pins, they are spirited off to some undiscovered bourne!"

"I think," said Walter Beauchamp, "that the skeletons of dead elephants are frequently discovered in African wilds, but in Ceylon they are certainly wanting, and I do not know how their disappearance can be accounted for."

"Tennent notes," observed Fisher, "a suggestion that the elephant's bones may be so porous and spongy as to disappear in consequence of their speedy decomposition,

* Sir J. E. Tennent, 'Ceylon.'

but, as he says, this cannot be the case with the teeth or tusks. The Singhalese have a curious idea that when the huge beast feels the approach of death, he retires to some sequestered valley, and in silence and in solitude awaits his end. To an Englishman hunting in the forests of Anarajapoor, the native who accompanied him remarked, on their arrival at a peculiarly lonely spot, that they were now in the immediate neighbourhood of the place where the elephants retired to die, but that it was so mysteriously secluded no one had ever succeeded in penetrating to it."

"I have seen the elephants at the London Zoological Gardens," said the fat boy, "and fancied that they looked exceedingly melancholy."

"When were elephants first seen in England?" inquired Douglas.

"That is a question I cannot answer," said Fisher, "but one of the earliest visitors must have been the elephant presented by the king of Spain to James I. (A.D. 1620), who, by the way, was curiously fond of wild animals. It was accompanied by five camels. 'Going through London after midnight,' says a state-paper letter, 'they could not pass unseen;' and the wondering clamour raised by some street-loiterers at sight of their 'ponderous bulk and ungainly step,' roused the sleepers from their beds in every district through which the unwonted procession lumbered. The English court found it almost as difficult to provide for the king of Spain's present as any Siamese nobleman for the celebrated white elephants. Missives were constantly interchanged between King, Lord Treasurer, and Mr. Secretary Conway, as grave and weighty as if they related to some knotty point of foreign policy. In expressive language the thrifty lord treasurer shows 'how little he is in love with royal presents, which cost his master as much to maintain

as would a garrison.' The king, however, cared right royally for his elephantine guest. He issued warrant to the officers of the Mews, and to Buckingham, master of the horse, 'that the elephant should be daily well dressed and fed, but that he should not be led forth to water, nor any admitted to see him, without directions from his keeper, which they were to observe and follow in all things concerning that beast, as they will answer for the contrary at their uttermost peril.'

"Elephants are not maintained for a trifle, and the state-papers for August 1623 furnish a brief note of the charges of the royal elephant and his keeper for a year, which might well appal the economical spirit of Mr. Secretary Conway :—

'To feeding for the elephant at 10s. per diem, is per annum,...	£180	0	0
To the two Spaniards that keep him, 20s. per week,.....	52	0	0
To the two Englishmen, his keepers, 16s. per week,.....	41	0	0

Sum per annum in toto.....£275 12 0''

"Stop, Fisher!" cried Walter Beauchamp; "£180—52—41; why, that gives a total of £273, not £275, 12s."

"Yes," replied Fisher; "and the author from whom I borrow these details,* remarking upon the inaccuracy, expresses a hope that Mr. Secretary Conway's foreign policy was better than his figures. But this calculation does not include every item of the costly bill of fare: 'Besides,' adds the secretary, 'his keepers affirm that from the month of September until April, he must drink—not water—but *wyne*'—wine for an elephant!—'and from April unto September he must have'—in addition to water, I suppose—'a gallon of wyne the day.' I opine that Behemoth, as Milton calls him, was far better off in his pleasant winter

* Chambers, 'Book of Days,' ii. 37, 38.

quarters at St. James's Park than he had been in parsimonious Spain!"

"Elephants, of course, were known to the ancients," remarked Vernon, "for ivory was a favourite ornament of their houses."

"Yes," rejoined Seymour; "and Horace, when condemning the luxurious tendencies of his age, boasts that neither ivory nor fretted ceiling enriched with gold could be seen in *his* simple home:—

' Non ebur neque aureum
Mea renidet in domo lacunar.' *"

"A very pert quotation," said Douglas, laughing; "Seymour is a walking treasury of choice passages—a *Thesaurus Verborum*, always opening at the right page."

"Ivory," continued Fisher, "was extensively used by the Greeks, and you will remember that the great sculptor Phidias fashioned with it that sublime statue of the Olympian Jupiter which it was considered a misfortune to die without having seen. The Romans, as you have remarked, were very partial to it, and diffused its use over the whole of Europe. The art of working in ivory undoubtedly arose in India, but it is the ivory of the tusks of the African elephant that has always been held in the highest estimation, on account of its superior density and whiteness. It was from Africa the Romans first obtained their supplies, until, having drained the districts known to them, they were compelled to content themselves with the less valued products of India.

"The elephant figured in those wild beast shows which gratified the thirst for blood of the Roman populace, which we have already discussed. Pliny records a curious combat between a troop of elephants and a company of Getulian

* Horace, *Carm.* ii. 18.

archers which took place in the circus in the year B.C. 54, that is, in Pompey's second consulate. One of the elephants, although infuriated by a wound, seized upon the shields of his human adversaries, and whirled them in the air with a peculiar movement, which caused them to revolve before they fell to the ground. An animal, having been slain by a single blow of a javelin through his eye, his fellows dashed forward with impetuous onset, as if to save him, and falling with great force against the iron palisades of the circus, overthrew them, and injured several of the spectators."

"They were cruel sports," said Beauchamp; "these combats between man and wild beasts. I often think there must have been a natural love of cruelty in the Roman character, or surely such sanguinary pastimes could never have been popular."

"The semi-civilized mind," replied Fisher, gravely, "requires coarse food. It can only be stimulated by amusements which a more refined age shrinks from in abhorrence. We regard with disgust the bull-baiting and bear-fighting that our ancestors enjoyed so heartily. But the shows of the Romans were pre-eminently cruel because they set man against man in mortal strife, or the half-armed savage, torn from his native land, against the furious beast of prey, purposely maddened by want of food. Let me relieve, however, these graver details with one or two exciting passages, lest you should grow weary of my prosiness."]

AN ELEPHANT FIGHT IN AVA.

Elephant fights are common in the East, and a graphic account of one at Ava is supplied by quaint old Bernier in his entertaining narrative of travel:—*

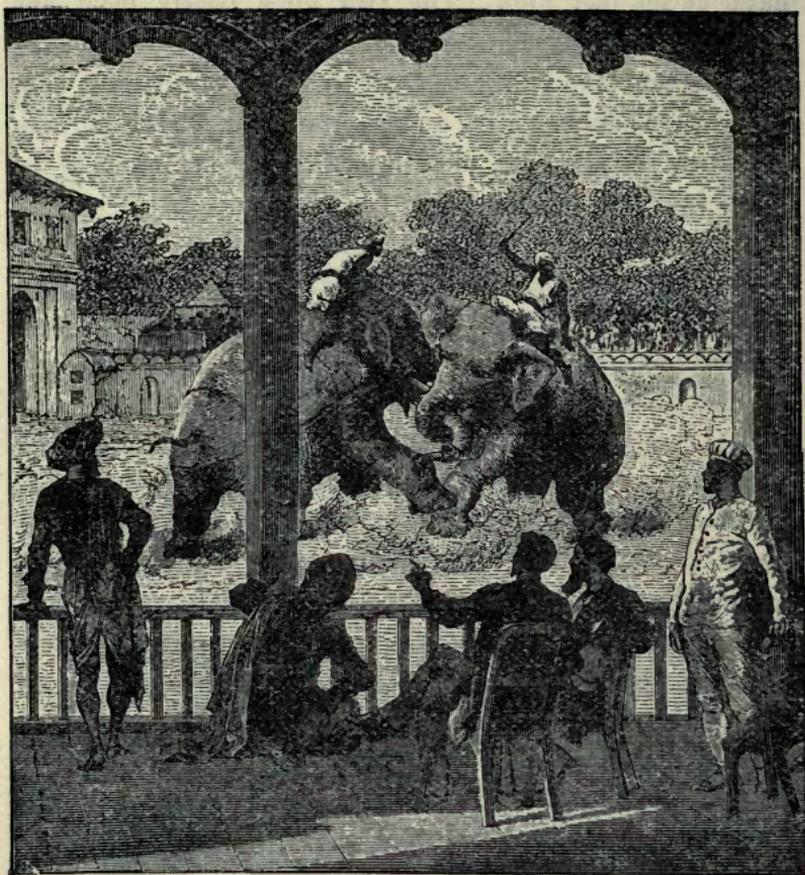
* A wall of earth is raised four or five feet wide, and

* F. Bernier, 'Travels in the Mogul Empire,' transl. by Brock, Lond. 1826.

about seven feet high. The two huge beasts meet one another face to face on opposite sides of the wall, each having a couple of riders, so that the place of the man who sits on the shoulders with a large iron hook for the purpose of guiding the elephant, may immediately be supplied if he should be thrown down.

'The riders animate the elephants either by soothing words, or by chiding them as cowards, and urge them on with their heels until the poor creatures approach the wall and are brought to the attack. The shock is tremendous, and it appears surprising that they ever survive the dreadful wounds and blows inflicted by their tusks, their heads, and their trunks. There are frequent pauses during the fight; it is suspended and renewed; and the mud wall being at length thrown down, the stronger or more courageous elephant passes on and attacks his opponent, and, putting him to flight, pursues and fastens on him with so much obstinacy that the animals can only be separated by means of *cherkys*, or fireworks, which are made to explode between them; for they are naturally timid, and have a particular dread of fire, which is the reason why elephants have been so little used in warfare since the introduction of fire-arms.

'The fight of these noble creatures is attended with much cruelty. It frequently happens that some of the riders are trodden under foot, and killed on the spot, the elephant having always cunning enough to feel the importance of dismounting the rider of his adversary, whom he therefore endeavours to strike down with his trunk. So imminent is the danger considered, that on the day of combat, the unhappy men take the same formal leave of their wives and children as if condemned to death. They are somewhat consoled by the reflection, that if their lives



AN ELEPHANT FIGHT.

should be preserved, and the king be pleased with their conduct, not only will their pay be augmented, but a sack of *peyssus* (equal to about two pounds sterling) be presented to them, the moment they alight from the elephant. They have also the satisfaction of knowing that in the event of their death, their pay will be continued to their widow, and that their sons will be appointed to the same situation. The mischief with which this amusement is attended, does not always terminate with the death of the riders. It often

happens that some of the spectators are knocked down and trampled upon by the elephants in the crowd ; for the rush is terrible when, to avoid the infuriated combatants, men and horses in confusion take to flight.'

Such are the amusements of a savage people, affording them as much enjoyment as the music of a Mozart, or the elocution of a Kean, does to the refined audiences of London or Paris.

["To entrap live elephants," said Vernon, "must be a very difficult task."

"Yes," replied Fisher ; "a task requiring much ingenuity and patience, and the labour of many men. But the work is now carried on with a certain amount of science, and it is the object of the hunters to capture a score or more of animals at a time. You may remember that, for this purpose, a gigantic trap is constructed, which in India is called a *keddah*, and in Ceylon a *corral* (from the Portuguese *curral*, or catch-pen). I will endeavour to describe it to you."]

THE CORRALS OF CEYLON.

The *corral* is a rectangular enclosure, about half as wide as it is long—600 feet by 300, for instance.* It is formed by a sort of rampart or barrier of stout poles lashed together with jungle rope. Can either of you boys tell me what jungle rope is?

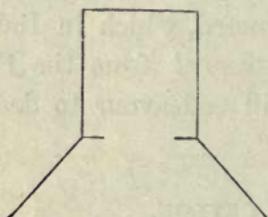
["I can," said Beauchamp. "It is woven with the pliant stems of climbing parasitical plants, which in the tropical forests grow to an extraordinary length."]

Very good. Well, this barrier is placed in the ground very firmly, and has a height of about fifteen feet, its inter-

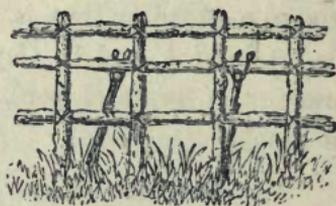
* The following details are chiefly borrowed from Sir J. Emerson Tennent's 'The Wild Elephant' (ed. 1867).

stices being wide enough to admit of the passage of a man's body. Outside the rampart great buttresses of green timber are set fast, so as to protect it from external pressure. At one end is left an opening, through which the elephants are to be driven into the corral, and from each angle of this end a line of strong palisading is continued on either side, in amongst the thickly branching trees. The object of this last arrangement is, that if the herd should turn aside to the right or left they should find escape impossible, and be driven back to the gate. I see, Vernon, that your pencil has been busy with a ground plan of the corral. Let us have a glimpse of your hands' work.

[Vernon shyly passed up to his comrade a small card, on which he had drawn the following design. Fisher pro-



The corral.



The fence.

nounced it correct, and in his turn gave his schoolmates an illustration of the kind of fence which composes the corral.

When the boys had inspected these simple diagrams, which Douglas considerably improved by a fancy sketch of an elephant pursuing the Fat Boy into the corral, Fisher resumed his explanation:—]

Elephant hunting is seldom pursued until the rice-sowing season is over, in order that it may not unnecessarily interfere with agricultural operations. A great number of natives is required to make the corral effective, and as they are well

aware that little rice will be gathered for their garner if many wild elephants remain at large, they usually volunteer their services very readily. To those who assist in the construction of the corral, a reward is paid by government.

The corral is invariably pitched in a route much frequented by elephants on their periodical migration to the water, and the trees and brushwood around it are left undisturbed. As beaters, a host is employed proportionate, you will say, to the quality of the game; and these describe an entire circuit round the locality where the elephants are supposed to have collected.

At first their advances are slow and cautious, so as to induce the wary animals to move slowly in the desired direction. An entire month is frequently occupied in this preliminary movement, until the circle of beaters is eventually contracted to half its original radius. The elephants then take the alarm, and the beaters on their part take courage. At intervals of ten paces all round the ring great fires are kindled, which blaze both night and day, while headsmen gallop to and fro that no laggard may neglect his duty. For were an opening once discovered, the whole herd would quickly effect their escape.

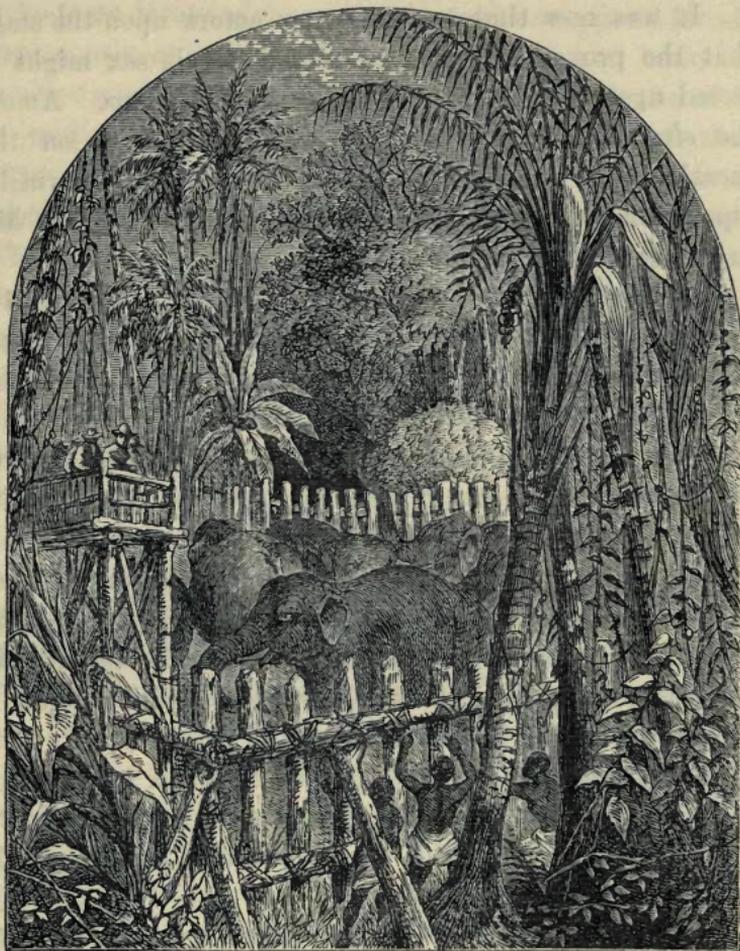
In a corral which Sir Emerson Tennent was a spectator of, two months were consumed in these preparations, and they had been thus far completed when he and his suite arrived on the spot, and took up their places on a platform specially erected for them, overlooking the entrance to the corral. Close beneath them, a group of tame elephants, sent by the temples and the chiefs to assist in securing the wild ones, were picketed in the shade, and lazily fanned themselves with leaves. Three distinct herds, whose united numbers were variously represented at from forty to fifty elephants, were inclosed, and were at that moment concealed

in the jungle within a short distance of the stockade. Not a sound was permitted to be made; each person spoke to his neighbour in whispers; and so great a silence was maintained by the battalion of watchers at their post, that the listener could sometimes hear the rustling of the branches as some of the elephants stripped off their leaves.*

Suddenly the signal was given, and the stillness of the forest was broken by the discordant shouts of the guard, the rolling of the drums and tom-toms, and the rattle of musketry; and beginning at the furthest side of the area, the elephants were impelled towards the portal of the enclosure. The watch-fires were increased to huge shooting masses of flame, which seemed to describe an impenetrable ring in the forest wilds. Thus surrounded and goaded, the herd of mighty beasts drove madly towards the only spot which seemed free from their tormentors—the dark, obscure, and silent corral, and immediately its gate was closed upon the struggling mass. Then, with a melodramatic effect, vast bonfires were kindled all around the trap, and revealed the strange weird scene in every picturesque detail.

The elephants, aroused by this sudden illumination, first dashed to the very extremity of the enclosure, but being arrested by the powerful fence, started back to regain the gate, which they found closed upon them. Their terror was sublime; they hurried round the corral at a rapid pace, but seeing it girt by fire on every side, attempted to force the stockade. The guards, however, were on the alert, and drove them back with spears and musketry and blazing torches, so that, on whatever side they approached, they were speedily repulsed. Collecting into one body, they would pause for a moment in apparent bewilderment; then start off in another direction, as if to try some point which

* Sir J. E. Tennent, 'The Wild Elephant.'



A CORRAL IN CEYLON.

they had previously overlooked ; but again foiled, returned to their forlorn resting-place in the centre of the corral.

Further proceedings were deferred until the morrow, when, at daylight, Sir Emerson Tennent, on visiting the corral, found the captives completely overcome, and huddled together in a group, while all sides of the enclosure were guarded by crowds of men and boys, with spears or white peeled wands about ten feet long.

It was now time to bring new actors upon the stage, that the proverbial influence of the female sex might be tested upon these wild and untamed leviathans. Among the *elephantesses*—pardon the word—employed on this occasion was one named Siribeddi, which had earned a reputation for her skill as a decoy, and now did her best to justify that reputation.

She entered the corral with a stealthy step and a cunning air of easy composure, proceeding leisurely in the direction of the captives, and occasionally pausing to gather a tuft of grass or a few succulent leaves. On approaching the herd they put themselves in motion to salute her, and the tusked leader—their Achilles and Nestor—advancing a few paces before them, passed his trunk over her head with a gentle caress, and then slowly retired to his companions. Siribeddi followed with the same laggard step, and drew herself close up in his rear, enabling the native who acted as nooser, and who had followed stealthily behind, to slip the noose over the hind foot of the wild elephant. The latter, instinctively aware of his danger, shook off the rope, and turned to attack the man, who would certainly have perished, had not Siribeddi lifted her trunk, and driven the assailant back among the herd.

Once more the terrified beasts huddled together in the centre of the corral, when two more decoys were sent to Siribeddi's assistance, and the three contrived to detach from the herd the largest elephant. The nooser this time secured the rope over the brute's hind leg, and then, with the two decoys, retired, leaving Siribeddi to complete the entrapment. She accordingly drew off her victim, tail first, towards the proper tree. Giving her end of the rope one turn round the trunk, she endeavoured to haul the beast close up to it, but this feat proving beyond her strength, one

of the tame decoys advanced to her assistance, placed herself courageously opposite the groaning captive, and with her shoulder against his, literally backed him towards the tree; Siribeddi, meanwhile, hauling in every foot of rope thus gained, until the huge beast was finally 'cribbed, cabined, and confined.' Now came up the other decoy, and, protected by the trio, the nooser fastened his jungle-ropes round the brute's other legs, securing the end of each rope to a tree, and the capture was completed. I am near the end of my yarn, boys, and a long one you must have thought it.

["Elephant trapping, it seems, is a work of skill and patience," said Vernon, "in which the beast shows himself almost equal to man. I often think what a revolution would be effected in the world, if the animals combined together in a league offensive and defensive. It would surely tax all our wit and strength and resources in such a case to hold our own."

"I am very well satisfied," remarked Douglas, "with the present state of affairs. To venture on a quotation, I should say that 'whatever is, is right.' However, I am too much interested in Fisher's narrative to stop the way with an argument."]

When the decoys had moved off, (resumed Fisher,) the captive seemed suddenly to awake to a full consciousness of his wretchedness. Hitherto he had remained comparatively calm and almost passive under his sufferings, but as soon as he was left entirely alone, he made the most surprising efforts to free himself and rejoin his companions. He felt the ropes with his trunk, and endeavoured to unfasten the numerous knots; he drew backwards to release his fore-legs, then leaned forward to extricate the hind ones, till every branch of the tall tree shook with his persistent struggles. In his anguish he literally *screamed*, raising his

proboscis aloft in the air; then, like a man fairly overcome with misery, who feels that life for him has neither hope nor pleasure, he fell on his side, laid his head to the ground, and pressed down his doubled-in trunk, as though he would bury it in the earth; suddenly rising, he balanced himself on his forehead and fore-legs, holding his hind feet fairly off the ground. This scene of distress continued for some hours, with occasional pauses of apparent stupor, after which the struggle was renewed at intervals, abruptly, and as if by some sudden impulse. But at last the vain strife subsided, and the poor animal stood perfectly motionless, the image of exhaustion and despair.

Among the game captured on this occasion were two little creatures about two months old. When the mother of the smallest was noosed, and being hauled along by the decoys, the whelp kept close by her side, as if to soothe and comfort her, and occasionally vented its anger on the noosers by butting at them with its little head. Driven back to the herd, it was petted and fondled by another matronly elephant, but as soon as the noosers had secured and quitted its parent, it sprang up, and scampered off to her side. Filial affection, however, was not proof against the demands of appetite. It was amusing to see how, in the midst of all their agony and affection, the little fellows seized on every article of food that was thrown to them, and ate and roared simultaneously.

For three days the captives lay in the corral, the older animals at first rejecting the food brought to them by their captors, and trampling it under foot. The manner in which the different beasts met their fate was singularly characteristic. Some stood motionless, as though prostrated by panic fear; others fretted and writhed in feverish restlessness; others, prone upon the earth, gave vent to their despair in

low but incessant moans. Strict watch and ward were still maintained about the corral; the fires blazed at night, and those watchers who were not on duty reclined in the cheerful warmth until their turn came. In the day-time a general holiday was kept, and from far and near the dusky natives flocked to the welcome spectacle. They assembled by thousands: aged men and women; young girls a year or so wedded, with a baby lashed to their back; maidens, dressed in quaint costume, with gold ornaments flashing in their dark hair, and their oiled sweethearts joining with them in a dance to the soft music of the Kandyan flute.

At length the proud spirit of the captive is subdued, and a stall being allotted to him between those of two half-tamed elephants, he soon reconciles himself to his fate, and returns to his food. The natives who attend in the stable are each armed with a *hendoo*, whose point is held towards the wild elephant's trunk—the said *hendoo* being not unlike a whaler's harpoon, or a spear-head with a stout hook attached to it,—while others rub the animal's back, and hum a low monotonous chant, in which, according to its age and sex, it is addressed as their 'mother,' 'son,' or 'father,' and advised to behave genteelly, and in a mild and tractable manner. To the voice of the charmer, however, he is sometimes exceedingly insensible, and strikes out furiously with his trunk; but as the tender proboscis invariably meets the points of the sharp *hendoo*, it becomes so sore and painful that it is soon curled up out of harm's way, and its owner begins to acknowledge the folly of kicking against the pricks.

He is now allowed a bath, but fond as he is of water in his free and unconfined state, he manifests a decided aversion to it in captivity. He has to be driven down to the tank between two trained companions; his legs are bound with



AN ORIENTAL PAGEANT.

rope; and he is compelled to lie down by a free application of the *hendoo*. Finally, the native doctor is called in to

tend the poor animal's legs, which are generally cut to the bone by the coarse jungle rope employed to noose him. The wounds frequently do not heal for several months, or even years. And thus subjugated by man's activity, perseverance, and courage—as well as by the treachery of his own kind—the leviathan, which once roamed at will through the forest solitudes, may be found treading clay in a brick-field, or figuring in the pageantry of some Oriental court.

["I wonder," said Mountjoy, "what sort of eating an elephant steak would be. I have heard of hippophagy, or eating horses; but no right-minded man would like to sacrifice for his kitchen a favourite mare. I should have no such scruples about an elephant, and I fancy it would sound rather jolly to tell one's cook to broil an elephant chop, or stew down some elephant's-foot jelly!"

"What nonsense you talk, Alfred," said Seymour; "but I can tell you that elephant's flesh is eaten—at least in some parts of Africa—and Major Denham, the traveller, asserts that though coarse, it is better flavoured than any beef he found in the country. Vaillant speaks of it as making quite a dainty dish, which might tickle the palate of a luxurious gastronome. He absolutely indulges in ecstasies on the merits of baked elephant's foot, and declares that our modern epicures, with all their contrivances, have never invented anything half so exquisite!"

"Well," replied Mountjoy, "it might be a good speculation to import elephant *pemmican*, though I can fancy the astonishment of people at seeing placarded in the provision shops,—

'Arrival of some Fine Pickled Elephants' Feet;'

or,—

'Just Imported: Real Preserved Elephant's Trunk;'

or,—

'No More High-priced Beef and Mutton. Try our
Fine Salted Elephant's Brisket!'"

"I think," said Fisher, laughing, "Englishmen would rather adhere to their national dish, and give their faith upon the virtues of roast-beef. I have heard an old song declare that—

'The brains of nightingales,
With unctuous fat of snails,
Between two cockles stewed,
Is meat that's easily chewed;
Tails of worms and marrow of mice
Do make a dish that's wondrous nice!'"*

but I have no fancy for such culinary novelties.]

ELEPHANT HUNTING IN AFRICA.

To continue my narratives, and fly from Ceylon to Egypt, Mr. Petherick supplies some interesting details of the mode in which elephants are hunted at Djour, on the White Nile.† A herd having made its appearance in the vicinity, the Djour population started in pursuit. Mr. Petherick also repaired to the scene of action, in the capacity of an eye-witness. The natives had separated into several bands, and scattered themselves in different parts of the bush. Joining one of these, he found that a chief, named Pfung, with whom he was on terms of the closest amity, and fifty men, had succeeded in bringing an elephant to bay, around which they stood in a circle; whilst the furious young beast, with tusks about one foot in length, with cocked ears and uplifted trunk, trumpeted his displeasure. Turning round, as if on a pivot, he confronted the party from whom he expected danger. Pfung, with his nephew, a lad of sixteen,

* Bp. Percy, 'Reliques of Ancient English Poetry,' ed. G. Gilfillan, 1857.

† J. Petherick, 'Egypt, the Soudan, and Central Africa' (London: 1861).

sprung into the ring towards him, and approached to a point within about ten yards. The lad then leapt forward a pace, hurled his lance, and struck the elephant's foot,—an achievement entitling him to the tusks.

They retired now as quickly as they advanced, while the enraged beast drawing the lance with his trunk, broke it in twain, gave a loud screech of rage, and darted at his assailants. This was the moment for the negroes on his left side to make a simultaneous attack, and wounding him with their spears, they effectually diverted his attention from his previous enemies. Then, with equal rapidity, he was assailed on the right side, half a dozen lances piercing his body up to the very socket.

The maddened animal stood still for a moment, squirting water from his trunk on his bleeding wounds, extracting some of the spears, and snapping them like reeds. While thus engaged, he was subjected to renewed attacks, until, losing patience, he rushed off at a hard trot with several of the lances sticking in his body. The negroes followed at their utmost speed, and succeeded in bringing him a second time to bay. After repeated charges, the poor brute was overcome. Four others had fallen; and during this and the following day both men and women found ample employment in securing the meat, with the skin attached to it, for consumption. Great were the rejoicings in the Djour on an occasion so auspicious!

This method of killing the elephant is adopted by nearly all the tribes, who also excavate pitfalls in the neighbourhood of pools or streams where the herds are accustomed to drink, and across narrow gorges in the mountainous parts of the Dôr district, through which they have to pass. A Djour negro related to Mr. Petherick a remarkable instance of an elephant which had fallen into a trap of

this kind being extricated from it by the trunks of his companions.

Another mode of 'killing made easy' is practised by some of the upper Dôr and Baer tribes: a strong lance, with a handle five feet long, the extremity shaped like a club, in diameter about four inches, is weighted with a stone, fixed to it with cords, and plastered over with clay, the whole being made as heavy as possible. With this instrument a negro, conversant with the noonday haunts of the elephants, which are invariably found

'Under the shade of melancholy boughs,'

ascends a large tree, and laying himself out on a branch, quietly expects the arrival of his prey. As soon as one passes directly under his covert, he drives his spear, with all his force, into his back or shoulders. When the blow has been skilfully directed, the animal may bound about for a short time, but he only increases the oscillation of the spear, and accelerates his death.

On another occasion, when a herd of elephants was announced, containing amongst the number a female with a young cub, Mr. Petherick offered a large reward for the baby elephant, if taken alive and uninjured. After much manœuvring, the negroes contrived to separate the herd, and detach the mother and her offspring. Mounted on a mule, Mr. Petherick anxiously followed her, although he found it a difficult matter to keep up with the negroes.

At length the elephant was brought to bay. She fought desperately with her assailants, who, with wonderful activity, bounded towards her, discharged their lances, and retreated dexterously. Incessant attacks of this kind, made by small detachments of the negroes, roused the animal to a terrible state of fury. She mercilessly charged first one

party and then another; the excitement of the negroes seeming to equal that of the elephant.

During the heat of the affray little notice had been taken of the young one by the shouting, yelling, struggling negroes; she had, however, engaged all Mr. Petherick's attention, and even his sympathy, for whilst her mother was hazarding the most furious charges, she followed her at the top of her speed. With raised tail and ears, with fresh shrill note and uplifted trunk, she indicated plainly the same feelings which animated the mother. At length, the latter being sorely pressed, the young elephant seemed fully conscious of her danger, and volunteering her assistance, bravely charged the negroes, pressed into their very ranks, and tripped up several of them by her furious sallies.

Her loud repeated cries now attracted the attention of her mother, and, facing a volley of spears with as much indifference as Leonidas and his Greeks confronted the lances of the Persian host, she rushed to the rescue of her offspring. This she effected; braving another discharge of spears while she caressed her young and sheltered it between her fore-legs. Renewed attacks seemed but to call forth fresh displays of energy. The combat, however, was too unequal to be much longer protracted; the young elephant, pierced by a heedless negro, dropped dead; and its mother soon afterwards succumbed, her body literally perforated with lances. She proved to be an old elephant, her long and taper tusks weighing fifty pounds each.

The female African elephant—unlike the Asiatic—is provided with tusks as well as the male, but, in general, they are shorter and much thinner. The right tusk, which is most used for digging roots, is not unfrequently broken at the extremity, or is always so much worn as to be shorter than its companion. Tusks differ according to latitude;

those, for instance, in the more northern latitudes being shorter, thicker, less hollowed, and heavier than those in the south. Thus, the tusk of an elephant in the Shillook country will weigh one hundred and twenty pounds; that of an elephant from the Bâri, only from seventy to eighty.

["Are there any white African elephants?" inquired Vernon.]

No, (answered Fisher;) I believe they are entirely confined to the Burman empire. The so-called white—or yellowish-white—elephant is, in fact, an animal afflicted with leprosy, and it is only for their rarity that these albinos of the carnivorous races can be valued. In Siam they are treated with peculiar consideration. Slaves minister to them with fear and trembling; they are fed luxuriously and housed sumptuously; and when they are angry, the people cover their heads as if a god had frowned upon them. Record is preserved of a white Siamese elephant that was the cause of constant hostilities between two nations for nearly a century, and was red with the blood of five kings and thousands of soldiers. A hundred men attended on this terrible beast, which was fed out of golden vessels.

The Burmese regard the white elephant with superstitious veneration, and should he give an unusual grunt will break off the most important negotiations, or pause in the most critical enterprises. In Siam he is considered an indispensable part of the regalia of sovereignty; just as the coronation-chair, ampulla, or crown, is in Great Britain. 'Royalty,' says an intelligent traveller, 'is incomplete without him; and the more there are, the more perfect is the state of the kingly office considered. Both the court and people would consider it as peculiarly inauspicious to want a white elephant, and hence the repute in which they are held, and

the anxiety to obtain them; the capture of a white elephant is consequently highly rewarded. The one which I saw was first discovered by four common villagers, each of whom received two thousand five hundred ticals in money, and offices, titles, and estates. While I was at Ava,' says my authority, 'a report was brought that a white elephant had been seen; but it was stated, at the same time, that his capture and transport on a sledge over the cultivated country could only be accomplished by the destruction of ten thousand baskets of rice. His majesty, when informed of this trivial consideration, replied, with sublime enthusiasm, "What signifies the destruction of ten thousand baskets of rice, in comparison with the possession of a white elephant?"'*

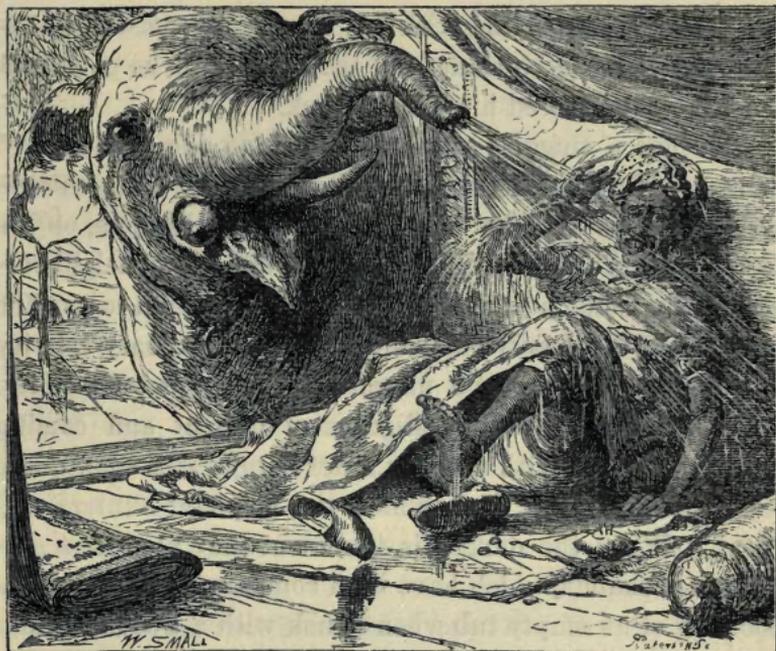
["You have told us how elephants are entrapped," said Douglas, "but I should like to hear something of the way in which they are usually hunted."]

I daresay one of you fellows can help me here, (replied Fisher,) but I must first conclude my notes upon the elephant's habits and peculiarities. For instance: he has a marked dread of, or dislike to, anything like a fence or stockade. The Singhalese think it sufficient to throw up around their rice-fields an enclosure of slight sticks, which, here in Yorkshire, would not keep out a short-horn. It is seldom above six feet high, and yet is very rarely broken. Pathways about twenty feet broad run between the fences, and in the night the wild herds pass along these routes to the water-tanks without doing the slightest injury. But leave a gap in the hurdle, and woe betide the young green crops! An elephant wounded by the hunter will rarely pursue his antagonist through a hedge, but will run to and

* J. Crawford, 'Journal of an Embassy to the Court of Ava in 1827,' edit. London, 1834.

fro for several yards in search of an opening. Is this extraordinary timidity or suspicion owing, as Sir Emerson Tennent suggests, to some instinctive consciousness that his superior bulk exposes him to danger from sources that for lighter animals might have no capability of evil? Some similar apprehension is evident in the deer, which shrinks from attempting a fence of wire, although it will leap, without hesitation, a stone wall of greater height. 'At the same time,' says Tennent, 'the caution with which the elephant is supposed to approach insecure ground, and places of doubtful solidity, appears to me, so far as my observation and experience extend, to be overrated; and the number of temporary bridges annually broken down by elephants in all parts of Ceylon is sufficient to show that, although in captivity, and when familiar with such structures, the tame ones may, and doubtless do, exhibit all the wariness attributed to them, yet in a state of liberty, and while unaccustomed to such artificial appliances, their instincts are not sufficient to ensure their safety.'

The sagacity of the elephant almost approaches reason, and to some extent he possesses a faculty of combining his ideas or recollections. A remarkable example of this is afforded in a well-known tale. An elephant was in the habit of passing daily through a particular street in some Eastern town. A tailor, seated at an open window on the route, gave the huge beast a cocoa-nut several mornings as he passed by. At length, to amuse himself, the tailor substituted for his usual gift an empty nut, and much enjoyed the elephant's discomfiture. He repeated this trick the next morning. On the third, the elephant flung aside the shell as soon as it was presented to him, and dashed over the astounded tailor a volume of dirty water from his uplifted trunk. Here it is evident that the animal under-



TIT FOR TAT.

stood the nature of the indignity to which he was subjected, and, concluding that it would be offered to him again and yet again, was prepared to resent it.

Among the many extraordinary tales of his sagacity I scarcely remember to have read one more curious or interesting than that which the poet Rogers attributes to the great Duke of Wellington. 'Elephants,' said the Duke, 'are used always in war (in India) for conveyance of stores or artillery. I had once occasion to send my men through a river upon some. A drunken soldier fell off, and was carried down by the torrent till he scrambled up a rock in the middle of the stream. I sent the elephant after him, and with large strides he obeyed his driver. When arrived he could not get near the rock, and he stiffened his tail to serve as a plank. The man was too drunk to avail himself of it, and

the elephant seized him with his trunk, and, notwithstanding the resistance he made, and the many cuffs he gave that sensitive part, placed him on his back.

He has a singular power of detecting the existence of danger. If the hunter attacks a herd at night, and performs his murderous exploits with the utmost stealthiness, on the morrow not a single elephant will be left in the neighbourhood. By some means every member of the herd leaves the presence of the deadly rifle, and with extraordinary celerity they gather together and migrate to some securer locality. They seem to convey intelligence of present and coming peril by uttering with the lips a low, suppressed sound, like the twittering of a bird, which the elephant-hunters call 'prut.' When the danger is imminent they produce a succession of sounds, which have been compared to 'the hollow booming of an empty tub when struck with a wooden mallet or a muffled sledge.' These are probably caused by his striking the ground forcibly with the point of his trunk.

["I have read of *rogue* elephants," said Vernon ; "why are they so designated, Fisher?"]

It appears, (replied Fisher,) that elephants associate in well defined family-groups. A distinct similarity of feature has been detected among various members of a herd. Thus, in a herd of one and twenty, captured in Ceylon in 1844, it was observed that the trunk of each exhibited the same peculiar formation. In another society of thirty-five captives, the eyes of all were of the same colour. These families aggregate together in one large herd on very friendly terms, sometimes numbering two or three hundred individuals, but if any alarm arises, the leader of each family sounds his warning note, and the mass dissolves into its separate component parts. It is not too much to say that alliances from one family into another are discouraged by

the elder elephants, so that if through any evil chance an unfortunate animal lose all his kith and kin, he is regularly ostracized—

[“Ostracized; what do you mean, Fisher?” interrupted the Fat Boy.

“He means, ‘sent to Coventry,’” replied Douglas.]

Yes, (continued Fisher;) none of the herd will consort with him, and he is compelled to live in utter loneliness, cut off from the companionship of his fellows by their own act. This excommunicated solitary is a sort of Ishmael; he is against every other elephant, and every elephant is against him. He may bathe and drink at the same pool, but he may not hope to find a mate among the herd. Even if trapped with the herd, when you would suppose that mutual danger would create mutual sympathy, he must stand apart, and neither expect nor offer any condolences. There are no caresses for him, and, on his part, he is animated by a bitter antipathy for his kind. Solitude makes him morose; he is less timorous of man than his fellows; breaks through the fences into rice-field and cocoa-nut plantations; and will even intrude himself among the rice reapers, and carry off a fragrant sheaf or two at his pleasure.

It is to this banned and excommunicated animal that the Hindus give the appellation of *Goondah* or *Saun*, and the Singhalese, of *Hora*, which, being interpreted, means ‘rogue.’

[“Bravo, Fisher,” cried Douglas; “I now find that an astonishing similarity exists between man-kind and elephant-kind, and that both look upon the unfortunate with equal aversion. Well; I suppose that each of these family-groups has its patriarch or ruler.”

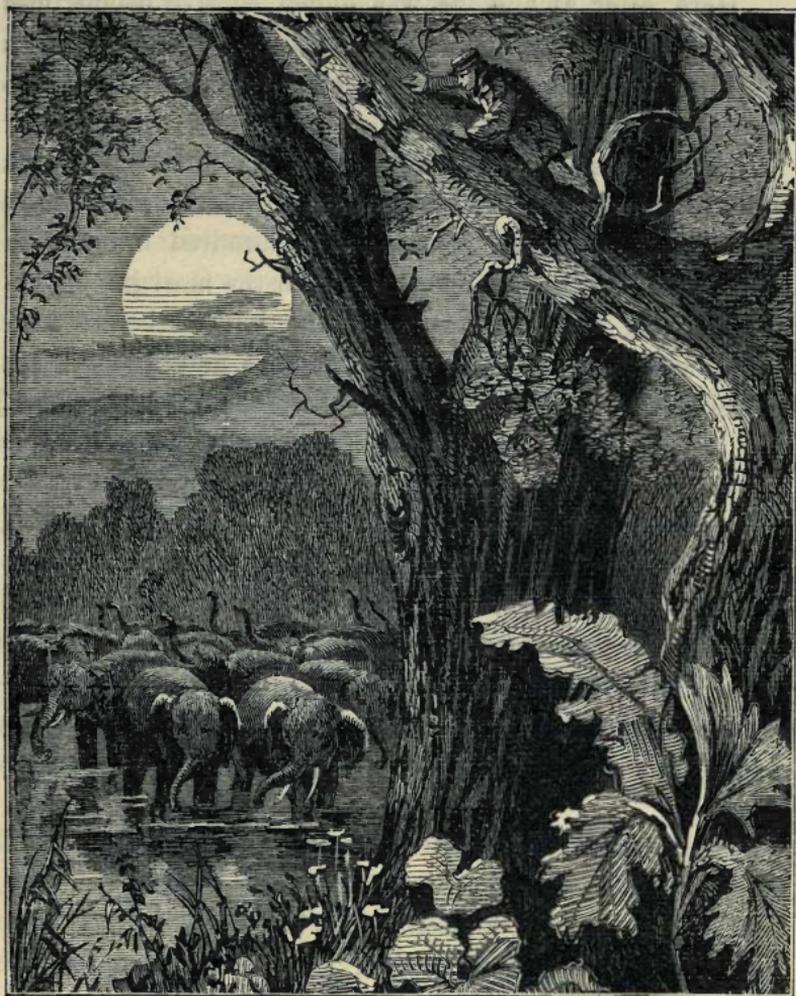
“Yes,” replied Fisher; “but it is not always the strongest or biggest animal in the herd that acts as leader. A

principle of selection prevails, and as females are sometimes found in command, we may conclude that the most sagacious or boldest animal is generally chosen, or tacitly allowed, to rule. The other elephants exhibit as sincere a loyalty towards their chief as any civilized nation towards a popular sovereign. They would die to save him, they watch his lightest gesture, they allow him to chastise them, they seek to receive in their own bodies the hunter's bullets intended for his. This admirable devotedness is repaid on the part of the leader by equal fidelity; and many princes and peoples might learn mutual lessons from the elephant."']

AN AFFECTING SCENE.

A modern traveller records a scene of which he was an eye-witness, illustrative of this attachment between the herd and their chief. He had concealed himself at night in the neighbourhood of a large tank; the moon shone brightly, and he had a favourable opportunity of watching the movements of the animals. After waiting about two hours, he saw an unusually large elephant issue from the dense cover, and cautiously advance across the open ground to within a hundred yards of the tank, where he stood perfectly motionless. So quiet had the elephants become, although they had been roaring and breaking the jungle throughout the day and evening, that not a movement was now to be heard. The huge sentinel remained in his position, firm and still as a statue, for a few minutes, and then made three successive stealthy advances of several yards, halting for some minutes between each, with ears bent forward to catch the slightest sound, and in this way he moved slowly to the water's marge.

Still he did not venture to quench his thirst, for though his fore-feet were partly in the tank, and his colossal bulk



THE ELEPHANTS AND THEIR LEADER.

was mirrored clear in the water, he remained for some minutes listening in perfect silence.

Not a motion was discernible either in himself or his shadow. He returned slowly and warily, like an Indian scout, to the position he had first assumed on emerging from the forest.

Here, after awhile, he was joined by five others, and with these he proceeded as cautiously, but somewhat more quickly, than before, to within a few yards of the tank, and then posted his patrols.

His next step was to return into the forest-glades and collect around him the whole herd, which must have amounted to between eighty and a hundred individuals. These he led across the open area with the most imperturbable gravity and composure till he joined the advance guard, when he left them for a moment and repeated his former reconnoissance at the edge of the tank. After which, and having apparently satisfied himself that no enemy was to be apprehended, he returned, and obviously gave the order to advance, for in a moment the entire herd moved into the water with a degree of unreserved confidence so directly opposite to the caution and timidity which had marked their previous movements, that our traveller declares he will never be persuaded there was not rational and pre-concerted co-operation throughout the whole party, and a degree of responsible authority exercised by the patriarch leader.

He continued to watch them with great interest until they had satisfied themselves both in bathing and drinking, when he bethought himself of trying how small a noise would frighten them from their fancied security. All he did was to snap a little branch, and away went the whole herd like a group of startled children, each of the smaller calves being apparently shouldered and carried along between two of the older elephants.

["I should never have thought," said Vernon, "that those mighty fellows were so cowardly; yet I ought to have known that neither size nor strength gives courage."]

Beauchamp did not think the elephant was so much cowardly as timorous.

“What is the difference?” inquired Vernon.

With his usual bashfulness, Beauchamp hesitated to reply; but being encouraged by Seymour, he said,—“The timorous are those, I think, who fear unseen enemies or dangers existing chiefly in their own imagination. When the danger actually comes, or the enemy is really before them, they often show themselves capable of the greatest courage and endurance. On the other hand, the cowardly shrink from the peril which is in presence, and cannot be roused to endure suffering or repel attack. History shows how bravely many a timorous woman has won the crown of martyrdom, how many a craven soldier has fled from the field of battle when his country’s freedom was at stake.”

“Very good,” said Fisher; “your definition is both correct and neatly expressed. And I may illustrate it by pointing out that it is only of man, with his unknown powers of destruction, that the elephant shows any apprehension. All the beasts of the forest own the elephant’s superiority. At his approach the tiger slinks back into the reedy coverts of his jungle, and the lion withdraws to his secret lair.”

“You boys will remember,” interrupted Seymour, “the gallant part which he so often played in ancient warfare.”

“Yes,” said Douglas; “but when the soldiers of an opposing army got accustomed to him, the tables were speedily turned. I recollect reading that when Hannibal invaded Italy, the elephants which accompanied the Carthaginian army at first struck terror into the hearts of the Roman soldiers; but they soon grew familiar with their bulk and towering stature, and learned to regard them with comparative indifference,—nay, by the use of balls of fire, they even drove them back in terror and confusion upon the ranks of Hannibal’s army.”

"That's right, Douglas. I am glad," exclaimed Fisher, "you remember what you read, because it shows you don't read superficially—don't skim your books, but dive deep into them. Some fellows are always reading, and yet never know anything. That is because they don't read to *learn*, but only to amuse themselves."

"Well, we must just adjourn our discussion of the lordly elephant until to-day week, I find," said Seymour. "It is getting late, and if we don't make a run for it we shall not be in our places until after the bell is rung. Away with you, boys! Let us see who will be the first to reach Dr. Birch's gate!"]

IV.

The Elephant: Continued.

THE ELEPHANT IN WARFARE—AN AFRICAN NGHAL—MASTODON AND MAMMOTH—TAME ELEPHANTS—ELEPHANT STORIES.



WHEN the little company had again assembled in their cave, Fisher reminded them that they had left off, on the last occasion, in the midst of some remarks about the employment of the elephant in warfare.

“Yes,” said Beauchamp; “and I have been looking up my Greek history since, and I find that Darius, the great Persian king, brought elephants against the army of Alexander the Great; but the Greek soldiers do not seem to have been much frightened by them.”

“The Greeks were bold sailors and explorers; and as they traded with the Asiatic nations, they would be acquainted with the elephant, and therefore they would have no fear of its huge proportions.”

“But you must remember, Fisher,” said Seymour, “that when Alexander had pushed forward to the borders of India, he was unable at first to cross the river Indus, because the opposite bank was guarded by Porus—that was the Indian prince, you know—with a large army and two hundred elephants; and it is particularly said how formidable an appearance these elephants presented. But I see you have

kindly drawn up some notes for our instruction. Boys, attention! Professor Fisher will open the proceedings."']

Elephants were principally employed, (said Fisher,) as you are all aware, in the wars of Eastern nations. A curious story is told respecting their use by the great Assyrian queen Semiramis, when engaged in hostilities with Stabrobates, an Indian potentate. She was leading her armies into his dominions, and to compensate for her want of elephants, and at the same time to terrify her enemies, who believed that those colossal animals only existed in India, she caused three hundred thousand black oxen to be slaughtered, and their skins stitched together and stretched upon frameworks designed to represent the elephant, placing within each a camel and his driver to provide for their locomotion. Stabrobates, however, either from traitors in the Assyrian camp, or by his own spies, had received intelligence of this manœuvre, and, therefore, when the two armies met in battle, directed a fierce charge of horsemen against the fictitious elephants. It happened, however, that the horse has an innate abhorrence of the camel, and when the cavalry approached the leather-covered framework their steeds scented the camels, and, stricken with a panic, carried their riders back into their own battalions. Stabrobates was at a loss to comprehend the cause of this sudden alarm, but he proved equal to the emergency, and led his elephants against their uncouth resemblances. The camels were paralyzed before these formidable opponents, which trampled them on the ground, pierced them with their tusks, and completely routed the Assyrian army.

The great Timour when he invaded India with the view of overthrowing the Moslem potentate Mahmood (A.D. 1399), was opposed by the latter with a cohort of elephants. He devised an ingenious stratagem to render them powerless.

Around his camp he caused an immense trench to be excavated, and this he protected with a rampart of shields or bucklers ; round the rampart he posted buffaloes, securely fastened by the necks and feet, with brambles upon their heads, which he set on fire as soon as the elephants approached. The Mohammedan host was composed of 40,000 foot, 10,000 horse, and elephants armed with cuirasses, and poisoned daggers upon their trunks. The towers which they carried on their backs were filled with cross-bowmen and archers, who fought securely under cover. On their sides were placed numerous natives, with iron pots full of melted pitch and blazing naphtha, and rockets shod with iron. The Tartar army was affrighted at this formidable array ; and, when the Moslems beat their brass kettle-drums, and sounded their countless bells, cymbals, and trumpets, they showed a signal disposition to save themselves by flight. Timour, however, encouraged them with brave words, and, flinging himself on his knees, prayed the Lord of Hosts to give him the victory. The battle began. The Sultan's elephants threw his own left wing into disorder ; the right was repulsed, and Timour himself led his soldiers against the centre. The elephants fled before the sabres of the horsemen. The expert swordsmen aimed at the trunks of the terrified animals, and many of them were strewed over the field with the slain. The alarm which the supposed invincibility of the elephants had produced was dissipated for ever. Timour's grandson, only fifteen years of age, wounded an elephant, and drove the animal before him into his grandfather's camp. The next day Timour sat on the throne of the Indian sovereign, and received the homage of his new subjects. Twelve rhinoceroses and a hundred and twenty elephants were paraded before him.

KUBLAI KHAN AND THE ELEPHANTS.

The accounts given by the old traveller, Marco Polo, of the great battle in which Kublai Khan first subjugated the Indian elephants, is full of interest.* It was in the year 1272 that Kublai was at war with the King of Ava, who, powerful in the number of his subjects, in territory, and in wealth, resolved upon aggressive operations. Learning that a Tartar army had arrived at Vochang, he immediately marched to attack it, in the hope that its destruction would deter the Grand Khan from again attempting to station an armed force on the borders of his dominions. For this purpose he assembled a numerous host, and collected a multitude of elephants, upon whose backs large wooden towers were erected, each capable of containing from twelve to sixteen soldiers. With this formidable armament he took the road to Volchang, where the Tartar army lay encamped, and, tarrying at no great distance from it, designed to give his warriors a few days' rest.

But, being apprised that the Tartars had descended into the plain, he immediately put his army in motion, took up his ground within a mile of the enemy, and proceeded to draw up his forces. He placed his elephants in the van, and disposed his cavalry and infantry in two extended wings in their rear, but with a considerable interval between them. Here he took his own station, and proceeded to animate his men, and encourage them to fight valiantly, assuring them of their victory, as well from the superiority of their numbers, being four to one, as from their formidable body of armed elephants, whose shock the enemy, never before having been engaged with such antagonists, could by no means withstand.

* 'Travels of Marco Polo,' transl. by Marsden, ed. by Wright, 1854.

Then, giving orders for sounding a prodigious number of warlike instruments, he advanced boldly with his whole army towards that of the Tartars. But Kublai Khan had commanded them to remain firm, and attempt no forward movement, suffering the Burmese to approach their entrenchments. As soon as the latter were within a hundred yards or so, the Tartars rushed forth with loud shouts, and with a valour worthy of their old repute. But their horses, unaccustomed to the sight of the huge castled elephants, were terrified, and, wheeling about, could not be brought to the charge by the utmost exertions of their riders. Kublai Khan was not dismayed by this unexpected disorder, but, with great presence of mind, instantly ordered his soldiers to dismount, and their horses to be taken into the neighbouring forest and fastened to the trees.

The Tartars then briskly advanced on foot towards the threatening line of elephants, and poured in a very storm of arrows. So swift were their discharges, all the missiles being directed against the animals, and none against the soldiers in the wooden towers, that galled, infuriated, and alarmed, they gave way, and fell back upon their own people in the rear, trampling them under foot, and throwing the whole army into confusion. Smarting with the pain of their wounds,—affrighted by the shouting of their assailants,—they became ungovernable, and, at length, in a frenzy of rage and fear, rushed into a portion of the wood not occupied by the Tartars. Here it happened that, from the intertangement of the branches of large trees, they broke with loud crashes the castles that were upon their backs, and involved in the ruin the unfortunate soldiers posted within them. On seeing the utter rout of the elephants, the Tartars were fired with fresh courage, remounted their horses, renewed the assault, and completely repulsed the Burmese host.

["Come Fisher," cried Vernon, "that's a famous story. I could sit and listen to you for hours!"]

"Mr. Winwood Reade, an adventurous African traveller, has graphically described the mode in which the elephant is entrapped by the Africans of the west coast, and it would be difficult to find a more striking illustration of that child-like simplicity which is not less characteristic of the elephant than his sagacity."]

AN AFRICAN NGHAL.

The ground enclosed for the *nghâl*, trap, or pound, was one of those comparatively open patches which sometimes occur in the dense Equatorial forests. It was covered with a thick shrubby vegetation, and sprinkled with a few large trees. Under one of these, he was told, the elephants lay asleep. The enclosure was frail enough; a circle of posts and railings which would have been easily broken through by a Shetland pony. Mounting on the railings, Mr. Reade surveyed the scene with interest, and especially directed his attention to a fine old tusker, not a hundred yards distant, which was swinging himself on three feet, sometimes lazily raising his trunk to the tree above him, and always unconscious, apparently, of the hum and murmur around. Imagine, says Mr. Reade, such a giant of intelligence decoyed into so palpable a trap! Imagine this monster, which can uproot trees, confined within a fence not strong enough to resist a calf. Imagine this philosopher of so high an order surrounded by talking savages. You do not know how a negro talks! You know how a boy of the lower form chatters—how a village gossip rattles—how a monkey gabbles—but you do not know how a negro talks. What can be the feelings of the elephant, with his retiring nature and his gentle repugnance to man, in such a position? Why, he would be a Timon of Athens 'blocked' at Temple Bar.

Mr. Reade asked how the elephants came within the *nghál*, which, rude as it was, must have occupied the savages a considerable time in erection. Were they driven into it? No. The elephants were in the neighbourhood; the *nghál* was built; a gap was left open, just large enough to admit an elephant; and lo, the herd walked in!

I have already commented upon the dread which an elephant exhibits on approaching a fence. Sportsmen have observed that even when enraged by a wound, he will hesitate to charge his assailant across an intervening hedge, but will hurry along it to seek for an opening.

It may be, therefore, that this *nghál* being built across the elephant's road, he turns aside on reaching it, and enters at the first gap which presents itself. Yet even this supposition does not explain the singular calmness displayed by the prisoners in an African *nghál*, when the Indian elephants break into a fury of rage on finding themselves entrapped. In Ceylon an army is required to enclose them, and they are only tamed, as you have heard, by the assistance of female decoys. Mr. Reade hazards the hypothesis that they are attracted to the enclosure by means of some plant for which they have the same mania as cats for valerian and rabbits for oil of rhodium. Such herbal secrets are often possessed by the medicine men, or priest-doctors, among savage nations.

One will naturally inquire, says our traveller, why the Africans resort to so laborious a method of killing elephants as that of decoying them into a species of colossal pound, and keeping them there until a certain period of the moon. To this we may reply that undoubtedly elephants were once caught alive in this manner in India, as in Africa. It is said that the Africans possessed the secret of taming elephants, which has expired with many other arcana of

by-gone ages. The huge monsters which performed in the Roman amphitheatres, dancing, and writing on tablets, were African. They are represented in ancient medals with the convex forehead and huge pendent ears of that particular genus.

In hunting the elephant, the African negroes excavate deep trenches, which they cover over with leafy boughs so as to hide them completely, and the animal is then precipitated suddenly upon a row of pointed stakes, and perishes on the spot. Sometimes they hunt them with guns, sometimes with arrows or assegays. Hunting them with darts is cruel, as the poor brute does not succumb until he has received a vast number of projectiles, so as to resemble an enormous porcupine! He rarely defends himself against his aggressors, but endeavours to make his escape, filling the air with sounds of agony, while the female seeks to protect her young ones, covering them with her body.

Let me quote, in conclusion, (said Fisher,) from the quaint old English translation of Leo Africanus in proof that this method of killing elephants has been practised in the more northern parts of Africa.*

'And although it be a mightie and fierce beast, yet there are great store of them caught by the Ethiopian hunters, in manner following: These hunters being acquainted with the woodes and thicketts where they keepe, use to make among the trees a rounde hedge of strong boughes and rafters, leaving a space open on the side thereof, and likewise a doore standing upon the plaine ground, which may be lift up with ropes, whereby they can easily stoppe the said open place or passage. The elephant, therefore, coming to take his rest under the shady boughes, entereth the hedge and enclosure, when the

* W. Winwood Reade, 'Savage Africa,' pp. 165-169.

hunters, by drawing the said rope and fastening the door, having imprisoned him, descend downe from the trees, and kill him with their arrows, to the end they may get his teeth, and get sale of them. But if the elephant chanceth to break through the hedge, he murthereth as many men as he can find.'

["I love those old authors," remarked Seymour; "they are like old wine—they have a *body* in them. There is something nervous and manly in their work, which irresistibly attracts you to it, and holds you spell-bound, just as the ancient mariner, in Coleridge's ballad, fixed the wedding guest with his glittering eye. The truth is, they were not forced to beat out their gold so thin as men must do now-a-days; so you come upon it in bright nuggets—solid and precious—instead of finding it manipulated into poor and apparently endless sheets of gold leaf, or, perhaps, which is worse, of mere Dutch metal. An old book is like an old friend; you never turn to it without receiving a word of honest counsel. Or it is like an old castle, which, even in decay, will afford you material enough for a dozen such houses as our modern builders construct. Or it is like—"

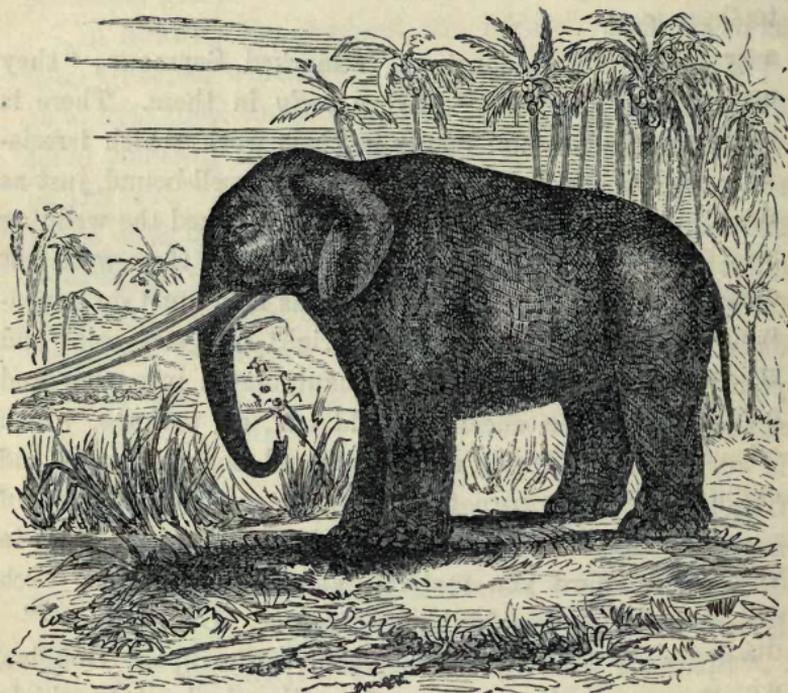
"Spare us your similes, Seymour," interrupted Douglas, "for they are leading us away from the elephant, to which, by the way, you can't compare your favourite old books."

"Yes, that I can," exclaimed Seymour, laughing; "once master them and they will serve you with equal docility, and they carry their precious ivory in the very front of them, like the leviathan of the African wilds. But I own the comparison is forced. So let us resume our zoological discussions."]

Some allusion should be made, (said Fisher,) to the prototypes of the elephant, the gigantic mastodon, which flourished long before the creation of man, and the colossal

mammoth, whose era immediately preceded the modern epoch. These are my notes on an interesting subject:—

The *mastodon*, which belonged to the pliocene period of geologists, did not differ greatly from the elephant except



THE MASTODON (RESTORED).

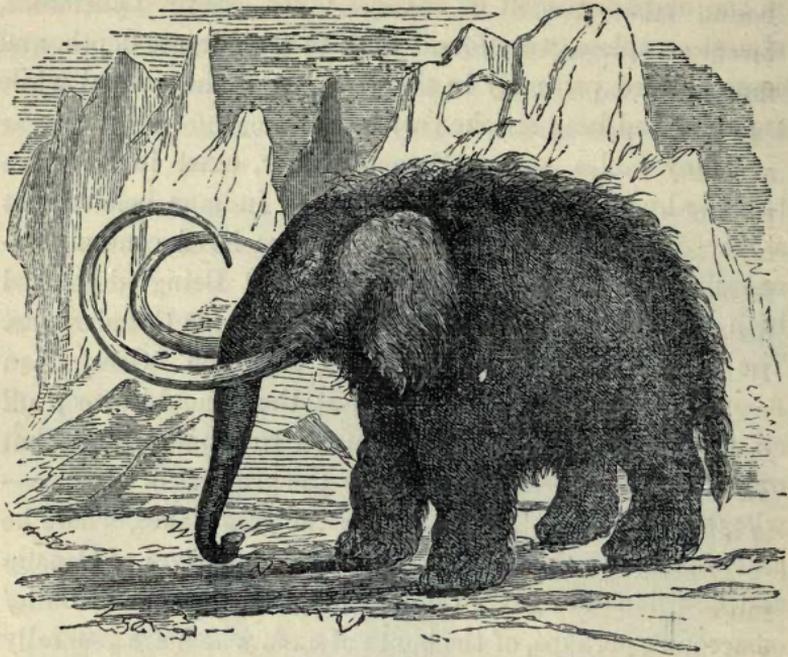
in its dental apparatus. Its grinders were mameloned or knobbed—whence its name;* it had two small tusks planted in the lower jaw, and two others in the upper jaw, of a prodigious length, all four projecting forwards. Buffon called it the Animal of the Ohio, because the first bones brought to France had been found on the banks of that river. They have since been discovered in every part of North America, but particularly in damp situations, and

* From the Greek.

in the neighbourhood of the salt lakes. Several skeletons, almost complete, were found sunk at a moderate depth, and some planted vertically in the earth, as if the animal while standing had been stricken with death.

Many fables, says a French author, exist in reference to these huge animals. The Chawnee Indians believe that a race of men of proportionate stature lived contemporaneously with them, and that the 'Great Being' destroyed both the giant and the colossal beast by his thunderbolts. The aborigines of Virginia assert that the 'Great Man Above' annihilated the species, lest they should sweep off all the animals necessary for man's sustenance, and that only one escaped—a male, and he the greatest of his race—who, being wounded, fled towards the great lakes, where he still wanders in the silent solitudes. The natives of Canada and Louisiana designate the mastodon the 'Father of Bulls,' on account, perhaps, of the bones of oxen which are generally exhumed with its own.

The *mammoth* (*Elephas primigenius*) is now known not only by the fossil remains found in every European country, but more perfectly by the almost complete skeletons recently discovered in northern Asia and the two Americas, and which demonstrate that this species was only extinct at a recent epoch. In 1799 a Tungusian fisherman found the body of a mammoth encased in a block of ice on the borders of the Lake Oncoul. Seven years later, the block having melted, this strange memorial of a by-gone time was completely exposed. The bones were collected by the naturalist Adams, and removed to the museum at St. Petersburg. This skeleton was wonderfully well preserved; only a fore-foot was wanting. Its flesh had been almost totally devoured by the white bears and Jakutski dogs; nevertheless, some ligaments and portions of skin remained, holding



THE MAMMOTH (RESTORED).

together the vertebral column, the posterior limbs, and one of the anterior. The skin of the head was dry, but intact; the brain was dried up in the interior of the skull; one of the ears was garnished with a tuft of bristles. What remained of the skin was covered with a reddish woolly fleece, from 9 to 10 inches long, and with a kind of hard bristle, red and black, 16 inches long, which formed on the neck a genuine mane. A second skeleton of this extraordinary monster was discovered some time afterwards on the bank of the Asaleïa, which empties itself into the Frozen Sea, by the Russian traveller Sarytscheff. The latter stood erect, and was entirely covered with its skin and hair. We may, therefore, conclude that it was organized to live in an Arctic climate. It probably roamed at large over the frozen waters or on the borders of the ice-

bound lakes and rivers, feeding on lichens, reeds, pines, birches, willows, and on such other plants and trees as flourish in moist soils.

["There were giants in those days," said Seymour; "what a formidable appearance so huge an animal must have presented, and had not Providence made it herbivorous, how terrible a foe it would have been to its meaner and feebler contemporaries! None could have escaped its furious jaws. I think I have read that it measured some 16 feet 6 inches in length, and 9 feet 4 inches in height."]

Yes, (added Fisher;) and its tusks—thousands of which have been found in England—were 9 feet 6 inches long. They are valued on account of their ivory, which, however, is inferior to that of the modern elephant.

I have nearly exhausted, (he continued,) the few memoranda I had collected respecting the elephant. I have told you how he is entrapped, but I think I have not yet informed you in what various ways he is pursued by the hunters. The South African savage takes a shaft of stout wood, some five or six feet long, and two or three inches thick, and to one end he fastens a two-foot blade, double-edged, and very keen. Armed with this rude but effective weapon he conceals himself amid the foliage of a tree standing in a well-frequented elephant track, and when the huge beast rolls his unwieldy bulk beneath him, swiftly plunges the steel into his body. He then follows up the infuriate giant, who plunges into the forest-depths, and as he winds among the trees, necessarily works the blade deeper and deeper into his side, and enlarges the dreadful wound, until, exhausted with loss of blood, he falls to the ground, and becomes the hunter's prey.

On the banks of the Zambesi a hundred natives bearing sharp reedy javelins collect for a grand foray, and singing

out some ill-fated beast, attack him with their puny weapons. It is the *number*, not the size or weight, that kills.

Another method adopted by the African hunters is 'hamstringing.' Two of them, naked, mount a tried and trusty steed; the rider in front carrying nothing but a switch, and the man behind, a sword with a broad blade, which he grasps by its thong-bound handle. The horse is galloped straight towards the elephant, pursuing him till he is brought to a stand, whereupon the rider with the switch commences abusing him with an eloquence worthy of a Dublin fish-woman. He loads the memory of his progenitors with the foulest abuse; boasts that he was the means of untimeously despatching them to the land of shadows; and announces his deliberate resolve to inflict upon him a similar destiny. He believes that his antagonist thoroughly comprehends this injurious language, and in a tempest of rage will dash at him. This, indeed, the beast does, to his misfortune, for while he is bewildered by the numerous wiles and feints of the native horseman, the swordsman glides to the ground, steals behind him, and with one swift cut severs the tendon just above the heel. Then he remounts, and away the pair gallop in search of assistance, certain of finding the elephant on their return at the exact spot where he was overthrown.

But the rifle is rapidly superseding all other weapons, and proves more potent than any against the wild beasts of the forest and the plain. It is a matter of dispute where the death-carrying bullet should be directed. The Singhalese always aim at the head, and the sportsman finds his safety to consist in boldly facing the animal to within fifteen paces, and lodging a bullet either in the temple or in the hollow over the eye, or in a well-known spot immediately above the trunk, where the weaker structure of the skull

affords easy access to the brain.* The African traveller Andersson is in favour of the shoulder, either behind or in the centre, near to the lower edge of the ear;† and Gordon Cumming, the Nimrod of Scottish hunters, after trying various parts of the vast elephantine bulk, seems to arrive at the same conclusion.‡

And now I shall terminate my elephant notes by narrating Lieutenant Moodie's remarkable story of his escape from one of these mighty animals.

A WONDERFUL ESCAPE.

Having been informed of the proximity to his camp of a noble herd, the gallant lieutenant hastily equipped himself for the encounter, and started off to join the hunters. Not being well acquainted with the country, however, he strayed from the right path, and could discern no signs of his comrades, until suddenly a gun was fired, and the air was rent with shouts of 'Moodie! passop! passop!'—that is, beware! Before he could realize the presence of any danger he heard the crashing of the thick jungle-growth, and the rustle of the dense foliage, and lo, a whole drove of elephants, led by a female of towering bulk—a Semiramis of the wilds—bore down upon him, like a squadron of mighty men-of-war.

Finding himself unable to take aim, the lieutenant thought it most prudent to beat a rapid retreat, but, on looking back, he saw, with feelings of horror and despair, that the herd had altered their course, and were in full pursuit of him, the female still to the fore, like—to carry out my former image—an admiral's ship in advance of his fleet, with all sail set, and eager for the fray. Mr. Moodie

* Sir Emerson Tennent, 'Ceylon.' † C. F. Andersson, 'Lake Ngami.'

‡ Gordon Cumming, 'Five Years of a Hunter's Life.'

redoubled his exertions, and made his way through the jungle with astonishing celerity, for, as old Montaigne quaintly observes, 'Fear sometimes adds wings to the heels,' and the lieutenant felt as if he was borne along on a magic steed. Seeing a stream before him, he rushed towards it, in the hope of swimming across and finding an asylum among the rocks that lined the opposite bank, but before he could succeed, thud—thud—came the heavy hoofs of the huge beasts behind him, and with uplifted trunks they filled the air with uproar. The lieutenant turned, and, as a last resource, shouldered his rifle, and fired at the female leader. The ball struck her head, and glanced off, like a bullet from a wall of granite!

She immediately charged at her assailant. The lieutenant fell; whether struck by her trunk or not he could never say. She thrust at him with her tusk—she had only one—but luckily missed him. She then caught him with her trunk about the waist, flung him beneath her forefeet, and for a minute or so knocked him about like a ball. Once she pressed her foot on his chest so heavily that he could feel the bones as it were bending beneath the weight; and once she trod on the middle of his arm, which fortunately lay flat on the ground at the time. He never lost his recollection, however, during all this terrible ill-usage, or else he would probably have perished; but owing to the roundness of the elephant's foot, he generally contrived, by a nimble management of his body, to escape her direct tread. His comrades now came up, and firing a few shots at her, one of which hit her in the shoulder, she suddenly abandoned her intended victim, giving him a kick or two with her hind feet as she left him. You may be sure that the lieutenant was glad to pick up his gun and his bruised limbs, and stagger forward to obtain the help and consolation of his companions.

While narrating to them and the Hottentot attendants the particulars of his escape, a huge male elephant rushed from his covert, and seizing a soldier who was standing by, bore him away, and crushed him into a lifeless, shapeless heap. As soon as the dismayed group had recovered from their astonishment, a soldier fired, and broke this male elephant's left fore-leg, completely disabling him from running. Thereupon the female, regardless of the danger she incurred, forsook her shelter in the bush, rushed to his assistance, walked round and round him, driving away the assailants and still returning to his side, and caressing him, and when he attempted to walk she placed her flank under his wounded side and supported him. This scene lasted for nearly half an hour, until the female received a severe wound, which drove her again to the bush, where she speedily sunk exhausted from the loss of blood, and the male, soon after receiving a mortal bullet, sunk to the earth.

And this was the conclusion of Lieutenant Moodie's adventure.*

["Heaven forefend," exclaimed Douglas, "that ever I should be called upon to run a similar hazard. Our stars be praised! there are no such dangers among our Highland hills!"]

After some desultory remarks Fisher observed that it was Seymour's turn "to spout;" and the Fat Boy expressed himself again anxious to hear something terrible—something that would curdle up his blood, he said, and make each particular hair to stand on end, like quills of the fretful porcupine.

"Pile horror upon horror," cried Douglas, laughing; "for my coarse appetite hath stomach for it all!"

Seymour replied that he was unable to promise anything very sensational, but would do his best to gratify his auditors.]

* Lieut. Moodie, 'South Africa' (2 vols.)

AN ENCOUNTER WITH ELEPHANTS.

I must premise that I borrow my facts from the record of an African hunter,* though I am responsible for the language in which I clothe them. And to render my story all the simpler, I shall ask you to suppose that I am the hero of it.

With the necessary train of waggons and Hottentot attendants, I was traversing the north-eastern districts of the Cape Colony, and had crossed the Sant river, when signs of an approaching storm determined me to halt in my journey.

The heat was excessive; the air was heavy and still; the sky obscured by a mass of lowering clouds. I could not doubt that a deluge was about to burst on my devoted head.

My followers soon raised a rude encampment in a sheltered and elevated position, protected by a lofty stone enclosure, which only needed the approach to be closed with fences to make a secure pound for the cattle. We had scarcely completed our arrangements when a stream of fire shivered along the ground, and a deafening clap of thunder broke above us, and down in big drops—quickly increasing into heavy torrents—came the rain; tropical rain; with a flood-like copiousness of which the denizens of a temperate clime can form no idea. This lasted during the greater part of the night; the thunder now seeming to die away in the distance; now drawing nearer and rolling more and more loudly;—

‘Far along

From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leapt the live thunder, not from one low cloud,
But every mountain soon had found a tongue.’

BYRON.

* Capt. W. Cornwallis Harris, ‘Wild Sports of Southern Africa.’

The horses and oxen were soon standing knee-deep in water; my followers remained sitting all night in the baggage-waggon, which leaked considerably, but my own, being better covered, fortunately withstood the pitiless storm.

About an hour before dawn it began to decrease in violence, and at sunrise it was perfectly clear, the sky was bright and the air fresh, but the streams swept onward with such fury as to be quite impracticable. I pushed ahead with a few of my Hottentots to reconnoitre the pass, but found it to be nothing more than a narrow rocky defile through which the Sant river rushed to join the Linkling, so that no waggons could possibly attempt it. From the highest peak I could see several herds of buffaloes, and, while descending, observed the tracks of a huge bull-elephant that had passed about an hour before. This being the largest footprint I had seen, I had the curiosity to measure it, in order to compute the animal's height—twice the circumference of an elephant's foot being the exact height at the shoulder. The result was twelve feet, which, notwithstanding the monstrous stories one hears of, I believe to be the maximum height attained by the African elephant. I followed the trail across the Sant river, which had now considerably subsided, and perceiving that it struck eastward along the mountain-chain, hastened back to my encampment for horses and ammunition.

Leaving the waggons to wend their way slowly towards an appointed rendezvous, we again took the field about ten o'clock, and sedulously followed up the trail for some eight miles, over a country marked by the boldest varieties of landscape. Thus: at one time we toiled up a bare, open, and stony acclivity; at another, wound through the labyrinthine recesses of shadowy but decaying forests; now we struggled through broad fields of high waving grass; and now

breathed the fresh air of swelling downs. At length, we found ourselves amongst a maze of grassy hillocks, and interlacing brooks, and patches of luxuriant foliage, where the recent ravages of the elephants had wrought extensive desolation. Here, to my indescribable delight, I descried a large herd of them, lazily browsing at the head of a distant valley; my attention being, in the first place, attracted to the animals by the strong and significant odour which was borne upon the wind. It was a spectacle such as I had never before seen, and I gazed upon it with wonder and admiration. Something of my enthusiasm seemed to communicate itself to my followers. As for Andries, the most intelligent, his agitation became so great that he could scarcely speak. With wide-opened eyes and quivering lips at length he stuttered, '*Dar stand de olifant!*' I immediately despatched a couple of scouts to drive back the herd into the hollow, while I and my trusty liegemen rode slowly and noiselessly up it, against the wind; until, drawing within one hundred and fifty yards unperceived, we made our horses fast, and selected a commanding position in an old stone kraal.

The shouting of the Caffres, who now appeared on the hills above, rattling their shields, caused the huge animals to move unsuspectingly towards us, and even within ten yards of our ambuscade. The group consisted of nine, all females with large tusks. We picked out the finest. It was a moment of hot suspense, at least for myself; for never before had I pursued such mighty game. We fired into her a volley of five balls. She stumbled, but soon recovered herself, and gave utterance to a shrill sharp cry of mingled agony and rage; whereupon the whole drove threw their trunks above their heads, and clambered up the ascent with remarkable swiftness, their huge fan-like

ears flapping in proportion to their speed. We immediately mounted our horses, and soon overtook the wounded animal. Streaming with blood, and infuriate with rage, she turned upon us, and it was not until after several discharges that a ball crashed into her brain, and brought her lifeless to the earth.

Leaving the prize for some of our attendants to secure, we found that we had arrived at the mouth of a second valley, which was shut in by bare stony hills, and traversed by a thinly wooded ravine. The superb panorama which here burst upon the view no words can describe. The entire landscape seemed alive with wild elephants! In the limited area embraced within our ken, there could not have been less than three hundred. Groups were planted on every grassy knoll, on every turfy undulation; while, in the bottom of the glen, they had gathered in 'a dense and sable living mass;'^{*} their colossal forms at one moment partially concealed by the trees which they were threatening with their giant strength; at others, looming in all their majesty through the open glades, as they slowly stalked on their way, with waving branches in their up-lifted trunks to protect themselves from the flies. The background was grandly filled with the shadow of the blue mountain-range, which here assumed a singularly precipitous character, and fitly completed a picture of unusual interest.

Against the wind we contrived to approach unobserved, nor did we excite any alarm until the herd we had left behind suddenly made their appearance, thundering down the declivity to join the main body, and passing so close to us that we could not refrain from firing a broadside into one of them, which, however, stood our volley as coolly as

^{*} Capt. W. C. Harris, 'Wild Sports of Southern Africa.'

the veteran of a hundred battles. We secured our horses on the summit of a stony ridge, and then selecting a suitable position, overlooking the woody glen, despatched Andries to manœuvre so that as many of the elephants as possible should pass before us in order of review, that we might ascertain, from close inspection, whether there was not a male amongst them. Stalking leisurely along, they occasionally halted beneath an umbrageous tree within fifteen yards of us, lazily fanning themselves with their ample ears, blowing away the flies with their trunks, and uttering their peculiar feeble cry. They proved to be all females, and most of them mothers, followed by their little old-fashioned calves, each treading close to the heel of her dam, and mimicking her motions. From our secure location we might have made as many victims to our rifles as we pleased, their heads being frequently turned towards us in such a position, and so close, that a single ball in the brain would have sufficed for each; but whilst we were yet hesitating, a bullet suddenly whizzed past my companion Richardson's ear, and instantly the whole herd was off at a rapid pace.

We had barely time to take shelter behind a tree, before a drove of about twenty, with several little ones in their wake, bore down upon us, striding at their hugest step, and filling the air with a sound like that of trumpets.

I rested my rifle against the tree, and taking deliberate aim struck the leader behind her shoulder. She dropped instantly. Another large detachment appearing close in our rear at the same moment, we were forced to retreat, availing ourselves of every tree, and the inequalities of the ground, and occasionally saluting our enemies with a discharge of stones. When the elephants had all passed, we returned to the body of our victim, whose struggles we

speedily terminated by a shot in the forehead. Andries now came up in excellent humour at his own achievements, and with an air of triumph discharged his piece into the motionless carcass, under the pretence that the animal was shamming. His object evidently was to confound the shots; for, thrusting his middle finger into the orifice made by my two-ounce ball, he coolly declared himself the author of the deed, being content to overlook altogether the simple fact that the elephant had received her mortal wound on the opposite side to that where he was stationed, and that his own ball had nearly made its mark on my worthy fellow-traveller.

The day being now far spent, we returned to our camp, where we received the welcome due to such skilful and successful warriors.

And here, boys, I think I may conclude my narrative of a day's encounter with African elephants.

[This short and simple story was much applauded, though Douglas remarked that it only contained one quotation, and that he had not detected a single simile, which was too bad, as he observed, in a poet. Fisher reminded him that a good poet always adapted his style to his subject, and that Wordsworth had narrated the history of Peter Bell in very different language to that which he had selected for his noble Ode to Duty. "Seymour," he said, "had a plain story to tell, and he has told it plainly."

"Do you not think it cruel," interrupted Beauchamp, "for men to pursue these majestic creatures in mere gratification of the love of sport?"

"It is useless to open up such a difficult subject of discussion," replied Fisher; "it is one on which so many opinions exist. Assuredly the love of sport is strongly implanted in the human breast, and, under certain con-

ditions, I see no objection to its cultivation. At all events, the hunter opens up to us new and untrodden regions which otherwise would remain closed to commerce and civilization, and enables us to obtain much valuable information relative to the mode of life and anatomical structure of the denizens of the Forest, the Jungle, and the Prairie. But I hold that sport should be pursued without cruelty, and that the hunter should use every care to avoid giving needless agony to the victims of his rifle. Mr. Baker, in his amusing book, 'The Rifle and the Hound in Ceylon,' assures us that 'all real sportsmen are tender-hearted men, who shun cruelty to an animal, and are easily moved by a tale of distress.' I would it were so, but his own book supplies abundant evidence to the contrary. The love of sport was probably at first a natural instinct, with which man was gifted for the evident purpose of enabling him to support himself in a savage condition on the proceeds of the chase. It still survives; under certain limitations is not objectionable; but when exaggerated into a consuming and devouring mania, must be censured by every thoughtful and well-balanced mind."

"I think, Fisher," said Douglas, "I remember an instance of cruelty associated with love of sport in the adventures of Gordon Cumming, the once-famous lion-hunter."

"The lion-hunter!" exclaimed Beauchamp; "ay, but just now, you know, we are confined to elephants, and we have had enough of lion-hunting."

"Yes," said Seymour; "to

' Nature's great masterpiece, an elephant;
The only harmless great thing.'"

DR. DONNE.

"Well, it *is* of elephants I was about to speak."

"Go on, Sholto," said Fisher; "I have no doubt your illustration will be well-chosen."

“Mr. Cumming had wounded an elephant, on one occasion, in the shoulder-bone, and so severely, that the great brute was compelled to lean for support against a tree. He then proceeded to unpack his knapsack, and, with all the coolness possible, to make himself a refreshing and highly-fragrant cup of coffee. While partaking of this delicious beverage, he closely scrutinized the agonies of the wounded elephant, as Parrhasius of old watched the tortures of the poor wretch he had wounded that he might serve as a subject for his pencil. At length he resolved to make experiments—experiments, mark you—on vulnerable points; and leaving his coffee, he approached the animal, and fired several bullets at different parts of his enormous skull. He only acknowledged the shots, it appears, by a salaam-like movement of his trunk, with the point of which he gently touched the wounds with a striking and peculiar action. Surprised and shocked to find, he says, that he was only prolonging the sufferings of the noble beast—but what else had he aimed at?—which bore its trials with heroic composure, he resolved to finish his sanguinary essay of skill, and accordingly opened fire upon him from the left side. Aiming at the shoulder, he fired six shots with his two-grooved rifle, which must have eventually proved fatal; and then, in his tender-heartedness, he fired six shots at the same part with a Dutch six-pounder. Large tears now trickled from his eyes, which he slowly shut and opened; his colossal frame shivered convulsively, and falling on his side, he expired.”

“Horrible!” cried all the lads, when Douglas had concluded.

“Such a man,” said Seymour, “would have plied the rack in the dungeons of the Inquisition, or tortured Anne Askew with the ‘scavenger’s daughter,’ and then assured

you that he was only anxious to terminate the sufferings of his victims !”

“ Yes,” said Fisher ; “ there can be no excuse made, no apology attempted, for acts of such deliberate cruelty.”

“ And I think they are especially detestable,” observed Vernon, “ when practised upon an animal so harmless and so sagacious as the elephant, whom Nature seems to have intentionally deprived of any power of offence.”

“ Sir Emerson Tennent remarks,” said Fisher, “ if I may once more refer to his authority, that the elephant appears to live on friendly terms with every quadruped in the forest, that he neither regards them as his foes nor provokes their hostility by his acts ; and that, with the exception of man, his greatest enemy is a fly !* It is true that towards man he evinces shyness, partly from his love of solitude, but more from his knowledge of man’s slaughtering propensities. But did his instincts carry him further, or were he animated by any feeling of animosity or hostility, it is evident that, as against the prodigious numbers which inhabit the Singhalese forests, man would wage an unequal contest, and that of the two one or other must long since have been reduced to a helpless bondage.

“ Nor, as he points out, is the testimony of statistics wanting in confirmation of this view : take the returns of 108 coroners’ inquests held in Ceylon during five years, in cases of death occasioned by wild animals ; 16 are recorded to have been caused by elephants, 15 by buffaloes, 6 by crocodiles, 2 by boars, 1 by a bear, and 68 by serpents. Little more than *three* fatal accidents annually, on the average of five years, must be accounted a small proportion amongst a population estimated at a million and a half, in an island abounding with elephants, and where encounters

* Sir J. Emerson Tennent, ‘The Wild Elephant.’

are daily stimulated by the love of sport or the hope of gain. 'Were the elephants instinctively vicious, or even highly irritable in their temperament, the destruction of human life under the circumstances must have been infinitely greater. It must also be taken into account that some of the accidents recorded may have occurred in the rutting season, when elephants are subject to fits of temporary fury, known in India by the term *must*, in Ceylon, *mudda*—a paroxysm which speedily passes away, but during the fury of which it is dangerous even for the mahout to approach those ordinarily the tamest and most gentle.'

"Do elephants fight with their tusks or trunks?" inquired Lambert.

"With their trunks, my boy; seldom, if ever, with their tusks, which, as I have already told you, are purely defensive weapons. But the great beast chiefly trusts to his enormous weight, the pressure of his foot being sufficient to crush any minor assailant whom he has first prostrated by means of his trunk. In using his feet for this purpose, he derives a peculiar advantage from the conformation of the knee-joint in his hind-leg, which enabling him to swing his hind-feet forward close to the ground, assists him to toss the body alternately from foot to foot, until deprived of life.

"A sportsman who had undergone this painful operation, but had happily been rescued before it was complete, describes his sufferings as he was thus bandied to and fro between the hind-legs and fore-feet of the animal as very acute. The elephant ineffectually attempted to trample him at each concussion, but abandoned him without inflicting serious injury."

"Well, boys," said Seymour, after a pause, "I don't know that I can tell you a good thrilling adventure, such as would

delight our friend Lambert, but in the book Fisher has so often quoted, I remember some notes respecting tame elephants."

"Hear, hear!" cried Fisher.

"Silence, gentlemen! Oyez! oyez!" shouted Douglas; and the little circle once more composed themselves in an attitude of serious attention.]

TAME ELEPHANTS.

Sir Emerson Tennent had a tame elephant in his house at Colombo, which became a general favourite with the servants. He was especially fond of the coachman, who had a little shed erected for him near his own quarters at the stables. His favourite resort, however, was the kitchen, where he received his daily allowance of milk and plantains, and picked up all kinds of titbits and little delicacies. He was innocent and playful in the extreme, and when walking in the grounds would trot up to his owner, and twine his little trunk round Sir Emerson's arm, and coax him to take him to the fruit-trees.

In the evening, the grass-cutters would sometimes indulge him by permitting him to carry home a load of fodder for the horses, when he would assume a most impressive air of gravity, showing his sense of the importance of the charge with which he was entrusted.

Being sometimes allowed to enter the dining-room, and helped to fruit at dessert, he at last learned his way to the side-board; and, on more than one occasion, having stolen in during the absence of the servants, he made a clean sweep of all the wine-glasses and china in his endeavours to possess himself of a basket of oranges. At length his pranks became so expensive, that Sir Emerson was compelled to put him away.*

* Sir J. Emerson Tennent, 'Natural History of Ceylon.'

In captivity he is very docile and tractable, and, encouraged by his keeper, will undertake the most laborious tasks. But should the eye of his attendant be withdrawn, he displays his natural indolence of disposition, and betakes himself to some cool covert, where he enjoys the luxury of fanning his heated hide, or blowing dust over his back.

He is particularly partial to coolness and the shade, and has as great an objection to work in the sun as a Neapolitan *lazzarone*; so that he eagerly snatches every moment of leisure for the pleasing pastimes I have already alluded to.

His obedience to his keeper is remarkable. When Chutnee, the famous elephant long kept at Exeter 'Change, was shot in 1826, he had received upwards of one hundred and twenty balls ineffectually in various parts of his body, and it was not until he turned his face to his assailants on hearing his keeper's voice, and knelt at the accustomed word of command, that the fatal shot struck home. Bleeding from a score of wounds, he nevertheless obeyed the long familiar voice.

This docility seems to spring from affection as much as from fear. But though his attachment will be so strong, that an elephant in Ceylon has been known to remain out all night, without food, rather than return without his mahout, who was lying intoxicated in the jungle, he seems equally ready to yield submission to a new driver. This seems contradictory of the popular belief that 'the elephant cherishes such an enduring remembrance of his old mahout, that he cannot easily be induced to obey a stranger.' In the Government establishments of Ceylon, the keepers are changed without hesitation; and the animals, if they meet with the same amount of kindness of treatment, render as implicit submission to their new drivers as to their old. There are, however, exceptions to this rule, and the 'vulgar

error' was, no doubt, founded at least on some reasonable basis.*

The elephant is chiefly guided in his movements by the voice of the mahout, whose principal cry has been described as a repetition, with various modulations, of the words *ur-re! ur-re!* It is curious that this sound, or combination of sounds, seems in vogue, with slight modifications, all over the world. The Eastern camel-drivers urge on their jaded beasts with *ar-rê! ar-rê!* The Algerine Arabs stimulate their mules by crying *eirich!* The French sportsmen excite the hounds by shouts of *hare! hare!* The Irish driver objurgates his pigs with *hurrish! hurrish!* and surely a family resemblance is discernible in our English *hurrah!*

The captive elephant is always a delicate animal, and must be watched as carefully and attended as sedulously as an English racer. He is comparatively of little value as a beast of burden; for though he could easily carry an enormous weight, so far as mere strength is concerned, it is difficult to pack it without causing sores or abrasions, that quickly ulcerate. 'His skin,' says an authority already quoted, 'is easily chafed by harness, especially in wet weather. Either during long droughts or excessive moisture, his feet are liable to sores, which render him non-effective for months. Many attempts have been made to provide him with some protection for the sole of the foot, but, from his extreme weight and peculiar mode of planting the foot, they have all been unsuccessful. His eyes are also liable to frequent inflammation, and the skill of the elephant-doctors, which has been renowned for ages, is nowhere more strikingly displayed than in the treatment of such attacks.' And nothing, I may add, is more remarkable than the patience with which he swallows the most nauseous doses, and the

* 'Menageries:' The Elephant (Society for Diffusion of Useful Knowledge).

fortitude with which he endures the most painful surgical operations.

And now I would beg leave to conclude these desultory notes with a translation of the passage in which Ælian describes the training and performance of elephants.

[“ But who was Ælian ?” here inquired Mountjoy.]

An old Greek writer on natural history, (rejoined Seymour,) Claudius Ælianus, born at Preneste about A.D. 200. His writings display an extensive erudition, but also a remarkable credulity. I think, however, you will pronounce the following passage full of interest :—

‘ I would wish to speak,’ he says,* ‘ of their musical feeling, the ease and docility with which they learn things that it is even difficult for human beings to acquire, much less a beast, previously so untamable ;—such as to dance, as is done on the stage ; to walk with a measured step ; to listen to the melody of the flute, and to detect the difference of sounds—how, if pitched low, they introduce a slow movement ; or high, a quick one ;—all this the elephant comprehends with perfect accuracy. Nature, therefore, has made him not only the hugest in size, but the gentlest and most easily taught.

‘ Now, were I about to treat of the tractability and aptness in learning of the elephants of India, Æthiopia, and Libya, I should probably seem to be concocting a tale and playing the braggart, or disseminating a falsehood respecting the nature of the animal, founded only on hearsay ; all which it is the duty of a philosopher, and a devoted lover of the truth, to avoid. I will only narrate the results of my own observations, and what I have gathered from others as having occurred at Rome, selecting a few facts out of a multitude to illustrate the peculiarities of these creatures.

* Ælianus, *De Natura Animalium*, lib. ii., c. 11.

‘The elephant, when tamed, is a peculiarly gentle creature, and easily induced to do all he is required. And with the view of doing him honour, I will first relate events of the greatest antiquity.

‘Cæsar Germanicus, the nephew of Tiberius, exhibited once a public show, wherein there were many full-grown elephants, male and female, and some of their breed born in this country. As soon as their limbs began to strengthen, a person accustomed to their ways trained them in a singular and surprising manner; trusting chiefly to kindness and gentleness, and enforcing his mild lessons with the bait of agreeable and varied food. Thus he gradually instructed them to cast aside their wildness, and, as it were, to adopt a state of civilization, conducting themselves in a manner almost human. [Did Ælian mean this for satire?] He taught them to preserve their composure on hearing the pipe, and not to be affected by the beat of the drum; but to be soothed by the music of the reed, and to endure discordant sounds, and the trample of feet from persons while marching. So, too, they were trained to feel no fear of a mass of men, nor to be wroth at the infliction of blows, not even when compelled to twist their limbs and bend them like a stage-dancer, and this, too, although gifted with energy and strength. And there is in this a very admirable addition to nature, not to conduct themselves with disorderliness, nor to disobey the orders and injunctions of their masters; for after the dancing-master had made them expert, and they had acquired their lessons skilfully, they did not render all his labour fruitless whenever occasion or necessity called upon them to exhibit what they had been taught. For the whole herd came forward from either side of the theatre, and divided themselves into sections; they walked forward with a tripping gait, and exhibiting in all their carriage the manners of a beau, while

decked in the festooned garb of the stage-mimes ; and, on the director of the orchestra giving a signal with his voice, they fell into line, and marched round in a circle, or deployed, as they were ordered. Then they adorned the floor of the stage by scattering it with flowers, doing everything with moderation and caution ; and straightway they beat a measure with their feet, and kept time together.

‘ Now that Damon or Spintharus, Aristoxenus or Philoxenus, Xenophilus, and others, should be well acquainted with music, and for their ability be classed amongst the few, is, indeed, a subject of admiration ; but there is nothing in it incredible, nor at all opposed to reason. And why ? Because *man* is a rational animal, endowed with mind and intellect. But that a jointless animal should understand rhythm and melody, and preserve a studied bearing, and keep to a regulated movement, and fulfil all that its instructors demand of it, these, I think, are gifts of nature, and a peculiarity in every way astounding. Added to these marvels were others which might almost drive the spectator out of his mind : when the strewn rushes and other materials for beds on the ground were placed on the sand of the arena, and they received stuffed mattresses such as belonged to rich houses, and vari-coloured bed-coverings, and costly goblets, and gold and silver bowls, containing a great quantity of water ; and splendid tables were placed there, of odoriferous wood and ivory ; and upon them meats and loaves enough to satisfy the stomachs of the most voracious animals.

‘ When all was prepared, and set forth in great abundance, the banqueters came forward, six male, and an equal number of female elephants—the former dressed after the masculine, and the latter after the feminine fashion ; and at a given signal they stretched forward their trunks in a sub-

dued manner, and ate their food in great moderation, not one of them appearing greedy or gluttonous, or snatching at a greater portion than another.

‘When it was time for them to drink, a bowl was placed by the side of each. Inhaling with their trunks, they drank in a very decorous manner, and then scattered the water about in sport, but not as in insult. Many other acts of a similar kind, both clever and astonishing, and illustrating the peculiarities of these great animals, have persons described to me; and I myself have seen them writing letters with their trunks on Roman tablets, neither turning aside nor looking obliquely. The teacher’s hand, however, was so placed as to guide them in the formation of the characters, and the elephant, while writing, kept its eye fixed upon the writing in a scholarly and accomplished manner.’

“I must ask you now,” continued Seymour, “to accompany me on an expedition in the dense bush of the Berea, under the leadership of a gallant English soldier.”

“But where is the Berea?” inquired Douglas; “my geography is at fault just now, and I have not the remotest idea of the locality of that interesting stream.”

“It is not a river, but a tract of wooded country, of considerable elevation, near Pietermaritzberg, in the South African colony of Natal.”

“You speak like a book, Seymour,” said the incorrigible Douglas: “and now I remember all about it; for do I not read the newspapers, when I get a chance, in the doctor’s study? Natal; of course! It is a British colony, connected with Bishop Colenso, and Zulus, and Langabilele; and it is going to be included in a great confederated South Africa!”

“Captain Drayson, whom we take as our leader, shall tell

our story, though I shall frequently beg leave to substitute my language for his."*]

THE BATTLE OF THE BEREA.

With most South African sportsmen the elephant is one of the last of the wild animals which he is fortunate enough to see : it was my first. The view was not a long one, but it is still forcibly impressed on my memory.

I had been invited by a colonist, who was a thorough sportsman, to accompany him to the Berea in chase of a large herd of elephants ; a proposition which, from our ignorance of all the artifices necessary in the bush, was rather rash ; for elephant-shooting is at all times a dangerous amusement, and when attempted by novices on foot, in a dense bush, against a very savage herd, it involves considerable peril.

In Africa, however, the elephant-chase is generally pursued on horseback. The Dutch boers, who frequently obtain their living by this sport only, are amongst the most skilful hands ; they make periodical trips into the uninhabited regions, or where elephants are numerous, and the country is open and exposed. When a herd is discovered, these boers arrange a plan of attack, either to drive the herd of game to a better and more open country, or to prevent them from retreating to any dense covert near at hand. As soon as the preparations are completed, they single out the leader of the troop, generally the largest bull-elephant. They then move up as close as is consistent with safety, and pour in a volley, while their attendants ply the infuriated animals with darts ; if the leader falls, they can manage the remainder more easily, from the confusion that always prevails when the herd miss their chief. Should he, however,

* Capt. A. W. Drayson, 'Sporting Scenes amongst the Kaffirs of South Africa,' pp. 77-88.

be only wounded, he frequently turns savage, and charges with a rush ; the boers then mount their horses, and galloping off a hundred yards or so, they separate, scatter about in different directions, and fire at the elephant as opportunity offers. Success generally crowns their efforts. I have been assured by many veteran hunters that they have oft-times seen a herd stand with heads close pressed together, after their leader has been killed, as if paralyzed with confusion and despair. Such a chance, however, seems reserved only for the peculiarly fortunate.

An elephant, as you know, moves with great swiftness, and with no less ease and silence.

Every boy will have heard the old tale of the elephant ! How he began to turn early in the morning, and did not conclude the difficult gymnastic performance until mid-day, so that the hunter had only to keep in his rear to ensure perfect safety. The experience of modern sportsmen contradicts this 'vulgar error.' The huge beast will wheel round, and crash through the—

'Primeval trees, that cast
Their ample shade on Niger's yellow stream,
Or where the Ganges rolls his sacred waves,'

with nearly the rapidity of a large buck ; and his speed out-vies that of a man, though he cannot maintain it for any considerable distance. Sir Emerson Tennent observes, that, for a creature of his extraordinary weight, it is astonishing how noiselessly and stealthily the elephant can make his escape from a pursuer. 'When suddenly disturbed in the jungle, he will burst away with a rush that seems to bear down all before him ; but the noise sinks into absolute stillness so suddenly, that a novice might well be led to suppose that the fugitive had only halted within a few yards of him, when further search would disclose that he has stolen

silently away, making scarcely a sound in his escape; and, stranger still, leave the foliage almost undisturbed by his passage.*

In the dense underwood or reedy jungle a man's progress is continually impeded, while an elephant bears down every obstacle with the utmost facility. A horse, however, in the open country, easily outstrips an elephant, and especially up hill, the weight of the latter being a serious drawback on rising ground.

The elephant, by common consent, ranks very high among sagacious animals, and is, perhaps, as capable of learning a moral lesson as any school-boy.

'When a large herd is but seldom disturbed by man, but on each visit five or six are killed, and two or three more die of their wounds, the remainder then have a very great dread of the smell of a biped, and the report of his gun; but when elephants are disturbed very frequently, and only one shot obtained at them, which wounds and annoys, but may not kill, they become very savage, and, upon smelling their teasing enemy, are at once furious and vindictive. The herds that come into the Natal bush are of this disposition; they are constantly persecuted, and sometimes fired at, but without any great result, as the density of the cover renders it almost impossible to get more than one shot, and a single bullet rarely carries immediate death.'

The bush that skirts the Natal coasts for many miles is only practicable by the paths made by the elephants; the avenues through which they stalk, in Indian file, on moving from place to place, or in quest of water.

It is difficult for the hunter, when moving along these curious paths, to see many yards on either hand, through the thickly-matted underwood, briars, and parasitical plants

* Sir J. Emerson Tennent, 'Ceylon,' *ut antè*.

which enclose him in. In many parts he has literally to drag himself through the luxuriant growth, where he cannot see a yard around him. He must place all his reliance, therefore, on his sense of smell or hearing, or he will not long be left to enjoy the fierce excitement of the sport, which, when once tasted, like the drink of the Mœnads, serves but to whet and inflame the appetite ; producing a 'bush-fever' that leaves as permanent an impression as the similar mental malady caught on the rolling prairies of the Far West.

And now let us suppose that we have crossed the dreary Natal flat, and entered upon a small, narrow bush-path that winds to the summit of the Berea, which is here about two miles broad, very dense, and closely covered with underwood.

On reaching the top of the wooded acclivity, we emerge upon an open space of some twenty yards in diameter, where we dismount, and fasten our horses to a neighbouring tree. The track of the elephants is here very fresh and plain. In every direction the grass is trodden down, and in some parts uprooted, as though a heavy log of timber had been hauled along it. You will note that in one or two bare and clayey places several large circular and oval-shaped impressions may be distinctly traced, and these belong, the circular to the bull, and the oval to the cow-elephant ; the height of each animal being about six times the diameter of these impressions. From a careful measurement it appears that the animals we are in search of must be about twelve feet high.

How strange, how mysterious the feeling which thrills the soul when we gaze for the first time on the fresh traces of a herd of these gigantic creatures ! Does it not seem an act of audacity for such pigmies as my companions and myself to adventure an attack upon twoscore or more of such giants, which, by a swing of their trunks or a stamp of their

hoofs, could crush us into nothingness? Strange, too, and mysterious is the emotion which springs from the utter solitude and deep silence of the measureless forests; widely different from the cheerful feelings one experiences when traversing an open breezy country. The gloom, the shadow, the stillness—only broken by a shifting ray of light, or the crackle of a distant branch, or the melody of some unseen bird—impress one with a species of devout awe.

[“Bravo!” exclaimed Douglas.

“I have often felt the peculiar sensation you describe,” said Fisher, “when wandering alone in a thick wood. One seems afraid, by voice or motion, to break the intense stillness which everywhere prevails.

‘Silence and twilight here, twin-sisters, keep
Their noonday watch, and sail among the shades,
Like vaporous shapes half seen.’*

We are conscious of the presence of an unseen Power, which subdues the wild tumult of our thoughts, and bids the passionate heart be still.”]

Moving quickly forward, (continued Seymour,) we neglected—I shall henceforth adopt the past tense in relating our adventures—we neglected to pay sufficient attention to the signs which betoken a herd’s proximity. We had scarcely traversed thirty yards, when I looked round to the spot where our horses stood, but was prevented from seeing them by the denseness of the intervening bush. Several large branches had been snapped off the trees, the ends eaten, and then flung across the track in different directions. Either in sport or wrath, the elephants had entirely destroyed two or three trees of a considerable size that had hung over their path, and peeled the bark off in many instances for several feet up the stems.

* Shelley, ‘Alastor.’

Steadily, steadily we pressed forward, following in the footmarks of the animals; their freshly-trodden course being easily detected.

The silence that reigned in the bush caused me much surprise, for I had supposed that a herd of wild elephants would indicate their presence by noises audible at a great distance. My companion told me, however, that during the day they usually remained quiet, especially if they were in a suspicious neighbourhood, or where they had smelled traces of man.

For about a mile we continued our steady march, creeping under the branches that checkered our forest-path, and removing others which had been apparently dropped by the elephants. At length, observing the branches of a distant tree to be violently shaken, we halted. We watched them for a considerable time, and listened, but only heard a strange rumbling sound, for which we could not account. This, as I afterwards ascertained, was produced by the elephants; but seeing a couple of monkeys springing about in a distant tree, we thought it must be caused by them.

About one hundred yards further the bush became very dense, long creepers trailing all over the shrubs, twining and interlacing the underwood together, and rendering it absolutely impenetrable, except where our huge game had forced a path. In moving through these avenues quickly, we could not help making a little noise. I was about two yards behind my colonial friend, and did not deem any animal was near, when suddenly the bushes close to our right hand were rudely agitated, and a deep growl was uttered resembling a lion's roar. My friend sprang forward, and raised his gun to fire: I was going to follow him, but glancing to the left, I descried a huge elephant, about two yards distant, striding towards us with upcoiled trunk and ears



“ RUN FOR YOUR LIFE ! ”

erect. At the same moment my companion fired, and springing past me, shouted, ‘Run for your life!’ I did not tarry for another look, as I then heard, almost over my head, the terrible shrill trumpet of the animal which I had seen charging, in addition to the groan of the wounded elephant, and the responsive shrieks of several others who had gathered round us.

For the first hundred yards we ran with all the speed of an athlete; but we had neither time nor space to spare, so looking round soon after we had started, I saw the big elephant charging close upon us, with a mischievous and malicious aspect.

I lost my hat, but we rushed on heedlessly; diving under some of the branches, leaping over others, wheeling first one way and then another, until I was completely out of breath. Having both barrels loaded, and being anxious to try a shot, I called for a halt, but my companion would not hear of it, advising that we should get clear of the bush at all hazard, as the herd had shown themselves so savage. I gave way to his better judgment, knowing that he united true courage and a daring spirit with sufficient prudence to prevent their degenerating into showy recklessness. At length we reached our horses, and I must own I felt much more comfortable when again seated in my saddle, than when on foot, and within a pace or so of the elephant's trunk.

We stopped to listen, and could hear the shrieks and trumpets of the wild troop, and the crashing of the thick jungle growth; all plainly showing that they were still intent on overtaking their insignificant but presumptuous foe. I had, as I have just told you, dropped my hat during the first hundred yards' rush, and felt it was inadvisable to stop and pick it up.

My companion told me that he expected we should find his elephant dead if we returned, as the growl we had heard seemed indicative of a death wound. Having aimed behind the shoulder, he considered such a result probable.

As soon as we emerged from the bush, we met with a Hottentot on the Natal flat, quietly sitting under the shade of a tree, to repair his only and sadly-dilapidated pair of trousers: he looked at us very sagaciously, and said, '*Ole-*

phants bannie qui bas'—(Elephants very angry, sir). On asking him how he knew this, he said, that although he could only just hear the report of the gun, the elephants' trumpets were audible enough, and he knew from the tone how savage they must be; yet this man was distant at least a mile from the scene of our encounter.

In the course of the evening we decided that, early on the morrow, we would retrace our steps, and follow up the wounded elephant until we found him, if he should not happen to have fallen dead on the spot. We also agreed that the ivory should be divided between us, as, although I had not actually fired, I had participated in the attack, the peril, and the flight. But woe to those who count their chickens too soon! At this very moment the tough old forest-giant was most probably stalking leisurely through the bush, without the least intention of becoming a white man's prize, and caring as little for a fourteen-to-the-pound bullet as an iron-clad man-of-war for an Enfield rifle!

The next morning, as soon as the sun had dried up the heavy dew, we set out.

We were now attended by an English settler, a veteran elephant-hunter, two Kaffirs, and a Hottentot.

The scene of yesterday's encounter was soon reached. The discovery of my hat, knocked out of all shape, satisfactorily identified it. But there was no sign of the wounded elephant. None but an experienced eye, indeed, could have detected that anything extraordinary had happened; but it was perceptible enough to both the Kaffirs and the Hottentot, who, after some little hesitation, lighted upon the huge animal's trail.

Following it up, we soon found blood, both on the leaves and branches, and even on the ground, but not in such large

quantities as I should have supposed. We pursued this spoor for some distance, but the blood soon ceasing, and the elephant's track being confounded by other feet, we abandoned the fruitless quest.

We discovered, however, that during our advance on the previous day, we had passed within fifty yards of three elephants without being aware of their vicinity. The noise and the rumbling sounds which we had heard were caused by them. We also saw that three or four elephants, feeding close to the spot from whence we had fired, had chased us for at least two hundred yards. We had unwittingly escaped a very great danger.

'These elephants,' said one of my companions, 'must have been very angry. But one never knows in what temper one may find them. To-day they will be very placable, and seem scarcely to object to a little rifle-practice; to-morrow they will not suffer you to approach within a quarter of a mile of them without charging you. I have been very careful how I approached elephants ever since my Kaffir was killed by them last year, near the Um Volozie.'

As a close to the day's sport, I begged my friend to relate the incident.

THE DUTCH BOER'S STORY.

It seems that, whilst out on a shooting expedition, he came on the fresh spoor of a very large bull-elephant. The traces were quite recent, the game having passed early that morning. His Kaffir, who was named Mabili, was an excellent marksman, very cool in emergencies, and of undaunted bravery. He was walking beside the Dutchman, who rode a small pony.

The two had arranged that Mabili was to receive half

the game if he put the first bullet into the elephant. My friend hoped by this agreement to stimulate him to a keener interest in the hunting, and make him keep a sharper lookout. If he only 'assisted' at the elephant's death, he was to receive whatever reward the boer might think he deserved.

Following the spoor of the elephant for about four miles through an open park-like country, where a few scattered bushes and trees were the only cover, they descried the elephant at last, standing under a tree of considerable size. What followed I will describe nearly in the Dutchman's own words :—

'He swung his trunk a little every now and then, or I could not have distinguished him from a large rock, he stood so still. We settled our plan immediately. I was to leave my horse where we were, and stalk with my Kaffir up to the elephant; for he seemed so quiet, I felt sure I should surprise him, and surprise is half the battle with an elephant.

'Mabili had a single-barrelled heavy rifle of mine, that threw a three-ounce bullet; while I was armed with a double-barrel, that threw eight-to-the-pound. To conceal our approach, we took advantage of every bush and tree, and arrived within fifty yards apparently without giving the alarm. But just as we were about to fire, the hitherto sleepy-looking and indifferent Colossus turned quickly round, with ears extended, and, trumpeting with tremendous shrillness, dashed straight at us.

'We both fired, and both hit him; but he never even shook his head, and continued his mad headlong charge.

'I turned, and ran towards my horse, as a man runs for his life, but with little hope of reaching him, as the distance was great.

‘I therefore wheeled suddenly to the right in the direction of a great tree that I had noticed near at hand. I did not know what had become of Mabili, but, on looking round, saw that he had turned in a contrary course. In this he he acted judiciously, for it generally puzzles an elephant when those he is chasing separate.

‘It seemed, however, as if the animal had fixed its eye on Mabili, for it turned sharp after him, and soon was close upon him. I feared that there was no chance for my poor Kaffir, but shouted as loudly as I was able, and fired my gun, in the hope I might distract the elephant’s attention. In vain: the next instant he had caught Mabili with his trunk, with which he seemed to press him to the earth, dropping on his knees at the same time, so as to thrust his tusks into him. I thought I heard a faint shriek, but instantly mounting my horse, I galloped up to the scene, and sent a couple of bullets into the monster. He had caught up the mangled body of the unfortunate Mabili, and, holding it by his trunk, was slowly stalking off. When I wounded him, he dropped the body, and giving one of his shrill trumpets, rushed at me. I cared little for him now, as I could gallop away from him easily, and loading quickly, I repeated the dose. Six double shots did I give that fellow—all about the shoulder—before he showed any signs of having received a severe hit; he then seemed rather weak, and spouted from his trunk a quantity of blood. I was determined to kill that elephant, if I followed him for a week. Upon giving him three more shots, he swung his trunk about a little, and fell.

‘I now looked for the remains of my poor Kaffir, and found him crushed to pieces: his death must have been speedy, as a tusk had gone quite through him, breaking in his chest.

'Next day we buried him under the tree near which we had first seen the elephant. He was the cleverest Kaffir huntsman I ever had. Therefore, beware how you go near single bull-elephants—they are always very savage; but, above all, avoid cow-elephants without tusks; they are not common, but if you should come across a "poes-kop" like this, "pas-op" (take care)!'

Here I conclude my hunting adventures in South Africa.

["I should like to go elephant-hunting," said Vernon; "there is some credit in braving a huge animal like that, but I never *could* relish the popping away at a little timid hare or unfortunate partridge—I don't call that *sport*, or, at all events, sport worthy of a man."

"No," said Beauchamp; "I had rather go deer-stalking. Oh, it must be a thing to cheer the heart to brush away the morning dew from the purple heather, and up the deep glen, and over the sunlit hill, to chase a noble two-year-old buck, one's frame all in a glow with exercise and expectation, and one's nerves as firm as steel with the consciousness of a glorious prize."

"Much of the pleasure of deer-stalking," remarked Douglas, "results, I think, from the beauty of the scenery among which it is pursued. You cannot help being exhilarated by the sight of each lofty mountain peak, soaring sharp and distinct into the clear blue sky—each deep, shadowy ravine, echoing with the mysterious murmur of an unseen brook—the green knolls that spring above the heather—the black-gleaming tarns lying in the hollow of the hills—and, now and again, the royal eagle, as it shoots homeward to its eyrie on some inaccessible cliff."

"You are right, friend Douglas; and no one," observed Seymour, "sees such magnificent landscapes—and shall I not say sky-scapes—as the hunter. His are the glories of

the sunrise and the sunset—noon, twilight, and midnight—heaven in a glow of golden splendour, or studded in its cloudless sapphire with a myriad stars. His, too, are the marvels of the wreathing mist, and his the wonders of the storm. 'Tis his,' says Professor Wilson,—

'Tis his, by the mouth of some cavern his seat,
The lightning of heaven to hold at his feet,
While the thunder below him that growls from the cloud,
To him comes on echo more awfully loud!'"*

"Dux," interrupted Douglas, "we are growing too poetical. We are rising above Firbank; we are soaring—soaring into mist and cloud; let us get down to earth again, and go on hunting the elephant."

"Good," said Beauchamp, "and with your permission, boys, I'll tell you another story of a wonderful escape."]

LIFE OR DEATH.

You will all have heard, I doubt not, of the Old Shekarry, an English gentleman who has published his remarkable hunting-experiences in India and elsewhere, under the title of the 'Hunting-Grounds of the Old World.' He appears to have been gifted with unusual presence of mind, patience, skill, and unrivalled courage, and it is certain that he encountered some terrible hazards, and accomplished some 'hair-breadth escapes.'

Chasing the elephant in the Annamullay forests of Hindustan, attended by his Hindu beater, Goolooloo, the latter suddenly gave the signal that the enemy was at hand. But scarcely had the Old Shekarry snatched up his gun, before a male and seven female elephants swept past like a whirlwind. Throwing up his gun, and aiming behind the ear, he fired a couple of shots, in the hope he might check

* Professor Wilson, Collected Works, 'Poems: The Hunter.

the career of the male. The last took effect, and brought him to his knees; but he immediately regained his legs, and, separating from the females, dashed madly through the forest, which he filled with his mighty roar.

Snatching his second spare gun from Goolooloo, and jumping down a bank, the veteran hunter ran with all speed to cut his prey off at the gorge, which was extremely narrow, as a torrent here poured its waters through a huge cleft in the rock, through which the animal would be forced to pass to join the rest of the herd.

The Shekarry was running down the bed of the stream, on either side of which the banks were lofty and precipitous, when he heard a rattling noise among the stones behind him, and, on turning his head, perceived the wounded elephant tearing straight after him, with eyes flashing fire, and about forty paces distant. Speed he saw could avail him nothing. The brute would have pounced upon him before he could have scaled the bank. Swinging round, therefore, he dropped on his knee, and took a steady aim. On charged the elephant, with a fiendish shriek of revenge. The Shekarry allowed him to approach within fifteen paces, and then fired, aiming between his eyes—his favourite shot, he says—but whether it was that he felt unsteady, being breathless from his run, or that his rifle, which weighed sixteen pounds, was too heavy, it is certain that his left arm dropped as he pulled the trigger, and his shot took effect four inches too low, entering the fleshy part of the roots of the trunk, instead of penetrating the brain. It failed to arrest his career; and before the Shekarry could get out of the way, the huge brute was upon him. Something dark passed over him; he felt a severe blow; then he was whirled through the air; he knew nothing more.

‘When I recovered my senses, I found myself,’ says our

plucky sportsman, 'lying on my face, in a pool of blood, which came from my nose, mouth, and ears. Although nearly choked with clotted gore, a sense of my perilous situation flashed across my mind, and I strove to rise and look after my antagonist, but he was nowhere to be seen. I picked myself up, and although fearfully bruised and shaken, found that no bones were broken. I was lying on the top of the bank, although quite unable to account to myself how I got there. In the dry bed of the nullah I saw my rifle, and after much painful exertion managed to crawl down and get it. The muzzle was filled with sand, which I cleared out as well as I could; and then, sitting by the edge of the stream, began to wash away the blood, and bathe my face and head. Whilst so employed, I heard a piercing shriek, and saw Goolooloo rushing towards me, closely followed by the infuriated elephant, who was almost mad from the pain of his wounds. Luckily, a hanging branch was in his way, and with the agility of a monkey he caught hold of it, and swung himself up the bank, where he was safe. The elephant, balked of his victim, rushed wildly backwards and forwards two or three times, as if searching for him, and then, with a hoarse scream of disappointment, came tearing down the bed of the nullah. I was directly in his path, and powerless to get out of the way. A moment more, and I saw that I was perceived, for down he charged on me with a roar of vengeance. With difficulty I raised my rifle, and, taking a steady aim between his eyes, pulled the trigger—it was my only chance. When the smoke cleared away, I perceived a mighty mass lying close to me. At last I had conquered. Soon after this I must have sunk into a swoon, for I hardly remembered anything until I found myself in my hut.'

["What a gallant fellow!" exclaimed Mountjoy. "There

was more true courage in such a deed, than in charging half a score of bayonets on the field of battle."

"But did the Old Shekarry die?" inquired Lambert.

"No," answered Beauchamp; "or he would not have published his book, and we should never have known all his wonderful adventures. He was seriously ill, however, for some time, being bruised and shaken in a frightful manner."

"He showed great composure," remarked Seymour, "in a peculiarly trying emergency. It must test the iron of a man's nerves to see a huge beast charging full upon him, and to know that his hope of safety rests in his rifle, which, perhaps, might miss fire. I doubt whether the mere love of sport is a sufficient justification for plunging into such severe risks. If a man becomes a hunter with the view of keeping down the beasts of prey that are so severe a scourge to various regions, he does a good work in his generation, and I honour him for it; but if he pursues them merely for the purpose of gratifying a thirst of adventure or notoriety, I don't sympathize very keenly with him in the dangers he voluntarily incurs."

"And don't be misled, my boys," continued Fisher, "as to the nature of true courage. I do not dispute the pluck and presence of mind displayed by the Old Shekarry, but boys are too apt to make heroes of men whose only merit it is to show a contempt of physical danger. The physician who enters the room of a patient dying of some contagious fever exhibits a far nobler and more heroic spirit. So does the martyr who perishes at the stake; or the patriot who yields his life on the scaffold, in glorious testimony to the truth of the principles he has espoused. So an agreeable poetess has sung:—

'Yet, it may be, more lofty courage dwells
In one weak heart which braves an adverse fate,

Than his whose ardent soul indignant swells,
Warmed by the fight, or cheered through high debate.’”

“Who is the poetess?” whispered Douglas to Seymour.

“The Honourable Mrs. Norton, I think,” he replied.

“While Cowper,” continued Fisher, “defines a hero in admirable language:—

‘He holds no parley with unmanly fears;
Where duty bids, he confidently steers;
Faces a thousand dangers at her call,
And, trusting in his God, surmounts them all.’

“And therefore, young fellows, while I would not have you depreciate the courage of these hardy and adventurous sportsmen, I would wish you to remember that theirs is not the most exalted or most useful form of heroism.”

After a short pause, Seymour said,—

“Can none of you favour us with any further stories respecting the mammoth of modern animals? Are all your elephant anecdotes exhausted?”

“No,” said Edward Vernon; “I have been looking through a book of African travel lately, and I think I can recall a few passages which will interest you.”

“Very good, Ted,” said his dux; “we shall listen to you with pleasure.”]

A MIDNIGHT SCENE BY AN AFRICAN LAKE.

You must suppose yourself ensconced, (said Vernon,) in a shady covert on the marge of a small African lake, whose waters gleam brightly in the radiance of an unclouded moon. The trees, which are few and stunted, fling their gaunt shadows on the sandy desert like spectral arms. All is silent; save when an animal comes down to the cool waters to slake its thirst. And while the night wears on, the stillness is frequently broken by a giraffe or a zebra, a gnu or

a koodoo, all brought together by the same keen desire. As you watch, the scene grows animated; and at length you become sensible of a peculiar stir and agitation in the society of quadrupeds. Observe the giraffe swaying his long neck to and fro; hark to the low, dolorous, prolonged cry of the zebra. Why does the gnu retire with such evident alarm? Why, with a reluctant and angry movement, does even the ponderous black rhinoceros drag his slow bulk away from the shining pool? If you look across the plain to yonder low line of hill, you will detect the reason. Those dark forms, gradually looming larger in the moonlight, are elephants, and at their approach, as you have already been told, the inferior animals invariably retreat.

It was on such an occasion that the celebrated African traveller, Mr. Andersson,* approached to within a short distance of seven bull-elephants. While endeavouring to select the largest for his shot, he was startled by a peculiar rumbling noise immediately in his rear.

Springing to his feet, he perceived, to his surprise and alarm, a semicircle of female elephants, with their calves, rushing down upon him. Thus planted, as it were, between two fires, Mr. Andersson's position was certainly critical, and he had no other choice than to plunge into the pool, which could only be crossed by swimming, in the face of the male elephants, or to make a sortie through the ranks of the females.

He adopted the latter alternative, but first fired at the nearest of the seven bulls; and then, without a moment's hesitation, he rushed on the more open line of the female phalanx, uttering, at the same time, loud shouts. The unusual sounds caused a momentary panic among the animals, of which our hunter took advantage, and slipping

* C. J. Andersson, 'Lake Ngami,' pp. 413-417.

out between them, discharged his second barrel into the shoulder of the nearest as he passed her. No sooner, however, had he effected his escape, than the whole herd made a simultaneous rush at him, but fortunately in the darkness they did not see the course he took, and he was soon in safety among the jungle.

When, after a while, he sallied from his hiding-place, he found the whole scene silent and undisturbed; only a solitary elephant was drinking at the pool, and pouring water on his sides with his trunk. Mr. Andersson's spirit of adventure was nothing daunted by the peril he had so narrowly escaped, and seating himself right across the elephant's path, he quietly watched the animal's proceedings. 'After a time,' says Mr. Andersson, 'I saw him, as I thought, moving off in an opposite direction. But I was mistaken; for in another instant his towering form loomed above me. It was too late to get out of his way; so, quickly raising myself on one knee, I took a steady aim at his fore-leg. On receiving the ball, he uttered the most plaintive cries, and rushing past me, soon disappeared in the neighbouring forest. The next afternoon he was discovered dead within rifle-shot of the water.'

[“Thank you, Ted; a story ‘short but sweet.’ And now,” said Seymour, “we have had enough of the elephant. What is to be our next choice?”

After some discussion, the WOLF was selected, and Seymour announced it as the subject for the following Saturday. The boys then separated: some returning to the school, and some betaking themselves, on various errands, into the village.]

The Wolf: His History and Habits.

STORIES OF ADVENTURES WITH WOLVES—THE PRAIRIE WOLF—
WOLVES IN OUDH—ANECDOTES.



OPENING his manuscript volume, Fisher began to read as follows:—

The Wolf (*Lupus*) belongs to the genus *Canis*, and closely resembles the dog in structure, the only anatomical distinction being the oblique position of the wolf's eye. This distinction may serve to illustrate the difference of character that exists between the two, for the wolf can never look you straightforwardly and steadily in the face; he is susceptible of no generous emotions; fidelity, honour, tenderness—well-known canine virtues—he never cultivates; his glance is sly, furtive, and treacherous; his cunning can only be equalled by his ferocity, which no amount of confinement seems able to diminish; his cruelty is only surpassed by his powers of endurance. His subtlety exceeds that of the fox: he never ventures from his retreat to windward; as he advances, his tail obliterates all mark of his foot-prints, so that his enemies cannot track him; if two or three prowl forth in company, they travel in line, and contrive to tread in each

other's steps, so that you would think only one animal had passed; and to deceive his captor, or his intended victim, he will feign death with marvellous skill. The she-wolf, however—and it is the only pleasing trait in the lupine character—is very fond of her young, which she educates carefully.

[“Educates?” exclaimed Vernon.]

Yes; she trains them to their vocation, as you are pre-



WOLVES ON THE BATTLE-FIELD.

pared for a competitive examination. She accustoms them to suffering, and to bear pain without complaint, just as the Spartans taught *their* children; and it is said that their parents bite them, beat them, and drag them by the tail, punishing them if they utter a cry, until they learn to be

mute. They are gradually accustomed to eat flesh, and taken out to hunt down their prey.

For these reasons, I don't believe that the wolf proceeds from the same stock as the dog; their widely different characters would seem to indicate a distinct origin. Wolves, moreover, never *bark*—except in the case of a species met with in South Africa—they only yelp, or howl. A traditional hatred exists between the two, who never come in contact without fighting to the death: the dog, if victorious, leaves the dead wolf untouched; but the wolf, should he vanquish his assailant, feeds on the carcass. Altogether, the dog, it seems to me, belongs to a nobler type, and occupies a higher rank in creation.

Superstition, of course, has woven its fancies about the wolf, as about the grim and grisly bear. Pounded wolf's liver, steeped in wine, was supposed by the old pharmacopolists 'a sovereign cure' for diseases of the liver. Split open and dry a wolf's snout, and you were furnished with a talisman which no evil spirit would dare to disregard. The Hindus believe that the village within whose confines a drop of wolf's blood has been shed is cursed with a terrible curse, until due atonement is made. Pliny tells us that 'the great master teeth and grinders being hanged about a horse's neck, he shall never tire or be weary, be he put to never so much running in any race whatsoever'—a fact which I commend to the notice of the 'patrons of the turf.'

The range of the wolf is extensive. He is found in Europe, in the northern regions of Asia, in the more temperate parts of Africa, and in North America. In ancient times he abounded in Britain, and committed such terrible ravages that King Edgar enacted a law enabling the kinsmen of a criminal to ransom him with wolves' tongues, in greater or less number, according to the relative enormity of his

offence. When a man was outlawed, the Saxons said he was 'wolf-shed,' or abandoned to the wolves; and January was called 'wolf-monath,' on account of the havoc which they committed at that period of the year. All along the great roads of the counties bordering on Wales, refuges were erected for the wayfarer—stout huts, built of strong timber, and with impenetrable doors—whither he might fly when pressed close by the hungry animals.

As late as the reign of Edward I. their numbers were so great, that it was found necessary to appoint a Wolf-hunter General; and all bailiffs and royal officers were commanded to lend him every assistance.

They were gradually extirpated from the southern provinces of the kingdom; but in Scotland they lingered until the middle of the eighteenth century, especially in the wild fastnesses of Moray. A tragic story is told in connection with the last wolves which existed in that romantic district.

THE BROTHERS OF FALKIRK.

They had their den, it would appear, in a deep sandy ravine under the Knock of Bre-Moray, a lofty mountain near the source of the Burn of Newton.

Two brothers, residing at the little village of Falkirk, boldly undertook to watch one day until the old ones had gone forth in quest of food, and then to kill their young; and as every peasant had suffered more or less from their depredations, the excitement to learn the result of so perilous an enterprise was universal.

Having seen the parent animals quit their covert, the one brother stationed himself as a sentinel to give the alarm in case the wolves returned, whilst the other threw off his plaid, and, armed with his dirk alone, crawled in to despatch the cubs. He had not been long in the den when the

watchman descried the wolves stealing back to the ravine. A sudden panic seized the wretched man; he fled without giving the promised warning, and never paused till he crossed the Divie, two miles off. There, conscience-stricken for his cowardice, he wounded himself in various places with his dirk; and on reaching Falkirk, asserted that the wolves had surprised them in the den, that his brother was killed, and that it was with extreme difficulty he, wounded as he was, had effected his escape. A shout of vengeance rent the air; and, the villagers, laying their hands on the nearest weapons, set off in a body to recover, at all hazards, the mutilated remains of their friend.

What, then, was their astonishment, when, on reaching the hill of Bogny, they beheld the mangled and bleeding form of him whom they supposed dead, dragging himself towards them. For a moment they thought it was a ghost, and dreaded to approach him; but some of the boldest recovered from their momentary affright, and lent him the assistance the poor creature stood in need of. His story was soon told. After killing the cubs, he was in the act of making his way from the den, when the mouth of the hole was darkened, and the she-wolf threw herself upon him. With one lucky thrust of his dirk he despatched her at once; but his struggle with her mate was longer and more severe. Fortunately, the body of the brute he had killed afforded some protection, and, after receiving several severe wounds, he succeeded in driving his knife into the heart of his ferocious assailant. The indignation of the people against the dastard who had abandoned his brother to what seemed certain death, and had then endeavoured by falsehood to conceal his guilt, was unbounded. They dragged him before the laird, who, on hearing the case, assumed, as in those rude days was not unusual, the function of a judge,

and ordered the criminal to be hanged on the summit of the highest hill—a sentence that was immediately and willingly carried into execution. *

[“Showing,” observed Beauchamp, “that Lynch law was known in Scotland long before its introduction into the United States.”]

The wolves of Siberia, (continued Fisher,) are among the most ferocious of their kind; and the traveller through the Siberian wastes often falls a victim to their ferocity. Mr. Atkinson, an unimpeachable authority, records his opinion of their savage nature, and illustrates it by a ‘thrilling’ experience of his own. The story runs as follows:—†

With a retinue of Kalmucks he had encamped for the night on the banks of a small lake. A large fire was lighted, and the men disposed themselves around it, after having carefully picketed their horses. The darkness had gathered over, when a sudden and terrible howling broke upon the silence; a howling which smote with terror many a heart, for they knew that it proceeded from a pack of furious wolves. In hot haste they collected their horses, and posted them behind the fire. Then they looked to their fire-arms, though scarcely with a hope that their ammunition, however well expended, would outlast the murderous fury of the approaching enemy, who had scented them from afar.

The fire was suffered to burn very low, for the Kalmucks knew that their best plan was to suffer the foe to come within gunshot-range, and then pile on the fuel, and kindle an enormous flame, in such wise to dazzle and affright the wolves, and reveal their exact position. Ere long, the gallop of hundreds of heavy feet was heard, and then the pile was stirred up into a great blaze; the pack suddenly stopped

* Sir T. Dick Lauder, ‘Account of the Great Moray Flood.’

† T. Atkinson, ‘Oriental Siberia and Tartary.’

short; their ears and tails erect, their eyes glaring fiendishly. Make ready, men! Take sure aim, and waste not a shot! Now! A rattling volley was discharged, and with good effect, as the loud shrieks and grim howls bore witness. In a few moments the gallop was resumed; but the wolves were retiring, not advancing.

They did not withdraw to any great distance, however, nor had they any intention of abandoning their intended prey. They had retreated, we may suppose, to deliberate upon the best mode of attack. A brief interval, and they returned; stealing now between the lake and the camp, and dividing into two parties, so as to renew the assault on both sides. Galloping across the frozen snow—their fierce eyes glowing through the darkness—the double band came on, and on, and on. But again a storm of shot arrested their career; this time, however, they did not retreat—they only halted.

At this moment of peril, when so many hungry jaws were seeking to 'devour them up,' Mr. Atkinson's little band were startled by the approach of a fresh pack of wolves. But the very event that threatened their destruction proved their salvation, and they were rescued from their danger by the ferocity of their enemies. On the arrival of the second band, the first-comers, by their snarls and growls, indicated their wrath that these strangers should put in a claim for the booty which they considered their own. They therefore flung themselves incontinently upon them, and a frightful *mêlée* ensued, such, probably, as human eyes had never before witnessed. During the height of the fray, a few of the Kalmucks contrived to glide into the forest and obtain a fresh supply of fuel, which, piled on the dying embers, soon kindled a tremendous conflagration. The sudden-shooting flames and crackling

brands spread a terror and a consternation among the raging wolves; and a well-aimed volley being poured into their midst, they gave a final howl, and took to flight.

Mr. Lloyd, in his 'Scandinavian Adventures,' gives a curious account of a tame wolf, with which he was furnished by a Swedish lady. It will serve as a contrast to the foregoing narrative.

Her husband had purchased three wolf-cubs, which had only just begun to see. One of them was a female. Out of curiosity, the lady begged leave to keep them for a while. They were kept together about a month, residing meanwhile in a garden arbour. As soon as they heard their mistress in the courtyard, calling 'Sma valparna' (or, Little puppies), as she was accustomed to name them, they would run up to her with the most pleasing signs of affectionate delight; and when they had been caressed and fed, returned peacefully to their shelter. After the lapse of a month, two were given away; and the one that remained sought refuge with the work-people, though during the day he generally followed his mistress and her husband. As he grew up his attachment increased to such an extent, that when they took a walk about the estate, and he was with them, he would crouch beside them when they rested, nor allow any one to approach nearer than about twenty paces. If they drew closer, he growled, and showed his teeth. When his mistress scolded him, he would lick her hand, at the same time keeping his eyes intently fixed upon the intruder.

He wandered up and down the house, and in the kitchen, like a pet dog; and was very fond of the children, licking them, and playing with them good-temperedly. This continued until he was five months old. As he had then grown both large and strong, his master, apprehensive that in his sports with the children he might hurt them with his

strong claws, or, if he found blood upon them, be incited to do them an injury, determined on tying him up. However, his mistress frequently released him, and took him for a walk.

His kennel was placed in the lower yard, near to the gate; and in the winter-time, when the peasants came with charcoal, he would leap on to the stone fence, where he would wag his tail and whine, until they came up to him and patted him. At such times he showed a strong desire to search their pockets, in the hope he might come upon a dainty. To this practice the men grew so accustomed that they amused themselves by putting a piece of bread in their coat-pockets, to let him find it out, which he perfectly understood; and he ate all that they gave him. His regular daily allowance was three bowls of food. He allowed the house-dogs to eat with him out of the same bowl; but if any strange animal attempted to share the meal, he would break out into a frantic fit of rage. Whenever he caught sight of his mistress in the yard, he kept up a dreadful noise; and when she went up to his kennel, would raise himself on his hind legs, and place his fore paws on her shoulders, and in the excess of his delight would lick her,—always beginning to howl with sorrow when she withdrew.

One day a fox was shot. His master, having fastened a rope round the carcass, gave it to the wolf, who received it with evident pleasure, and drew it along with him into his kennel. But when his master pulled at the rope, with the intention of taking it from him again, Master Wolf held on so tenaciously that both he and the dead fox were drawn out of the kennel together; and even at last he did not release his hold except with the loss of two of his front teeth. As, however, these were his temporary teeth, others came in their place about three weeks later. He was kept as a

pet for a year; but proving expensive to keep, and making night hideous with his howls, his master caused him to be shot.

Mr. Lloyd furnishes other instances of the practicability of subduing the natural ferocity of the wolf,—at least while kept in confinement.

At one time, says Mr. Lloyd, he had serious thoughts of training a fine female wolf, which he had in his possession, as a pointer, but was prevented from doing so by her inconvenient partiality for the pigs of his neighbours. She was chained in a little enclosure, just in front of his window, into which those animals, when the gate happened to be left open, occasionally found their way. The devices to which the wolf resorted to get them in her power were very amusing. When she saw a pig in the neighbourhood of her kennel, she would throw herself—evidently to put him off his guard—on her side or back, wagging her tail with the most playful innocence. And she would continue her amiable demonstrations until the porker was enticed within the length of her tether, when lo! the mask was thrown aside, and she appeared in her true character of the remorseless enemy of the porcine race.

The Scandinavian wolves do not often attack man; only in the winter-time, when they are sore driven by hunger. They will then display the most astonishing audacity. A peasant, returning from a village which he had been visiting, was assaulted by a wolf with so much violence that he was torn from his sledge and dragged along the ground for some little distance. The man's coat, however, happily gave way; and the poor fellow, regaining his feet, sped back to his sledge, and pursued his journey. The wolf followed him closely, however, until he reached his own village.

We read of a boy, about eight years old, being attacked by a wolf in the winter-month of January 1821. Together with several others, he was cutting *gran-och tall-ris* (the sprays of the spruce-pine and Scotch fir), for the use of the cattle, in an enclosure near his father's cottage. On seeing the wolf approach, the boys shrieked out and made for home. But the beast soon overtook them; and charging into their midst, seized the child already mentioned, dragged him over a fence, and, as he bounded along, carried him over several dykes, or stone walls. The children who had escaped ran to tell their mother what had happened, and she immediately hastened to the rescue of her son. She found him still grasped in the cruel jaws of the wolf; but on her resolute approach the wolf dropped him and retreated. The boy grew up to be a man, but always carried about his body the marks of the wolf's claws.

It was in the same winter that a wolf fell in with some peasants who were crossing the snow-covered fields in their sledges, and ventured to attack the rearmost of the party. The peasant seized a stout stake, and rained blows at the aggressor; who, however, dexterously eluded them, and getting in the rear of the peasant, renewed his assault. The issue of the combat might have been disastrous, had not the cries of the man alarmed his comrades, and brought them back to his assistance.

A tragical event is recorded in the register of a Swedish village. A wolf killed a little girl, about eleven years old, within a short distance of her home, which she had just quitted on an errand. Some peasants, who were crossing the frozen expanse of Lake Ressen, which was close by, discovered the ferocious beast, with the poor little corpse lying under him. By sheer force they tore it from his clutch, and laid it reverently on one of their sledges, for the purpose

of depositing it at the nearest house until it could receive interment. This chanced to be the child's home. Great was the grief of the parents when they recognized the well-known features, and great their fury; for the murderous wolf had followed, and showed no dread of the people who



WAITING FOR PREY.

were collected. His craving for human flesh would seem to have been very great, for as he passed up from the lake to the cottage he licked the red drops that had fallen on the snow.

If you are not weary of these painful anecdotes, I will add one more in further illustration of the wolf's terrible voracity. A boy, Erik Scendstedt, fifteen years old, was

killed near a village called Stjernerund. In company with two young friends, he was skating on the Lake Grycken, and halted for a while on one of its little ice-bound islands. While the three were resting themselves and chatting merrily, a wolf suddenly dashed in among them. He was an animal of large size; in colour light gray, with some dark spots, and white under the belly; and the survivors, their imagination stimulated, perhaps, by their terror, asserted that his growl was as loud as the bellowing of an ox. His first charge was directed towards a boy named Sundmark; who, by leaping aside and brandishing a short stick, fortunately evaded it. But the unfortunate Erik, having removed his skates, could not get out of the way; and the wolf, attacking him next, threw him to the ground, flung his whole weight upon him, biting at his throat and shaking him dreadfully. The poor lad's cries, you may be sure, were of the most agonizing description. His comrades, terrified out of their senses, and unable to render him any assistance, darted away on their skates to the nearest village.

Meantime, the cruel wolf dragged his prey over the island, and along the ice, until he reached the shore. Then he crossed the high-road, dashed up a considerable eminence, and finally gained a kind of elevated wooded table-land.

The villagers, informed of the sad occurrence, pressed him in close pursuit; and the beast, finding he could not escape with his victim, hurriedly abandoned him, and galloped off into the forest.

The poor boy was alive when rescued, but soon afterwards expired.

[Here Fisher stopped. A minute or two elapsed before the painful impression passed away which these sad narratives had produced.

"I think I shall devote myself," said Douglas, "to hunting down the wolves of Scandinavia. I am convinced that if I succeeded in getting rid of them, as Egbert did of the wolves of England, I should be a public benefactor, and deserve a statue in gold!"

"Your single efforts," remarked Seymour, "would hardly accomplish so great an enterprise. Something more powerful than you—namely, Civilization—will gradually extirpate the ferocious characters. As population increases, and man extends his dominion farther into the wilds, the wild beasts still remaining in Europe will be destroyed."

"There does not seem to be any present decrease in the number of wolves in Norway and Sweden," said Fisher, "notwithstanding that every man's hand is against them."

"I don't wonder," remarked Beauchamp, "that every man's hand *is* against them. They are hateful creatures."

"The wolf, says a Swedish writer, taxes the peasant more heavily than the Crown. So great is the abhorrence in which he is held, that many Scandinavians believe he is an evil spirit incarnate. In the old Norse mythology we read that—

' Eastward, in the forest of iron,
Sat the Evil One,
And there begat
The young wolves.'

And the popular belief is, that thence descended all the different races of the ferocious animal. The usual superstition prevails that it is unlucky to call him by his real name; while to meet one at certain hours, or under certain circumstances, is a bad omen; and their appearance in considerable numbers forebodes war, or some great national calamity. Old women, lean and shrivelled, who dwell alone in the forest-recesses, and profess to deal in witchcraft, are be-

lieved to be in league with, and to shelter wolves; whence they are known by the hated name of *Varg-mödrar*, or Wolf-mothers."

"I think I have read that there are many ways of hunting the wolf adopted in Sweden and Norway."

"On this point," said Seymour, "I can give you some little information; borrowing it, as Fisher has done, from Mr. Lloyd's 'Scandinavian Adventures.'"

The boys disposed themselves to listen, and Seymour proceeded:—]

WOLF-HUNTING IN SCANDINAVIA.

First we will begin with the Lapps.

When in pursuit of the wolf, these hardy children of the North frequently carry no other weapon than a stout staff, about six feet long, armed at one end with an iron pike. This is useful, not only against their great enemy, but in staying or expediting their own movements across the slippery surface of the frozen snow. An enemy indeed, is the wolf to the unfortunate Lapps. Night and day, summer and winter, he prowls in the rear of their herds of reindeer, pouncing upon every straggler, and frequently carrying off as many as forty out of a single herd. When starting on the chase, the men, as it often occupies several days, take a sufficient supply of provisions; and with dogged perseverance they follow the wolf over the roughest ground and through the densest thickets, driving him from one place to another until he is worn out with hunger and fatigue, when they close in upon him, and with loud shouts put an end to his career.

Turning now to Sweden, we find that the chase is almost always conducted on foot. It would not be possible to take a horse up the mountain-ravines and into the tangled for-

ests. Generally the wolf-hunts that take place are for the capture of cubs,—the Swedish dogs being little capable of facing the older animals. In this case, the hunters make for the she-wolf's *lyå*, or lair. Twenty or thirty in number, they form in line, and carefully beat the country before them. While the cubs are small, the wolves usually take shelter in the thickest brakes and the clefts of the most inaccessible rocks; but when the rye has sprung up high enough to conceal them, they often retreat to the rye-fields. Their haunts are betrayed by the bones of slaughtered animals; and if large courageous dogs, accustomed to give *stånd-skall*—that is, like our pointers, to remain steadfast at one and the same spot—they will soon indicate the *lyå* and the cubs. The she-wolf does not deposit her cubs, like the fox, in deep holes in the ground, but under boulders, the stumps of uprooted trees, in close thickets, or beneath the spruce-pine; and hence, when the *lyå* is found the cubs are readily taken and destroyed.

It is customary, however, to retain one alive, that, by its cries, it may attract its mother. For this purpose a screen of boughs is hastily erected near the lair, and behind it a couple of the hunters conceal themselves. The homeward course of the mother-wolf is quickened by the yelp or wail of her offspring, as it hangs by the hind leg to a neighbouring tree. As soon as she comes within reach the hunters fire.

Allusion has already been made to the custom of hunting wolves with a pig as bait. Let me tell you a curious story in illustration of it:—

Some years ago, says a Swedish officer,* my servant, about eight o'clock one evening, informed me that she had just heard cries of distress on the Lake Råda,—which lay

* Lloyd, "Scandinavian Adventures," ii. 482, *et seq.*

about sixty feet only from my house. On going out-of-doors, I heard them also. Soon afterwards came a peasant, who said a drove of five wolves had attacked him on the ice, and attempted to deprive him of his horse; and that it was only by a sturdy use of a stout cudgel he and the steed had escaped from their jaws.

I ordered a horse to be harnessed without delay to a *kolryss*—that is, a very large basket-like sledge, in which charcoal is carried to the furnaces—and a pig to be tied up in a sack; and with the estate inspector as my companion, and three guns loaded with slug-shot, I dashed in the direction of the lake.

At first the pig would not squeal; but he altered his mind when we got his head out of the sack and pinched his ears. The sound of a possible prey soon attracted three wolves; but they did not approach nearer than within eighty paces, and at this distance they followed us for a considerable time. Finding, however, that so long as we kept moving the beasts would come no closer to us, we halted; whereupon they presently advanced to within forty or fifty paces, and quietly seated themselves on their haunches. The inspector and myself now agreed to count one, two, three, very slowly, and on pronouncing the last word to fire, each at his own particular wolf. This we did; our guns going off so simultaneously that the report seemed like one and the same. Both the beasts at which we had fired fell immediately, and the third dashed off with lightning speed.

We now ran towards the spot where the animals lay, but in our exultation forgot to take the third gun, which was still loaded, along with us. We had not proceeded more than twenty paces from the sledge, when one of the prostrate wolves suddenly sprang to his feet and ran off. Seeing

this unlooked-for resurrection, I returned forthwith to the sledge for the loaded gun. Meanwhile, the inspector went up to the other wolf, which had hitherto made no movement, and seized him by the leg with the intention of drawing him towards the vehicle. But as the beast showed signs of vitality, he struck him on the head with the butt of his gun. This, however, had an effect contrary to what was intended; instead of despatching, it brought the brute to life, and on to his legs again. Nor did a second blow improve the state of affairs, for he now not only broke from his captor, but, following his comrade's example, ran away. At this moment I had seized the loaded gun, and was in the act of giving the *coup de grace*, when, most unfortunately, the inspector stood in the very line of fire, and consequently I durst not pull the trigger.

We afterwards got into the sledge and set out in pursuit of the tenacious beast my comrade had been belabouring; but our horse, being old and steady, could not be stimulated even into a trot, and the attempt proved fruitless. We persevered as long as possible; and at times the moonlight revealed to us our missing wolf, as he *lunkade*, or trotted slowly before us. We fell more and more in the rear, however; and at length abandoned the pursuit, and returned home, exceedingly disgusted with the ill-success of our exertions.

At an early hour next morning we resumed the chase. The wounded wolves had taken different directions. The one which the inspector had tussled with we found near the borders of the lake, about four miles from the spot where he had fallen on the preceding evening; at least, we found his head, his tail, and his feet, his companions, cannibal-like, having banqueted on the rest of him.

The second wolf, at which I myself had fired, we also

found near the lake, lying under a willow-bush, where he had passed the night. At our approach he ran off. I tracked him all day, and several times as he crossed the open forest-glades caught sight of him; but on each occasion he was out of range. Traces of blood were discovered at each place where he made a temporary halt; but all my efforts to overtake him on that day proved fruitless. So did they on the following; which was not very surprising, as the snow was so deep that I sank in it up to my knees, and consequently could make but little progress.

On the third day I started with two men and a couple of large dogs. We had no difficulty in stirring up the wolf; for, as on previous occasions, he had spent the night very near where he was left on the preceding evening, his retreat being stained with much blood. The dogs, however, were of no avail; as soon as they scented the beast they were panic-stricken, came to heel, and refused to leave us for the remainder of the day. We ourselves persevered throughout the forenoon; but finding at length that the wolf, instead of growing weaker and weaker from loss of blood, as we had anticipated, began now to clear with the greatest ease obstacles which he had previously found much difficulty in surmounting, we considered all further pursuit as worse than useless, and returned home.

["Baffled by a wolf!" cried Vernon; "well, if *I* had been in the Swedish officer's place, I would not have given up."

"No," added Mountjoy; "I call that a miserable end to an adventure."

"Perhaps the wolf was uncanny," remarked Douglas; "and I should think he was, if the more blood he lost the stronger he became!"

Wolves in Sweden are frequently caught in the *varg-grop*,

or wolf-pit,—which usually measures ten to twelve feet across, and about the same in depth. They are of various sizes; square, octagonal, circular. The sides are usually built up with wood and stone; partly to prevent the earth from falling in, and partly to prevent wild beasts, when once incarcerated, from getting out. These pits are very effective. Sometimes as many as eight wolves are captured at one 'fell swoop.' But then the misfortune is, that now and then an unwary biped stumbles into one, and such a result cannot be considered otherwise than unfortunate. Mr. Lloyd tells an amusing tale of a country parson to whom this accident happened, under the following circumstances:—

The reverend gentleman in question was a great sportsman, and had a varg-grop on his land for the capture of wolves and foxes. One Sunday morning, after preparing his sermon and pulling on his snowy bands, he thought he would pay a flying visit to his varg-grop. On reaching the spot, he observed an aperture in the straw that covered the mouth of the pit; and though he had no time to send for a rope and ladder to haul up the prisoner, he could not resist the temptation of seeing what animal it was of which he had made prize. For this purpose he peered curiously into the pit; but reaching too far over the brink, he lost his balance, and plunged to the very bottom!

As soon as he had somewhat recovered from the shock, he looked around the gloomy den, and discovered, in a corner, a fox that some time before had effected its descent in an equally unexpected manner. What was to be done? It was Sunday morning; his sermon was in his pocket, and his gown was on his back: he could easily hold a service; but there was only an audience of *one*; and that one was more intent on regaining his liberty than on listening to a grave discourse! The parson himself was troubled with

the same desire, and in no mood for preaching. He looked at his large, round turnip-like watch, and lo! it wanted but a few minutes to the hour at which the service ought to begin.

Meantime, much surprise and confusion prevailed in the parsonage. Everybody was asking, Who has seen the pastor? The women-servants went upstairs and downstairs, and round about the house and the garden; but no pastor could be found. An old and faithful serving-man, however, withdrawing from the noise and bustle, began to reason within himself where his master could have wandered; and at last, knowing his propensities, conceived the idea that he had visited the varg-grop, and perhaps fallen in.

Without intimating his suspicion to any person, he hastened to the spot, and, to his great joy, heard the parson lustily chanting the 99th Psalm. In an ecstasy of delight he advanced to the brink of the pit, and extended his hand to the reverend divine to help him up. Unfortunately, the master weighed several stone more than the man, and, in his anxiety to escape from his captivity, tugged at the proffered hand with so much force as to draw the poor fellow down into the pit! Here was a complication! The varg-grop had never before held such a motley group; but fox and master and man were compelled to remain there until assistance arrived in the course of the afternoon.

What, you will say, became of the congregation? Why, with the characteristic patience of the Swede, they whiled away the time in the churchyard, the men with their long tobacco-pipes and the women with their longer tongues, until an infallible instinct told them it was the dinner-hour!

The report of this misadventure soon got abroad; but such is the wickedness of people, and such the tendency of a story to expand as it passes from lip to lip, that at length it came to be believed that *three* foxes of very different

colour, but all alike in cunning, had been caught, that Sunday, in the parson's varg-grop!

["Capital, capital!" exclaimed Douglas; "oh! how I would have liked to peep at those three foxes!"

"But I don't see," said Lambert, "why—"

"Of course you don't," rejoined Douglas; "but how awkward it would be for our beloved friend here if *he* met with such a catastrophe!"

Another mode of capturing wolves is by the erection of a *varg-gard*, or wolf-enclosure; an enclosure so arranged that the wolf finds no difficulty in getting into it, but is unable to get out of it. For this purpose the fence is made very high, and with an inward inclination: the spot selected is generally surrounded by a wood; and a kind of *chevaux-de-frise*, or low hurdle, bars the entrance. This gives way when the beast springs upon it, and deposits him in a cavity below, after which it recovers its upright position, and effectually prevents him from forcing his way out. Of course, he is tempted to enter the *varg-gard* by a distribution of bait outside and inside of it.

Many wolves are captured in Scandinavia in the common steel-trap. The trap is not baited, but simply concealed beneath the snow in such paths as they are known to frequent. It is fastened by a chain to a block of wood, some six feet in length, and of considerable thickness. This precaution is adopted in order that, should bad weather ensue, the trap itself, as well as the prisoner,—should one happen to be made,—may not be wholly buried in the snow, and lost. It is only brought into use in the winter-time, and after a fall of snow. A good situation for it is in the tracks trodden down by the herds of tame reindeer; for these *Lapp-vägar*, as they are called, are always haunted by several kinds of wild beasts. First in order after the herd

comes the daring wolf, now and then picking up a fawn, or even an old deer that has straggled from the herd. Next the voracious glutton; and after him the fox, who, by his cunning, manages to share in the plunder that his predecessors have acquired by force. Lastly comes the Arctic fox, bent on picking up some of the crumbs that may have fallen from his master's table. Several traps are usually set in the same pathway, at a distance of one to two miles apart, in order that the wolf, if he avoid the one danger, may fall into the next.

More wolves are destroyed by poison, however, than by any other means. The drug mostly used is arsenic, but some persons prefer *nux vomica*. Of course, the poison is administered by being carefully concealed in a piece of bait. Fulminating-powder is also in favour. This deadly preparation, after being duly protected from injury, is introduced into the leg or thigh-bone of a fresh-killed calf or sheep, from which the marrow has been first extracted. Afterwards the bone is laid in a part of the forest where the wolf is known to haunt; and when the beast begins to gnaw it, an immediate explosion takes place, and his head, as a consequence, is shattered into atoms!

Finally, the wolf is sometimes his own executioner. Thus: a wolf was found hanging between the stems of two fir-trees growing out of one and the same root, but separating at some feet from the ground, so as to form a fork. The probability is, that while in pursuit of a cat, martin, or squirrel, he had, in his efforts to seize his prey, made a great leap, and missing his hold, had fixed himself as I have described. A spruce pine, nearly six inches in diameter, growing close at hand, was nearly gnawed through by the tortured animal while thus imprisoned. The people in the neighbouring village stated that for some time they had

heard a plaintive howling in the forest ; but such noises are not uncommon, and their curiosity was not aroused. The wolf's suspended carcass was discovered by a passer-by.

["And now," said Fisher, putting aside his volume, "I call upon Seymour to relate one of his most interesting narratives, while I enjoy an interval of rest."

"To which," said Seymour, "you are well entitled. I don't know, old boy, what we should have done without your valuable aid. Well, here goes for a thrilling story."]

A LIFE AND DEATH RIDE.*

The scene is Circassia, and the time the winter of 1852.

The plains were covered with snow ; it had accumulated in the valleys ; it lay in heavy masses on the mountain-side ; and the Circassians, then gallantly struggling for liberty and independence against the Russians, had taken advantage of the severe weather to harass their enemy by desultory and incessant attacks.

One of the Circassian detachments having been encountered by a greatly superior force, had been compelled to separate, and return homeward by the most secluded paths. We shall follow the fortunes of a party of eleven men, who, well-mounted, and armed with matchlocks, pistols, and swords, carried with them as prisoners four Russian soldiers and a woman.

Emerging from a narrow defile, they found themselves upon a vast, dreary, and treeless plain, which spread before them, white and boundless, like a foaming sea. They made their way across it, until they fell in with a pack of seven wolves. Of these they killed two or three for the sake of their fur, and, dispersing the rest, continued their journey.

* 'The Hunting-Grounds of the Old World.'

Shortly afterwards the wind bore upon their ears a wild, hoarse, howling sound. They mistook it at first for the roar of the wind itself, as it tore across the snowy wastes from the hidden depths of the mountains; but soon their attention was drawn to a black spot on the distant horizon, which rapidly grew larger, advancing like a heavy and lowering cloud, and the travellers realized the full extent of the peril that impended over them—they knew that they were pursued by a horde of wolves.

It was sorely to their disadvantage that a long day's journey had already spent their horses, but the poor animals seemed conscious of the danger that threatened. They flew over the hard, crackling snow as if furnished with wings, and at first fairly outstripped their pursuers. But the nearest hamlet was at least seven miles distant, and occasionally the horses floundered in a snow-drift, which sorely impeded their progress. It soon became evident that escape was impossible, and the ravenous wolves, with fiendish eyes and horrid yell, gained rapidly upon their prey. The Circassians deliberated among themselves what course should be adopted in so pitiful an emergency, and finally determined on the cruel, yet not altogether unjustifiable plan of sacrificing the prisoners one by one, so as to gain time for the others to escape. The poor woman was the first victim. A Circassian, stepping behind, hamstringed her horse, and brought both to the ground. On swept the rest of the little troop—a fearful shriek ringing in their ears as they plunged into the darkness.

They had gained by this expedient a temporary respite, but the wolves were soon again upon their track, and as the horses could no longer keep up the first fury of their speed, their chances of safety were proportionably diminished. A second victim was now offered in the person of a Russian

soldier; and each time the pack overtook them, a new sacrifice was demanded, until all the prisoners were slain, and the whet of blood had only sharpened the appetites of their pursuers. The chief now deemed the time had come to try the effect of their matchlocks, and volley after volley was poured in among the pack. They were slain by scores, but the rest pressed on, as if their fury had only been stimulated by the slaughter of their companions.



WOLVES AND THEIR PREY.

Two of the horses, no longer able to maintain their flight, next fell to the ground, and fell with a terrible shriek, almost human in its intensity. Their riders were swift of

foot, active, and muscular, and they sped along as men will do when it is a question of life or death ; but the deep snow soon fatigued them, and bidding their companions farewell, they drew their yataghans, shouted their battle-cry, and died like heroes, among a heap of slain.

Another two miles, and the survivors would be safe ! But alas, their horses were panting in agony, and the foremost of the wolves were scarcely a hundred paces distant ! An old man, whose two sons were also present, perceiving that another sacrifice was necessary, calmly took his leave of his countrymen, chanted his *imaum*, or creed, as a death-hymn, and felling his horse to the ground with the butt-end of his pistol, perished nobly. The survivors, now eight in number, continued their mad, headlong flight. Again the ravenous foe was upon them. The Circassian leader drew his pistol, and shot the man nearest to him through the head. Throwing up his hands with a sudden gesture, and dropping the reins, he sat firm in his saddle—though dead, stone dead—and his terrified horse galloped fiercely onward, until a second shot brought both to the ground.

Thus was obtained another respite, and the long wished-for village appeared in sight. They reached a rude hut of timber erected for the benefit of hard-pressed travellers, and, the door being open, rushed in, closed it, and hastily barred it. At this moment a terrible shriek—as of ‘some strong swimmer in his agony’—rose distinctly above the tremendous howling of the wolves, and looking through the crevices of the timber, alas, what was their horror to see one of their comrades, whose horse had broken down, and, unperceived, had fallen behind the rest, hemmed in by the ferocious beasts, and contending with them desperately, but in vain ! He was dragged from his saddle, and both man and horse were devoured before their eyes. Then was it fortunate for them

that the hut was firmly set upon its foundations, and the door made of stout iron-bound oak, for the wolves beat against it like the billows of an angry sea; nor did the constant discharge of firearms maintained by the beleaguered wayfarers, though it thinned their numbers, arrest their fury. The dead wolves were quickly eaten by their brothers, and the raging, howling, furious horde continued their fruitless efforts against the hut, and fought and prowled around it, until, on the evening of the second day, a terrible thunderstorm arose, and away in the darkness they swiftly scurried, leaving the Circassian fugitives, reduced to six survivors, to thank God for their preservation, and return to their homes with mingled feelings of joy and sorrow.

["Phew!" exclaimed Douglas, drawing a long breath, "I have seldom heard or read a more stirring story."

"I declare," said Beauchamp, "I could not help casting a sly glance up and down the glen, to make sure no ferocious band was dashing down upon our snug retreat!"

"Those poor Circassians!" exclaimed Mountjoy; "it must have been terrible work to see their comrades dropping off one by one."

"I wonder," said Beauchamp, "whether they were justified in shooting the unfortunate Russian prisoners. I suppose they were, as it was the only means of preserving their own lives. Yet it would have been far nobler of them to have sacrificed themselves *first*, and to have saved the lives of their prisoners. I think *Englishmen* would have done so; in fact, during the great French war, several instances occurred, when ships were sinking or driving ashore, of every effort being made to rescue the French captives before our gallant tars gave any heed to their own safety."

"Wolves," said Fisher, "are hardly as black as they are painted. At least, several apparently authentic stories exist

of their fostering and suckling children, instead of eating them."

"Oh, ay," interrupted Douglas, "you refer to the she-wolf that suckled Romulus and Remus."

"No," replied Fisher; "for that is not a well-authenticated story, but a popular legend, originating in the simple fact that the foster-nurse of those celebrated heroes was named *Lupa*, the Latin for 'she-wolf.' Here, however, is a story whose truth is vouched for by a British officer."*]

THE WOLF-CUBS AND THEIR MATE.

Some seven years ago, a trooper in attendance upon Rajah Hurdat Singh, of Bondee, when passing near a small stream, saw three wolf-cubs and a boy drinking. He contrived to carry off the boy, who seemed about ten years old, but was so wild and fierce that he tore the trooper's clothes, and bit him severely in several places. The Rajah, at first, had him fastened up in his gun-shed, and fed him with raw meat. He was afterwards allowed to wander freely about the Bondee bazaar. There he ran off, on one occasion, with a joint of meat from a butcher's, and another of the bazaar-keepers shot an arrow at him, which penetrated his thigh. A lad named Janoo, servant of a Cashmir merchant then at Bondee, took compassion on the poor boy, and extracted the arrow from his thigh. Preparing a bed for him under the mango-tree, where he himself lodged, he kept him fastened to a tent-pin.

Up to this time he would eat nothing but raw flesh, but Janoo gradually accustomed him to eat balls of rice and pulse. In about six weeks after he had been tied up, and after much rubbing of his joints with oil, he was made to

* Major-Gen. Sir W. H. Sleeman, 'Journey through the Kingdom of Oudh.'

stand and walk upright, whereas hitherto he had gone on all-fours.

All this lasted for three or four months, and he was taught to perform several simple household duties. However, while the boy was lying one night under the mango-tree, Janoo saw two wolves creep stealthily towards him, and after smelling him they touched him, when he got up. He showed no apprehension, however, but put his hand upon their heads, and they began to play with him, frolicking about while he pelted them with grass and straw. Janoo endeavoured to drive them off, but could not. At last, however, they left him; but the following night three wolves came, and a few nights after, four, who returned several times.

Janoo, in his anxiety to retain the lad, removed him from place to place, but he never lost an opportunity of escaping into the jungle, and showed great dissatisfaction when brought back again. At length Janoo was forced to leave home on a short journey. During his absence the lad disappeared, and was never more heard of.

Another curious story, (continued Fisher,) is related by the same authority.

At a place called Chupra, twenty miles east from Sultan-poor, lived a cultivator with his wife and son, who was then three years of age. One day the man went forth to cut his crop of wheat and pulse, and his wife took her basket and accompanied him to glean, leading her son by the arm. He had recently recovered from a severe scald on the left knee, and in all the enjoyment of renovated health, tumbled about on the grass. A wolf rushed upon him suddenly from the covert of a bush, caught him up by the loins, and carried him at a swift pace towards the ravines. The father was some distance off at the time, but the mother courageously

followed, screaming for assistance. Her neighbours ran to her aid, but they soon lost sight of the wolf and his prey.

For six years her husband and herself mourned for their son as for one dead, and at the end of that period she lost her husband. Soon afterwards two sipatees came from the town of Singramow, which is about ten miles from Chupra. While they sat on the border of the jungle, which stretched down to the stream, watching for hogs—they commonly come to drink early in the morning—they descried three wolf-cubs and a boy emerge from the jungle, and proceed in company to the water. The sipatees watched them till they drank, and were about to return, when they rushed towards them. All four then ran hastily towards a den in the ravines. The sipatees followed with all possible speed, but the three cubs outstripped them, and took shelter in the den. The boy, however, was overtaken, and seized. He seemed very angry and ferocious, bit at them, and caught hold, with his teeth, of the barrel of one of their guns, which they put forward to keep him off, and shook it. Nevertheless, they secured him, brought him home, and supported him for twenty days. They could not prevail upon him for that time to eat aught but raw flesh, and fed him upon hares and birds. As they found it difficult to supply him with sufficient food, they took him to the bazaar in the village of Koeleepoor, and there let him go, to be fed by the charitable people of the place, until his parents might recognize and claim him. One market-day a man from the village of Chupra chanced to see him, and on his return mentioned the strange story of his discovery to his neighbours. The poor cultivator's widow, on hearing the particulars, asked him to describe the boy minutely; and when she learned that he had the mark of a burn on the left knee, and three scars from the teeth of an animal on each side of his loins, she felt assured that her child was found.

Immediately she repaired to the Koelee bazaar, and, in addition to the two marks already mentioned, discovered a third upon the child's thigh, which he had had at his birth. She took him home to her village, where he was recognized by all her neighbours. She kept him for two months, and all the wealthy landholders in the vicinity furnished her with game for him to feed upon. He continued to dip his face in the water to drink, but sucked it in, not lapping it up like a dog or a wolf. A disagreeable odour was exhaled from his body. When the mother went to her work, the boy always ran into the jungle, and she could never persuade him to speak. He followed her for food, but showed no affection for her, and she could never bring herself to feel much for him; and, after two months, finding him of no use to her, and despairing of ever making any impression on his wolfish nature, she left him to the common charity of the village. He soon afterwards learnt to eat bread when it was given him, and ate whatever else he could procure during the day, but invariably went off to the jungle at night. He used to mutter some guttural sounds, but never articulated any word distinctly.

The boy was alive, and in the same semi-savage state, when General Sleeman visited Oudh. He had been seen by a British officer, named Nicholas, and there seems no doubt of the entire truthfulness of the story."

["What a strange tale!" said Beauchamp; "surely the boy must have imbibed something of the wolf-nature, and learned to converse in the wolf-tongue. How completely he must have cast aside the feelings, thoughts, and desires of a boy! I profess myself unable to read the mystery, Fisher: and as I can't, I will volunteer a story which shall be intelligible enough, and which, if not as melancholy, is almost as exciting as the one which Seymour told us."

“Bravo, Beauchamp!” said Douglas, “and after you comes your humble servant.”]

IN THE LITHUANIAN FORESTS.*

The vast forests of Poland and Lithuania are the only regions where now exist the *aurochs*, or wild bulls, which, in the time of the Romans, were found in all the wooded districts of Europe, and were distinguished by their immense horns, their thick mane, their long beard, and their hunch garnished with shaggy hair. These same forests are infested by hundreds of bears and wolves; the latter, when sore pressed in winter by a ravenous hunger, frequently gather in immense hordes, and an encounter with them is necessarily attended with imminent peril, as the following *true* history will prove. I borrow it from a foreign source, but to avoid confusion, shall identify myself—if you will allow me—with the hero.

I had been on a visit, with my sister Aninia, to the château of our uncle, situated on the frontiers of Lithuania, when I received the painful intelligence that my father had been seized with a sudden and serious illness. We did not lose a day in setting out on our homeward journey, for as the snow had ceased to fall, as the moon shone in full-orbed splendour, and we possessed, in the person of the venerable Rosko—an old huntsman of my father’s—a safe and experienced driver, we resolved to start that very evening, and to travel all night.

Well wrapped-up in our fur pelisses and abundantly supplied with provisions, we ascended our sledge, and arrived at nightfall on the verge of the immense forest which separated us from our paternal residence, and which

* Adapted from a French version in Vuilliet’s ‘Scènes et Aventures de Voyages.’

stretched far away into the very interior of Lithuania. The road was so ample that the branches of the trees could not screen from us the silvery beams of the moon; but the heavy masses of snow which had accumulated at various points along the route somewhat impeded our progress, and fatigued our horses. The silence which our sorrow imposed upon us—for my sister and myself were lost in gloomy thought and anxious expectation—was only broken by the echoing hoofs of our steeds, or the occasional bursts of the night-wind through the desolate glades. And a stranger spectacle can hardly be conceived than our travelling-party presented; the galloping horses, the sledge with its human occupants, the dreary solitude of the forest, the moonlit snow, the wide and deep blue heaven closing over all!

It was near midnight, and hitherto nothing extraordinary had occurred, when suddenly our horses displayed a curious inquietude; they breathed loudly and with pain, and began to push forward with a rapidity which needed no urging. These horses had been in my father's possession for several years, and we felt assured that only some unusual circumstance could produce so great a change in their behaviour. Evidently they were the victims of a great terror, for they cast furtive and frightened glances behind them, and one might have said that some invisible power was coercing them forward.

Their bounds and leaps soon became so violent that Rosko, to restrain them, was compelled to rein them in with all his force. This unwonted conduct caused me considerable anxiety, and I could not help looking upon it as ominous of some approaching peril. Old Rosko was also much perturbed: he incessantly cast an anxious and searching gaze around us, and vainly endeavoured to discover something by lending his ear to every sound. Suddenly I saw him

give the horses the reins altogether, and immediately they flew over the snow with frightful rapidity.

Leaning forward over his shoulder, I said to him in a low voice, so that Aninia should not hear,—

‘What is it, Rosko?’

The old man appeared to reflect for a moment, then he replied in tones quite as subdued,—

‘I fear the wolves are on our track! The cold drives them from the forests, hunger animates them against us, and we are lost if the swiftness of our horses does not preserve us from their attack.’

I have faced death under its most terrible aspects, but never has the clash of battle produced upon me so terrifying an effect as these few simple words. My first thought was for Aninia; it seemed as if I already saw her, in all her young, fresh beauty, torn in pieces by those cruel and furious animals. I had often heard of the obstinacy and speed with which wolves pursue their prey. Undoubtedly we might be saved if our horses did not break down; but was there not just reason to fear that their strength would give way before we could reach a secure asylum?

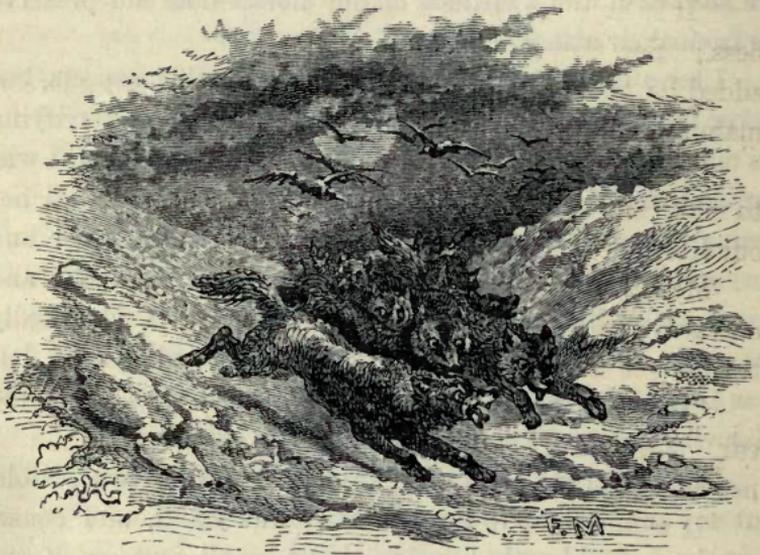
I had with me a hunting-knife, a gun, and two pistols, but my supply of powder and shot was small, and consequently I could only hope to slay a small number of our foes, whose habit it is to collect by hundreds for their nocturnal expeditions.

Our aged guide did all he could to urge forward his horses, but his exertions were unnecessary; their own instinct stimulated them more effectually than whip or spur.

I continually looked behind, but without desecring the objects of our detestation, when Rosko, whose eyes and ears were much more practised than mine, suddenly exclaimed,—

'There they are! Yonder! Do you hear their howls? That black point which you see in the distance is a troop of more than one hundred of these animals.'

I then perceived myself what the piercing sight of Rosko had discovered before me. The black, dense mass drew nearer and nearer. Their wild and terrible cries were borne to us through the stillness of the night, like certain messengers of an imminent danger.



IN PURSUIT.

Aninia suspected nothing; our extreme peril had not yet aroused her from her reverie. I could no longer leave her in such ignorance. Already I could distinguish the various groups into which our fierce and voracious enemies had gathered; already some, outstripping the rest of the horde, had pushed forward within musket-range of our sledge. I raised my gun, and levelled it at the nearest of these animals.

'Stoop, Aninia,' I cried, and at these words my sister seemed to awake from a deep sleep, but put no questions to me, comprehending at once that there was no time for explanations. Involuntarily she inclined her head, and the foremost, who was also the largest of the wolves, fell, pierced by a ball.

The report awoke my sister's maid, who, thinking we were attacked by robbers, began to shout for help with all her might.

'It is only the wolves,' said Rosko, with frightful coolness. 'See, they are devouring their fallen comrade! Come,' added he, 'we are delivered from one enemy, but there remain some scores, so that—'

He did not complete the sentence, for he was unwilling to make known to these poor women the actual horror of our situation.

Meanwhile, our horses, excited by the firing, galloped onward with fresh rapidity, while the wolves precipitated themselves on the dead body of the animal I had killed.

'It will not long delay them,' muttered Rosko in my ear. 'They will soon resume the chase, and our horses will not hold out.'

It was now that I learnt to admire my sister's firmness of soul. She was engaged in consoling her waiting-woman, and exhorting her to submit to God's will with Christian resignation. Then, folding her hands, she began to pray with serene composure.

The spectacle, I declare to you, inspired me with new courage, with fresh hope. I reloaded my gun, and held myself ready to fire. Our horses seemed to rally all their energies; but, at the same time, I saw that some of the gaunt and unclean beasts had gained upon us, impelled by increased fury.

A musket-shot again brought the foremost to the ground, and I hoped that the horde by falling pell-mell—as before—on the corpse of their fallen brother, would give us time to reach the edge of the forest, or, at least, some human habitation. But, alas! I was deceived in this expectation! Scarcely had I reloaded my carbine, when the wolves were again on our trail in a mass as compact as before.

[“Come now,” exclaimed Mountjoy, wiping the perspiration from his face, “I can’t stand this! Did they escape? What became of Aninia? Do tell a fellow!”

“No, no!” cried Seymour; “wait patiently for the *dénouement*, or you will spoil the whole.”]

‘All is useless,’ whispered Rosko; ‘our horses are nearly spent, and then the Lord have mercy on our souls!’

And, indeed, their exhaustion was becoming clearly evident. They breathed with hurried gasps; they swayed from side to side of the road; and yet they gallantly did their utmost, for they knew as well as we did the danger that impended.

Our situation was frightful, and I trembled—not for my own life, but my sister’s. I continued to kill the wolves, but the others did not slacken their pursuit. They followed behind us in serried ranks, and I could discern their palpitating tongues and glaring eyes.

And what a multitude of heads! My powder was exhausted, and to defend ourselves against this raging host, I had but my two pistols still loaded, my hunting-knife, and the butt of my carbine. Rosko had already taken note of this.

‘There remains for us but one hope,’ said he. ‘On our way to the castle I noticed a hunting-box, no longer inhabited, at a short distance from this point. If we can reach it, we are saved—at least for a time; on the other

hand, we have no other prospect before us but that of being devoured by the wolves. Should such a terrible fate attend us,' added he in a lower tone, 'then have mercy on Made-moiselle, and terminate her sufferings with your pistol, rather than see her torn to pieces by the teeth of yon terrible animals.'

I cast an angry glance at the old and faithful servant ; big tears rolled down his wrinkled cheeks, but he made a gesture with his head as if to enforce upon me his frightful proposition.

I shall never forget that moment. An icy cold feeling shot through all my limbs, and when I saw, in the attitude of prayer, resigned, and with eyes uplifted towards heaven, that sister whom I was bidden in the name of love and mercy to put to death, I experienced an anguish and an agony which no words can describe.

At that instant our hungry foes advanced simultaneously on each side of the sledge, and for a moment I despaired. My left hand seized one of my pistols, and with a wandering glance I was about to raise it to my sister's head, when I resolved on another effort for our preservation. I drew my hunting-knife from its sheath, and, brandishing it about my head, struck at the first wolf which essayed to spring upon the sledge ; he fell back bleeding upon the snow, and howling frightfully.

'Well stricken !' cried old Rosko ; 'spare your powder, and use only your knife and the butt-end of your carbine. Already I can see the hut I spoke of ; keep up the struggle for a few moments, and we are saved !'

These words restored my presence of mind. Rosko began to whip the horses without mercy, and the poor brutes made a last and powerful effort. I replaced the pistols in my pelisse, and, springing to my feet, stood upright, with my gun held high in the air.

Was it this threatening attitude, or the lightning-speed with which our horses bounded forward, which for a moment arrested our enemies? At all events it is certain that we shot several paces ahead, an inestimable advantage in our position. A moment afterwards, turning round my head, I could see the open door of the hut, and Rosko, with a shout of joy, sprang from his seat, while reining up the horses.

'We are safe! We are safe!' he cried; 'but we must not lose a moment!'

Aninia quickly abandoned the sledge, and entered the hut, into whose interior Rosko carried the waiting-woman. She had swooned in his arms. Then, seizing my gun, he returned to the sledge. Struck with astonishment and terror, for I could see the wolves approaching us in apparently increased numbers, I implored him not to expose his life without any necessity. But his end was already attained; he had cut the traces, and with a few blows from his whip, set the horses off at a mad gallop; then, turning round, he reached the door of the hut just as the two foremost wolves made a dash at the entrance. With the carbine he stretched one after the other on the ground, sprang into the hut, and quickly closed and barred its massive door.

We were safe!

["Hurrah!" shouted the boys, who had followed the narrative with breathless interest, as if they themselves had been the actors in it.]

It was a solemn moment, and the emotions which it excited no words of mine could fitly express. Many years have rolled by since then; but the thoughts and feelings which at that crisis I thought and felt still return to my mind in all their vivid force. A lively gratitude to God for so unexpected a deliverance animated every heart, and found vent in broken words.

At the moment that he had turned loose the horses, as the only chance of saving them, Rosko had had the presence of mind to bring away from the sledge the lantern which had illuminated it. We were therefore able, while the wolves raged frightfully without, flung themselves against the door, or strove to force the strong bars which protected the window, to explore the interior of our asylum.

Nothing met our gaze but walls of earth, completely bare, a miserable bench of the same material built up against the side, and a little half-rotten straw lying in one of the corners. But an invaluable treasure, which filled us with joy, was a considerable store of dry wood, capable of protecting us from the cold for four-and-twenty hours. Our old servant hastened to kindle an immense fire, which soon filled all the hut with a grateful warmth. The smoke escaped through an opening made for the purpose in the roof.

I looked with tenderness upon my sister, who, kneeling by the side of the still swooning waiting-woman, contrived at length, by administering a few drops of some restorative cordial, to restore her to consciousness. Then all of us seated ourselves around the cheering blaze, and while our enemies shrieked and howled without, we mutually congratulated ourselves on our good fortune in having escaped them.

Only the old Rosko appeared but little thankful for the grace which the mercy of God had accorded us. His gloomy looks were fixed upon the flames; his brow was heavy with grief and anxiety; and from time to time he shook his head with an air of inquietude. But I felt myself too happy to pay much attention to the mood of our companion. Suddenly we heard without a piercing cry, and we looked at one another in mute terror. The cry was too

loud to have been uttered by a human voice ; almost immediately it ceased, though the echo of it survived in our imaginations.

‘Sir,’ said Rosko to me, after a minute’s silence, ‘that outcry announces the death of your favourite horses. Often, on fields of battle, I have heard horses utter a similar shriek or moan—call it what you will—at the moment of death. It was evident to me that the poor beasts had fallen a prey to the wolves, who, while devouring them, suffered us to enjoy a temporary repose; but that they would return to us more lustful after blood and more terrible than before.’

Old Rosko was not wrong. A few moments later, these ferocious animals recommenced their attacks against the hut, and we could perceive that their fury was increased, for they made incredible exertions to climb up the walls to the very roof. While our eyes were lifted above with an unquiet gaze, a gust of wind driving away the smoke revealed to us the clear sapphire sky of night, and, at the same time, four ‘blood-boltered’ throats of hungry wolves ‘ravening’ for their prey.

‘From these we have nothing to dread,’ said Rosko, with a composure which we did not share ; ‘they fear the fire, and probably are too blinded to be able to recognize us.’

Suddenly we heard a terrible crash. At the same instant three of the furious beasts disappeared, but the fourth, precipitated inwards by the giving way of a portion of the roof, fell into the very centre of the fire.

‘Shoot quickly, but take good aim,’ cried Rosko, and, at the same time, he seized my gun. I fired and shot the wolf, which our old companion finished with half-a-dozen heavy blows. We dragged the dead body into a corner, its skin and flesh, scorched by the flames, exhaling an insupportable stench, and old Rosko tranquillized us with the assurance

that this would be the only visit of the kind which we had any cause to apprehend during the night ; but, added he in a whisper, the dawn will bring back to us more of these visitors than we shall be able to kill.

I alone had heard his last words. I asked him in a low tone why we had any cause to dread the morning, since, on the contrary, it seemed to me that, at daylight, the wolves would disperse and retire into the interior of the forest.

‘We must not hope that,’ he said, ‘for when wolves assemble in great numbers they do not fear the brightness of the day. As long as our supply of wood shall last, we shall be safe from any attack by way of the roof ; but when that is spent, little hope will remain of defending our lives and those of our companions. For what could we do when night returned, and our fuel had come to an end ?’

My last hope, then, was extinguished, and our ruin seemed inevitable ; my heart ached with the bitterness of its despair. Not the less did I seek to conceal my anguish from Aninia, and I was happy when she sunk to sleep, overpowered by fatigue and mental exhaustion, save that the soft smile which played about her lips smote me to the very soul.

Old Rosko continued in silence to maintain the fire. For the rest he was right ; no wolf showed himself at the breach in the roof ; but the scratchings at the door and the howls and hisses of strife and fury, lasted throughout the night. Before Rosko had communicated to me the secret of his apprehensions, all my prayers had been for the swift approach of day ; now, on the contrary, I wished that night would never terminate. What would be the gain to exchange the frightful but swift death by the wolves for a slow but painful death by hunger ?

At length the stars began to wane, and the dreaded dawn appeared. The moment for the fulfilment of Rosko’s

prophecy approached. The wolves, encouraged by the light, leapt, to the number of twenty or more, upon our feeble roof, which threatened to give way beneath the burthen. Aninia still slumbered, and I praised God for it. At this instant of supreme peril, when all hope seemed lost, we heard the sudden discharge of a musket—of a second—of a third—another, and yet another—while the shouts of huntsmen and the barking of dogs were borne to us upon the wind. My sister and her attendant awoke; the wolves sprang from the roof, and with fierce howls galloped away.

In hot haste we rushed to the door. All the pleasures of existence returned to us simultaneously with our deliverance from captivity and the dread of death. The blood flowed freely in our veins, and we inhaled with rapture the fresh air of morning. At length our liberator made his appearance at the head of a large body of huntsmen; it was M. Léon de M——, my sister's *fiancé*.

How can I describe the rapture of that moment! I felt like one distraught, and warmly clasped my friend in my arms; my sister, with a sweet smile, extended her hand to Léon, who pressed it fondly. And while his companions pursued the wolves, we related to him the incidents of that terrible night, and he, in his turn, explained the circumstances which had brought him to our help at so opportune a moment.

At my uncle's château, where he had been a guest at the same time as ourselves, the news had arrived, soon after our departure, of an immense herd of wolves that had broken out of the interminable forests of Lithuania, and spread over the country which we would be compelled to traverse. It was also stated that several catastrophes had already occurred, and that the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages had assembled to wage a war of extermination against them. Léon was much disturbed by these tidings, and immediately

collecting as many men as could be supplied with fire-arms, he set out in pursuit of us, accompanied by the other landholders and farmers. These had not wished to commence the chase until the following day; but no arguments or considerations could divert Léon from his purpose, and he succeeded in arranging for their immediate departure. Had he been an hour or two later, who knows whether I should now have been alive to relate this true story?

[When Beauchamp had concluded, a general burst of applause expressed the satisfaction of his audience, who all concurred in Seymour's oracular decision, that "it was a very good tale very well told."

"I don't think," remarked Douglas, "there is any beast of prey more repulsive to man than the wolf. Why, we have adopted the epithet 'wolfish' to express anything cruel, treacherous, and particularly foul."

"Ay," rejoined Fisher, "and when the Bible describes the fierce qualities of one of the sons of Jacob, it likens him to this sanguinary animal—' Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf; in the morning he shall devour the prey.'* It was the object of terror and dread to the shepherds of Europe in the mediæval times, so that they resorted to witches and sorcerers for the purpose of obtaining some charm or exorcism to protect the folds from its destructive attacks. In France the following 'Prayer against the Wolf,' which I am about to read to you, was considered very effective:—

"'Come, beast of wool, thou art the lamb of humility! I will protect thee. Go to the right about, grim, gray, and greedy beasts! Wolves, she-wolves and young wolves, ye are not to touch the flesh which is here. Get thee behind me, Satan!'" †

"What an absurdity!" cried Mountjoy.

* Genesis xlix. 27.

† Chambers, 'Book of Days,' i 129.

“Yes ; a good musket,” said Vernon, “would be more likely to scare away Master Wolf than all the exorcisms ever invented. What sort of animal, Fisher, is he in appearance ?”

“The European wolf is of a yellowish-gray in colour. He is clothed with harsh, strong, shaggy hair ; his eyes are obliquely set ; his muzzle is long and black ; he has a straight tail, white upper lip and chin, and a black band or bar upon the fore legs. Altogether, he is not unlike a dog. This species of wolf, according to Cuvier, ranges from Egypt to Lapland, and seems even to have crossed into America. The colour and size vary in different countries. Thus, the French wolf is browner and smaller than his German brother ; the Russian is longer, and carries a great quantity of hair on the cheeks, throat, and neck. In Scandinavia the colour is white in winter ; the Alpine wolf is small, and of a brownish gray hue ; in Italy, Dalmatia, and Albania, the colour is fulvous. The black wolf, a large, strong, and furious beast, infests the passes and forests of the Pyrenees. According to Colonel Smith, they formerly congregated in large troops, and even now the *lobos*, as they are called, will accompany strings of mules as soon as it becomes dusky. They are seen bounding from bush to bush by the side of travellers, and keeping parallel with them as they proceed, waiting an opportunity to select a victim ; and often succeeding, unless the muleteers can reach some place of safety before dark.

“Can you imagine a more terrible situation than that of some straggling traveller who has taken refuge from these sanguinary enemies in some cavernous recess of the mountains, and there, with gun and pistol, keeps watch during the long moonlit night, lest the herd should break in upon him ? Such incidents are not rare. Let the weary way-



ON THE WATCH !

farer but yield to the drowsiness which is too sure to creep upon him, and his fate is certain. It is only while the wolves know and see him to be on the alert that they refrain from attacking him; and if they are very hungry or ferocious, not even their instinctive dread of man will control them. Alas for the lonely watcher! Nothing is then left for him but to sell his life as dearly as he can!"

"And now for my story," said Seymour, "as nearly as I remember it."*]

AN ADVENTURE WITH WOLVES.

Mart, a Livonian peasant, was one evening making his

* Miss Rigby, 'Livonian Tales.'

way home through a desolate swampy wood, which stretched for some miles on one side of his little farm, and where the track, deep between accumulations of high snow, allowed only just space enough for his horse and sledge to pass. Mart's eyes were closed, and his senses heavy with weariness; nevertheless, he soon began to be aware that the animal was unwontedly quickening its pace; again it jerked forward—quicker still—and a low neighing sound of terror effectually roused the sleeping man. He looked in front; the scene had not changed its accustomed features. Then he looked behind. At first it seemed as if the landscape was the same; but soon he became aware that close to the sledge galloped three dark loathsome animals, while another was fast coming up behind. So low was the sledge, and so nigh the foremost, that its jaws were within reach of Mart's shoulders. For this he cared not; he knew that it was his horse they wanted first; and in an instant he perceived that all depended on the animal's courage rather than on his own. Could the frightened creature keep steadily in the track, the chances were much in his favour, for the moment the wolves turned off in order to pass and get ahead of it, the depth of the snow diminished their speed; but should the horse, in its turn, start aside and plunge into the snow, Mart knew that he must be lost. He leaned forward, and so encouraged the animal with word and hand, that it darted forward at an even pace.

Mart shouted violently, but the wolves were either too keen or too numerous—he did not succeed in arresting their pursuit. It was an awful moment, both for the horse and its master. Mart kept his hand on the animal, while with his eye he watched the ferocious brutes, which were often within arm's length. He had a hatchet, which he always carried on these occasions to chop the frozen fish; he felt for it, and

grasped it in his hand, forbearing to use it, however, for the closer the wolves kept to the back of the sledge the less they were seen by the horse. Every minute, however, one or more of them broke out of the track in the attempt to pass ;



ON THE LOOK-OUT.

and although they instantly lost footing in the snow, yet the unblinkered eyes of the little animal had descried the dreaded enemy, and a sudden plunge forward made Mart turn his eye in anxiety to see that it kept straight in the narrow path.

One of the wolves was unusually large and long-limbed, and more than once had contrived, in spite of the deep snow, to draw nearer the sledge than any of its companions. On this grim grisly creature Mart kept constant watch, and caught the greenish glare which shot from its straining eyeballs. It turned off again—the snow lay flatter for a space—the wolf kept its footing—it gained—for their swiftness is extraordinary—the horse turned a despairing eye upon it—

Mart withdrew his hand, wet with the animal's perspiration, the wolf was just beyond arm's length, but he held his hatchet in readiness. The horse swept forward at a pace inspired by terror; the wolf was just abreast, it turned sharply towards the sledge; now was Mart's opportunity. He dealt a tremendous blow; the wolf avoided it, stumbled, and in a moment was yards behind.

The distance from Mart's home, where a young wife and sister anxiously awaited his return, was now quickly shortened beneath the horse's hoofs, till the fear of an overturn became a source of fresh apprehension. Mart, by this time, was alive to the fact that he had no common lazy brutes to deal with, but keen, hungry, and resolute animals, to which man or horse would be equally welcome. Such creatures would not be deterred even by the sight of a human habitation, as is usually the case, and an ugly mile or more of open ground which lay between the verge of the forest and his hut he looked forward to with real alarm.

They had now reached the very margin of the wood; the road became opener; the wolves gained on each side; it was a race between life and death! The horse bounded furiously forward, the sledge caught against the stump of a tree, was swept away at a tremendous pace, and Mart was left alone in the snow. In a moment a heavy claw had slit the throat and front of his sheep-skin—it was well his wife's home-made wrappers lay so thick beneath. He flung off his assailant and rose; his hatchet had been jerked out of his hand in the fall, he flung a despairing glance around, but saw it not. The horse was now out of sight, two of the wolves were close to the defenceless man, and two others, abandoning their pursuit of the animal, were bounding back to him. Mart faced the foremost, he could do no more, and in an instant was surrounded.

[Here Seymour paused, and every boy—so great was the excitement—drew a long breath, as if he had just surmounted some imminent peril. The Fat Boy indulged in a murmured exclamation of "Stunning!" and the young *raconteur* resumed his interesting narrative.]

Let us now return to Mart's modest home, where his wife and sister muse and wonder what can have detained him. Have you never felt, when a loved one has been absent, some dim presentiment of evil gradually taking possession of your mind, until, in spite of all your efforts to be bright and hopeful, your cheek turns pale, your eyes fill with tears, and an agony shoots sharp and sudden at your heart? It was so with Anno, Mart's fair young wife, as she sat at her spinning-wheel by the light of the pine-wood candle. Liso, Mart's sister, unable any longer to stifle her apprehensions, but reluctant to increase Anno's alarm by exhibiting her own, retired into a small chamber especially appropriated to her. Old Karria Pois, their trusty dog, lay curled up before the stove in happy slumber; but all at once he pricked up his ears and listened—he rose hastily—darted to the door—barked, scratched, and wagged his tail—until Anno rightly interpreted his signs and threw the door open. The dog dashed furiously out, but no signs of her husband greeted the wife's anxious eyes. She went out into the freezing air, saw nothing, heard nothing, and was slowly returning, when a sound caught her ear—the clatter of hoofs ringing sharply on the frozen ground. What danger did this portend? Mart had never before approached in so hurried a manner. There was no time, however, for wonder—the next moment the horse galloped up to the door, reeking with foam, and trembling in every limb. Anno saw instantly that something had occurred—something terrible—something, the very thought of which seemed to freeze her blood—for the sledge was overturned, and Mart was not there!

Anno was still but a girl of seventeen summers—her life hitherto had been all summer—she called quickly to her grandmother, who did not answer, she flew into the inner room, where Liso stood, motionless as a statue, but with hands folded and her lips moving in silent prayer. ‘O *Jammal* (God),’ cried the poor girl, ‘deign thou to hear her!’ And leaving her undisturbed, she darted again from the house, and, almost unconscious of what she did, attempted to trace the rugged track which the horse had followed through the snow.

We must now return to Mart, whom we left beset by the hungry wolves. He knew what it was to put forth his vigorous strength in athletic games and wrestling matches, and it was such as, shoulder to shoulder, and muscle to muscle, few even of the hardy Livonian peasants could withstand. Yet was it as nothing against the heavy weight, the intolerable pressure, the iron grasp that now bore him down on every side. For a few seconds the despairing efforts of a man to whom life was sweet, because he had much to live for, daunted his pitiless assailants; but his own blood was reddening the snow, and its sight seemed to heighten their ferocity into fury. Again the blood-seekers closed upon him—and they pulled him down!

We are sometimes told that in sudden peril the mind has no time to think; those who utter such a platitude have never experienced such an emergency. It is then, indeed, that the powers of the mind are strained to the uttermost, and thoughts pour over the brain, to scathe and scorch it, like a lava flood; thoughts of the checkered past, with its loves, and joys, and sorrows; thoughts of home and the old familiar faces; thoughts of the mysterious future, on whose threshold we are trembling; all, all, and more, are concentrated into one moment of passionate emotion! So was it

with the poor Livonian, while struggling in the jaws of hungry wolves. But the lurid eyes glared over him, and the grasp tightened on his throat, and he felt a terrible choking sensation; his senses were giving way, when, lo, into the midst, with one sharp howl, dashed another animal, hard breathing, and fastened like a vice on the principal assailant. For a moment the wolves relaxed their fury; Mart reeled giddily to his feet, and recognized Karria Pois as his deliverer. He stood, bewildered and amazed, for a second; then, looking around, he saw one wolf slinking off and the others grappling with his gallant dog. At the same time his glance rested on a bright object in the snow—it was his hatchet. Mart joyously darted upon it, and then threw himself into the mêlée. The blood dripped from him, but his limbs were uninjured, and the strokes he dealt were worthy of the stoutest peasant in that country-side.

One wolf soon lay dead at his feet; another, gashed with many wounds, crawled off as best he could; and now Mart flung his whole strength on the third and hugest brute, which held Karria Pois in as deadly a clutch as he had held his master. No light task was it to release the faithful dog. Mart dealt his ringing blows on the wolf's skull, and ribs, and backbone, but the dog's own body prevented him from dealing a fatal wound, and the wolf seemed to feel no other. Nor was it until Karria Pois in his great agony suddenly stretched out his limbs, that Mart found an opportunity of burying his hatchet deep in the creature's throat. Exhausted with his great toil and imminent peril, he would now have flung himself on the frozen snow, where death would have surely visited him in the guise of slumber, but a light touch on his shoulder, and a fond trembling voice in his ear, aroused within him a new life—a sob, a tear, and Mart and Anno were clasped in each other's arms!

["So ends my story," said Seymour, modestly.

"And a better story," cried Douglas, "I never heard."

"Well, of all animals," remarked Mountjoy, "I do think that wolves are the most sanguinary; they have not a spark of generosity in them; I don't wonder that Egbert the Saxon was glad to get rid of them by accepting wolves' heads for tribute-money. But, Fisher, cannot you tell us something by way of companion to Seymour's capital sketch?"

"Yes, I think I can. Did any of you ever hear or read Mr. Whitehead's account of his escape from wolves in North America? Well, then, I will tell you what I remember of it."]

"A NIGHT OF PERIL.*"

During the winter of 1844—you must suppose that Mr. Whitehead himself is talking to you—I had much leisure to devote to the sports of a new country, for I had recently settled in the State of Maine, but no pastime did I adopt with greater zest than that of skating.

The deep and sequestered lakes which form so conspicuous a feature in the scenery of Maine, when frozen by the intense cold of a Northern winter, present a wide field to the lovers of this exhilarating amusement. So I would frequently bind on my skates and glide away up the glittering Kennebec, and thread the mazy course of each quiet streamlet, that beneath its shroud of ice rolled towards the all-embracing ocean. At times I would follow the track of a fox or otter, and run my skate along the mark he had left with his bushy tail until it disappeared in the woody depths. On moonlight nights—silence all around me, a keen blue sky above me—such excursions had a peculiar

* Though we have adopted Mr. Whitehead's incidents, we have ventured to use our own language.

charm; but on one occasion an incident happened that effectually deprived me of any liking for nocturnal adventure, and which even now I cannot recall without a feeling of dread.

I had left my friend's house one evening just before dusk, with the intention of skating a short distance up the noble Kennebec, which glided directly before the door. The night was very lovely. A moon of intense radiance rode through the 'blue serene' of heaven, and myriads of stars came forth, as if to admire her queenly beauty.

I had ascended the river nearly two miles, when coming to a little stream which fed it during the rainy season with tributary waters, I turned into it to explore its course. Fir and hemlock of a century's growth arched overhead, forming a canopy radiant with frostwork. All was dark within; but, strong in the fearlessness of youth, I plunged joyously into the depths of this strange natural avenue; excited with the swift motion and the wild beauty of the scene, I shouted aloud, like a soldier on the brink of victory. My voice rang like a trumpet through the echoing woods, and I listened half appalled to the reverberations that rolled and rolled away into the far distance. Suddenly a horrid sound arose. At first I thought it was a ground-swell or rising of the waters beneath the ice; but soon it gathered in strength and volume, until it broke into one wild and appalling yell. I stood transfixed with dread. Never before had such a sound broken on my ears. Presently I heard the twigs on the bank crack as though from the tread of some wild animal—the blood rushed to my forehead—I regained my energies, and my presence of mind returned—I looked around me for some means of escape.

The moon glinted through the opening of the embowered creek which had beguiled me into the forest. Seeing no

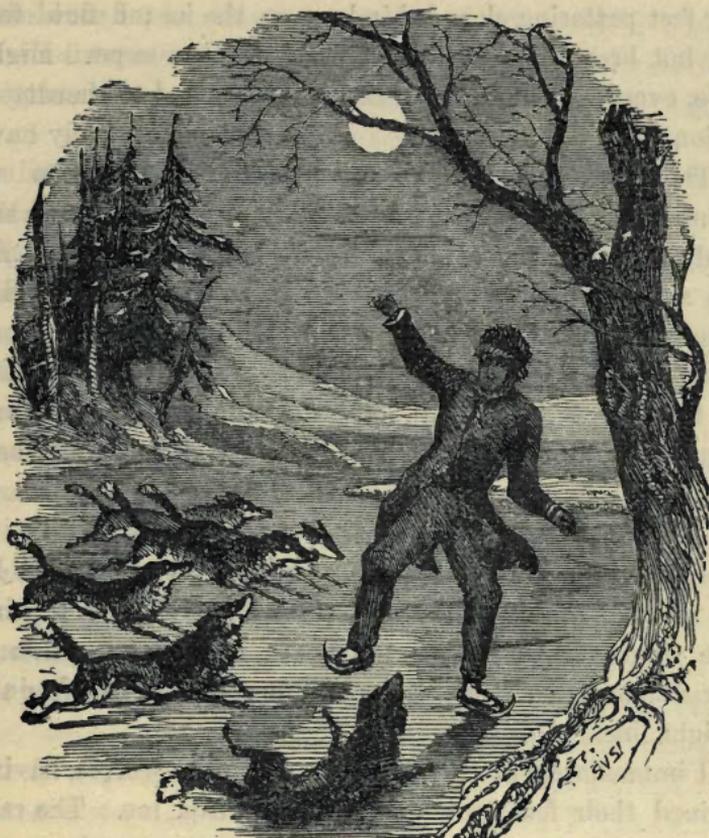
other channel of safety I darted towards it, and flew over the ice with that swiftness which so imminent a peril might reasonably be expected to stimulate. It was hardly a hundred yards distant, and the swallow could scarcely have surpassed my desperate flight ; yet, as I turned my head to the shore, I could see two dark objects dashing through the underwood at a pace nearly double in speed to my own. By this tremendous speed, and by their occasional short yells, I knew them to be the much-dreaded gray wolves.

I had never met with these animals, and from the tales I had heard of their ferocity, I had little pleasure in making their acquaintance. Their untamable fierceness, and especially their untiring strength, render them objects of alarm to every benighted traveller.

With their long, swinging, unresting gallop they follow up their prey, never swerving from their victim's track ; and when the weary hunter fondly thinks he has at length outstripped them, alas, he finds they have but waited for the darkness to pounce upon him.

The bushes that fringed the shore glided past with the noiseless velocity of lightning as I dashed towards the narrow opening. It was nearly gained—a second, and I should be comparatively safe—when my pursuers emerged on the bank above me, which rose, at that point, to the height of ten feet. There was no time for thought ; bending my head, and with a silent prayer, I rushed madly forwards. The wolves sprang, but miscalculating my speed, fell behind, while their intended prey passed out upon the broad river.

Instinct, rather than reason, turned me towards home. The light snow-flakes spun from the iron of my skates, and I thought I had wholly distanced my pursuers, when their loud howl told me that they were still on my track. I did not look behind me—I felt neither fear, nor sorrow, nor



A HOT CHASE.

alarm—one thought of home shot across my brain, of faces that would brighten at my return, of eyes that would fill with tears if I perished—and then all my energies of body and mind were directed to my escape. It was one chance in my favour that I was perfectly at home on the ice. I had spent many days practising with the skates, little thinking that the skill I thus attained would ever bestead me in a struggle for life. Every half minute an alternate yelp from my fierce attendants warned me that the pursuit did not slacken. Nearer and nearer they came ; I heard

their feet pattering close behind me on the ice ; I could feel their hot breath ; I could hear their snuffing scent. Every nerve, every muscle in my frame was stretched to its utmost tension.

The trees along the shore wavered and reeled to my straining eyes ; my brain was giddy with my breathless speed ; yet still the wolves seemed to hiss forth their breath with a sound truly horrible, when any involuntary motion on my part turned me out of my course. Close behind me, but unable to stop, and equally unable to turn on the smooth ice, they slipped and fell, still darting far ahead ; their tongues were lolling out, their white tusks glaring from their bloody mouths, the foam lay on their shaggy breasts in broad patches, and as they passed me their eyes lit up with a horrible fire. The thought flashed on my mind that by this means I might baffle them, namely, by sharply turning aside whenever they drew too near ; for the formation of their feet prevents them from running on ice, except in a straight line.

I immediately acted upon this plan. The wolves, having regained their feet, sprang directly towards me. The race was renewed for twenty yards up the stream ; they were already close on my back, when I swiftly wheeled about, and dashed directly past my pursuers. A fierce yell greeted my evolution, and the wolves, slipping upon their haunches, glided incontinently onward, presenting a curious picture of helpless, baffled ferocity. Thus, at each turning, I gained nearly a hundred yards. This was repeated two or three times, and every moment the animals seemed to grow more infuriate.

At one time, by delaying my stratagem too long, my sanguinary adversaries came so near that their foam besprinkled my dress as they sprang to seize me, and their

teeth clasped together like the sudden closure of a fox-trap. Had my skates failed for one instant, had I tripped over a fallen branch, or caught my foot in a fissure of the ice, this story would never have been told.

For myself, I thought all my chances over ; I reflected where they would first seize me if I fell ; I wondered how long I should be in dying ; I prayed that God might forgive the sins and errors of my young life : in a word, those feelings and that agony were mine which naturally afflict the mind of one doomed to a terrible and premature death.

But at length I came opposite my friend's house, and the hounds, roused by the unusual noise, bayed furiously from their kennels. How I longed that they might break their chains, for then I knew I should soon be avenged upon my foes. Happily, their deep, resonant clamour alarmed the wolves. They hesitated—they turned—they fled ! I watched them until their dark forms disappeared in the obscure shadows of the forest ; then I took off my skates, and, with feelings of unutterable thankfulness, made my way to the house. But I never even now see a broad sheet of ice in the moonlight, but I think of the Night of Peril which I passed on the frozen Kennebec !

[It is needless to say that the boys received this true tale with much favour, and found it difficult to decide whether the palm of merit as a *raconteur* should be awarded to the accurate Fisher or the poetic Seymour. They did not long dispute the point ; the juvenile appetite for stories of enterprise and adventure is not easily satisfied ; the more you feed it, the keener it becomes ; and Vernon was again summoned to contribute to the amusement of his comrades.

“My story will also take us into America,” said Vernon, “but not so far north as the frozen Kennebec. The scene is laid in the prairie-land near the source of the river

Nueces, one of the principal Texan rivers; and the hero is a well-known American adventurer, Captain Dan Henrie, who distinguished himself in the Mexican wars by his reckless daring and inexhaustible energy."]

THE BURNING PRAIRIE.

Dan had started on a grand buffalo-hunt, accompanied by some of his troopers, who, on nearing the ground where they expected to find their game, had scattered in various directions. The captain himself, riding slowly along, followed up the western arm of the Nueces, until he arrived at its head waters. A rough, reckless, fervid spirit, he had not much relish for the poetry of Nature, but the landscape which now spread before him was of so strange and exquisite a loveliness, that it was impossible for him to look upon it unmoved; just as there are some melodies of such ineffable sweetness that they affect the dullest ear. The plain here rose like a billow against the base of a lofty mountain-range, the parent of many streams, which threw out one bold and rugged spur, like a promontory into the green waves. This spur was a huge, square, perpendicular mass, which, nearly in the centre, and from crest to foot, was cloven by a deep fissure, just as if it had been smitten by a thunderbolt. The vast piles of stone which built it up were marked with fantastic seams, and along these seams trailed festoons of evergreens and wild-flowers. Towards the base the masses became less regular in their disposition, and fell into a strange similitude to the mossy ruins of some glorious Gothic sanctuary—a similitude which Nature loves, I think, for I have often observed it in the wave-worn cliffs of the sea-shore. From the prairie level sprung a broken arch with a sweep so grand that you might easily have believed it to be the relic of a stately cathedral or feudal

stronghold. Away to the left, and beyond this promontory of the prairie, rolled a wide spread of undulating plains, dotted with clumps of cactus, and apparently tenanted only by the deer, the wild horse, and the buffalo.

Dan had dismounted from his steed, and, overpowered by the choice beauties of the scene, remained for a minute or two in rapt contemplation, when that habitual instinct of vigilance peculiar to men who lead lives of constant adventure, induced him to change his position and turn his head. In moving, he observed one of the droves of mustangs moving slowly towards him. They were still at a considerable distance, and nothing in their appearance could excite suspicion; yet he now remembered to have noticed, as he rode thitherward, the unshod tracks of horses and mules that had evidently been galloping. And why galloping? Either, he thought to himself, they must have been Indian horses and mules, or mustangs chased by Indians; and no bitterer enemies than the Indians had the reckless Texan rangers! He thought no more of the picturesque, but of the possible dangers in his way, and once more flung himself upon his horse.

Now and then his eye fell upon the still-advancing drove, with a feeling of apprehension that he could not account for. At length they disappeared behind one of the billowy undulations that cross the prairie like so many mounting waves, and were out of sight so long that he had almost forgotten, and had certainly ceased to suspect them, when suddenly they broke again upon the scene, moving directly towards him, at a swift gallop. He reined up his horse behind a cluster of cactus to let them pass, but as they rose upon the higher ground, and stood out sharply against the sky, he saw—with what feelings you may well imagine!—that each animal had an Indian slung along its side, by

one hand and foot, clinging to either horn of the saddle. This is a common Indian stratagem when approaching an enemy by daylight on the prairies; and at a distance can scarcely be detected by the wariest eye, as they ride close together, and no part of the body is shown above the outline of the horse.

The ranger could trust his steed—a true son of the prairies!—and stimulating him with hand and voice, he flew across the fragrant sward at a wondrous pace. So soon as the Indians perceived themselves discovered, they had wheeled up into their saddles again, and urging their mustangs forward, raised their war-whoop like exultant fiends. Henrie, glancing hastily behind him, saw that they were spreading over the prairie, with the evident intention of hemming him in against the mountains. His sole chance of escape, therefore, was a desperate run for an elbow of the range, which, could he reach and turn it *first*, he thought, would secure his safety, as around it the wood grew very dense, and he knew the Indians would not follow him into its recesses, lest they should encounter his comrades, and face a score of rifles instead of one.

A terrible race was that, I tell you—a race for life and death—a race in which all that man prizes most was the stake; and fast as the pursued galloped onward, the pursuers were no less rapid in their pursuit.

Happily, however, he succeeded in gaining the projecting angle before the Indians surrounded him, and waving his cap in derisive triumph, he burst, with the joyous shout of one who has escaped from a deadly peril, into the sheltering shadows of the wood. Here as he expected, the baffled bloodhounds gave up the chase, but as the neighbourhood was evidently dangerous, he rode onward for five or six miles more ere he ventured to draw rein.

When he once more emerged upon the prairie, he found himself far away from the river's course, and consequently from the tracks of his companions. After a brief rest, he again urged his horse into a gallop, taking a direction which, as he conjectured, would bring him back to the morning's hunting-ground. But after some hours' hard riding, night gathered rapidly over, his animal was thoroughly exhausted, and yet the desired locality could not be found. He came at last to a small rivulet gliding through a deep, rough hollow, to join, as he supposed, the western arm of the Nueces. This, then, if closely followed up, would put him right when daybreak came. Meantime, as both horse and rider needed rest, Henrie selected a small plot of meadow-ground thickly covered with musquito grass, and screened from view by great clusters of thorn-trees which encompassed it on three sides. Here he stripped his weary steed and turned him to graze. For himself, he had lost his provision-wallet in the chase, and he durst not shoot any game for fear of arousing the Indians; he was fain to content himself, therefore, with a draught of water, and, supperless, retire to his grassy couch.

[“ Poor fellow ! ” exclaimed the Fat Boy, in a tone of commiseration, “ he must have felt very uncomfortable. ”]

Early the next morning he was mounted and off, somewhat disconcerted at the evident signs of fatigue which his horse evinced. He moved on very slowly in order to spare him, especially as his practised eye, after a close survey, could discover no indications of pursuit. Following the rivulet, he gained in due time the western branch of the Nueces, and turned up at a quicker pace, encouraged by the hope of soon rejoining his comrades, and finding them safe. In an hour he was in sight of the ground, and put his steed into a gallop in his eagerness to reach it. Alas, he saw—

not his companions, not his trusty troopers—but the dead body of an Indian warrior, flung across the ashes of their camp-fire, all gashed and bleeding with bowie-knife cuts. The adjoining ground was torn up and broken, as if it had been the scene of a desperate hand-to-hand struggle. The breech of a rifle, which he recognised as belonging to his band, and a number of arrows, with a rude shield and shivered lance, lay in different directions. He felt a choking sensation, and his blood seemed to congeal in his veins.

Undoubtedly the troopers had been surprised by the same body of Indians who had so nearly captured himself. Whether they had escaped with equal fortune he knew not, but he feared the worst. Amongst the numerous tracks of unshod horses, he could distinguish the marks, here and there, of his troopers' steeds. He saw no trace of their bodies, and it seemed very strange that the Indians, contrary to their habits, should have left behind their dead brave. Cautiously, as one who treads among pitfalls, he followed up the trail for several hours, but without any result, until, towards noon, when ascending the crest of a steep ridge, he suddenly descried in the plain beneath him a large body of his enemies encamped about a mile off.

To his keen regret they discovered him at the same moment, and now, indeed, he felt that his life hung on a thread. One glance, as he wheeled about, showed him several warriors mounting the horses of his troopers. A race against the Indian mustangs he would not have dreaded ; he knew his horse to be more than a match for the best of theirs ; but the chargers of his comrades were as good as his own, and not so fatigued ! He bitterly repented the temerity that had induced him to follow up their trail, but regret was now too late—*too late !* alas, what an influence on the fate of men and nations have those two brief but

pregnant words exercised!—a ride was before him, and, striking his heels into his horse's flanks, he rushed like a whirlwind down the hill. All depended upon his getting back to the shelter of the wood. He had a good mile the start of his pursuers, whose frightful yells were borne to him upon the wind, but this would avail him little if, as he supposed, their horses were fresher than his own. However, his object was to get out of sight with all possible speed, for he gained a great deal by compelling the Indians to pursue his trail. He pushed his animal forward tremendously, and succeeded in his design, for when the sudden burst of their voices came from time to time, proving that they had gained the summit of the ridge, he looked back and could neither see it nor them.

He breathed a little more freely now, and had time to consider his best course. His chances of escape seemed very slight, for he was still above six miles from timber. It now suddenly occurred to him that for several days past he had noticed a heavy cloud of smoke gathering in the south, and, turning in that direction, he saw that the whole horizon was obscured with gloomy masses, and that apparently at no great distance a vast fire was raging. Observing that it was not very high, he concluded, after a moment's thought, that the safest course for him was the most desperate; and, as his horse was evidently sinking, he resolved to ride straight at the advancing line of this fire, and take his chance of passing through the flaming barrier alive. And on the other side, with such a rampart between himself and the Indians, he was safe! Acting upon this strange alternative, he urged his horse steadily forwards; and soon they encountered the lowering vanguard of the smoke, as it rolled along the grass, and rode beneath the stifling shelter, the fire being yet a mile distant.

He was now out of sight of the keenest Indian scout who ever hunted on the prairies, and, leaping from his horse, he began to prepare himself for the passage of the Sea of Fire. Cutting his blanket into pieces, with one he blindfolded the animal, another he tied loosely about the lower part of its head, enveloping the mouth and nostrils. He then protected his own face with a mask of the same material. The blanket was coarse, and admitted air enough to sustain life for a short time, while it kept out the smoke. He could hear the yells of his pursuers apparently close at hand. He was now in utter darkness, and mounting quickly, he galloped towards the fire. On, on he went—he knew not whither—he cared not whither—but plying lash and spur with all the energy of desperation.

The air grew hotter ; hot as a furnace-breath ; his lips were parched ; the sweat poured down every limb ; he felt stifled, choked, maddened ; it seemed as if billows of flame and fire were rolling over him ; his hair was burnt, and the flesh of his body was sorely scorched. But that wild ride knew neither pause nor hindrance, and the horse and the hunter still darted onward—onward !

The horse would fain have wheeled aside, but the fierceness of the agony had turned his rider's arm and will to iron.

On, on ! Through the wreathing flames—through the roar and hiss of the fire ! A few bounds more, and the peril will be past ! Yes ; the air is fresh and cool—oh, so deliciously cool !—and balmy, like the breeze which stole through the blossomy bowers of Eden. Away with the head-gear which has served its purpose so well ; away with the wrappings from the trembling steed ; air—air—fresh air ; and lo, both the adventurers are safe, after breasting that sea of fire !

For an hour they stood side by side upon the blackened

plain, unable to move from sheer exhaustion. Every hair on the animal's body was gone, its skin was terribly scorched, and its limbs seemed stiffened into stone. But now the keen agony of thirst came upon the soldier, and he felt that the peril was not all past—that without water both he and his companion must die. He sprang into the saddle, and urged forward the poor, gasping animal for *its* sake as well as his own. They swept across a charred and smouldering waste. In an hour he had begun to grow faint and giddy; strange noises rang in his ears; strange forms danced before his eyes; the earth heaved and rolled like a stormy sea; and through the shadows which wrapped him round about, he could plainly define the shapes of huge galloping wolves, glaring at him with blazing eyes, howling at him with hungry jaws. Suddenly his mustang dashed down a steep acclivity, and rode full into a brawling stream. Henrie flung himself from his saddle into its invigorating waters.

Immediately, as if by magic, he regained his senses, though the prospect on which his conscious gaze then rested was one to have driven most men into madness. He found himself surrounded by thirty or forty prairie wolves, some swimming in the water after him, while others crouched on the bank, and howled their gathering cry. He struck the nearest with his gun-barrel, and beat them off, while he had time to draw his heavy knife. One of them had seized his passive horse, which, while it was endeavouring to pull him down, continued his eager draughts. The wolf's head Henrie split open with his knife, and the others he soon drove back out of the water, yelling at the wounds he had inflicted. But those upon the bank only howled the louder, and were answered nigh at hand and from afar by hundreds of others, which swiftly gathered in on all sides to the expected banquet.

He now remembered that the wolves always collect in

large numbers and follow up the track of a prairie-fire, to regale on the carcasses of the animals destroyed by the devouring flames, or to chase and drag down such as have passed through the ordeal alive, but in too enfeebled and distressed a state for resistance or escape. Blood, impunity, numbers—all tend to excite their ferocity, and very few creatures which the hungry fire has spared can hope to shun their yet more ravenous jaws. At other times the prairie wolf is not remarkable for courage; but even the bold ranger shuddered when he recalled the dreadful stories he had heard of its fierceness under such circumstances as these.

He looked at his horse. Refreshed and stimulated by his copious draughts, he had begun to apprehend the new danger which threatened him, and with straining eyeball looked around on the gaunt and horrid forms that crowded the bank of the stream. He lifted his head with a wildly mournful neigh, that echoed on the wind like the wail of a lost soul, and actually brought tears to the rough soldier's eyes; yet there was some consolation in it—the horse had life enough still to make one more desperate effort for safety.

He mounted, fired his rifle with deliberate aim into the midst of the howling pack, and then, at full speed, dashed through. They leaped at his feet, and attempted to seize the animal's legs, but terror seemed to have lent him wings, and his flight was not for one moment interrupted. Away he flew across the prairie, and after him, in hot pursuit, bounded the yelling wolves. They were more than a hundred now, and their numbers seemed constantly increasing. It was evident that all depended on the strength and endurance of his steed, and the ranger was heartily glad to perceive that he was leaving his pursuers far behind. There can be no comparison between the swiftness of a horse and that of a prairie wolf.



A RACE FOR LIFE.

After a hot gallop, Henrie reached a woody patch, where he hoped his safety would be secured, but his poor comrade was utterly exhausted. Climbing a tree, he looked around, and for the moment thought his grim enemies had abandoned the chase; but, alas, no! The long yellowish-looking train

soon rose in the distance, and as it approached Henrie saw it had been joined by several large white wolves, whose pitiless cruelty nothing living can escape.

The yells grew louder and more distinct. See, they have reached the wood—they spread themselves among the trees—they pounce upon the ranger's horse—they rend him in pieces. And now, panting and yelling, they gather at the foot of the tree, and fix their red eyes hungrily upon their human victim. Whenever he moves they look up eagerly, as if to meet his fall. The ranger, in a species of gleeful hilarious desperation—that horrid mirth which springs from a sense of utter misery—deliberately fires, and fires again and again, at the glaring eyeballs of the white wolves, laughing aloud at each successful shot; laughing louder still when the whole pack rush on the bleeding brute, and greedily devour it with gnashing teeth.

This strange wild sport occupied the ranger for an hour, until he had slain, and had seen devoured, each white wolf that had joined the chase. In his mad hatred he became so reckless that he narrowly escaped falling. He only saved himself by dropping his gun, which the wolves seized, tearing its stock before they discovered that it was uneatable. Though night was gathering over—slowly and gently as sleep steals over a happy infant—they gave no indication of abandoning their watch, and he felt that he must soon drop from his post through the exhaustion produced by hunger and fatigue, if compelled to spend another hour without food. He had grown entirely desperate now, and loaded his pistols, determined, if he must fall, to bring some more of his enemies to death before life abandoned him.

Suddenly he heard a distant yelling on the prairie, like that which had pursued him in his headlong flight. The wolves listened to it as eagerly as himself. Looking forth,

he could just faintly discover a large buffalo bull plunging across the plain, encompassed by a great herd of wolves which pressed him sorely. At the sight of this fresh victim, most of his adversaries started to join the chase, and those which still lingered behind showed manifest signs of greedy impatience. As the buffalo came in sight, even these dashed away, yelling furiously. He fired his pistols after them as a farewell salute, killing one of the hindermost, while another, with a broken shoulder, limped along with the pack.

Oh, how joyously Henrie descended from his perilous position! He knew that if he could kindle a fire before their return he should be safe, and with trembling eagerness he proceeded to make use of the flint and steel which every hunter carries. Soon a spire of flame shot heavenward—the most welcome sight that for many a long day had greeted his eyes! His next step was to cut a piece from the last wolf he had killed, and roast it for food. The meal greatly refreshed him, and having gathered a heap of wood, which he arranged in a blazing circle, he laid himself down in the centre, and calmly composed himself to sleep. Some of the wolves returned during the night, but the fire effectually scared them, and the one or two which remained, when Henrie awoke in the morning, soon fell victims to his well-aimed pistol. Then he made a hearty breakfast off the fattest of his enemies, and prepared to resume his journey homewards. Picking up his gun, he had the satisfaction of finding that, though the stock was much injured, it was still serviceable, and thenceforward, in his weary march for the American settlements, he was troubled no more by hunger. His sufferings, however, were very severe; and when he arrived at his journey's end, few of his friends could recognize in the wan, wasted, gaunt, and haggard form before them the dashing and robust Dan Henrie, conspicuous among Texan rangers for his athletic figure and great strength.

["Such is a prairie adventure, boys. Little do we, who 'sit at home at ease,' know by what suffering, and at what cost of human life and happiness, the pioneers of civilization accomplish their difficult work. The road once made, the ground once levelled, it becomes easy to travel along it, but surely to those who make the road and level the ground something of gratitude should be rendered."

"Do you know Charles Mackay's song?" said Seymour.

" 'Fair elbow-room for men to thrive in!
Wide elbow-room for work or play!
If cities follow, tracing our footsteps,
Ever to westward shall point our way!
Rude though our life, it suits our spirit,
And new-born states in future years
Shall own us founders of a nation—
And bless the hardy Pioneers!'"

"Jolly!" was the emphatical comment of the Fat Boy.

"I have an extract here," continued Fisher, "which describes four varieties of the prairie wolf. The white wolf, says my authority,* is the invariable attendant upon the buffalo; and when one of these persevering animals is seen, it is a certain sign that buffalo are not far distant. Besides the buffalo-wolf, there are four distinct varieties common to the plains, and all more or less attendant upon the buffalo. These are: the black, the gray, the brown, and last and least, the *coyote* or *cayote* of the mountaineers, the '*wach-unka-marut*' or 'medicine-wolf' of the Indians, who hold the latter animal in reverential awe.

"This little wolf, whose fur is very thick and beautiful, is of diminutive size, but wonderfully sagacious, making up by cunning what it wants in physical strength.

"In bands of from three to thirty they not unfrequently station themselves along the 'runs' of the deer and the an-

* G. F. Ruxton, 'Life in the Far West.'



RUN TO DEATH !

telope, extending their line for many miles, and the quarry being started, each wolf follows in pursuit until tired, when it relinquishes the chase to another relay, following slowly

after until the animal is fairly run down, when all hurry to the spot, and speedily consume the carcass.

“The cayeute, however, is frequently used as a tool by his larger brethren, unless, indeed, he is actuated by motives of spontaneous charity. When a hunter has slaughtered game and is employed in cutting it up, the little wolf sits patiently at a short distance from the scene of operations, while at a more respectful one the larger wolves (white or gray) gather hungrily around, and lick their jaws in greedy expectation. Occasionally the hunter flings a piece of meat to the cayeute, which seizes it immediately and runs off with it in his mouth. Before he gets many yards with his prize, the large wolf pounces with a growl upon him, and the cayeute, dropping the meat, returns to his former position, and will continue his charitable act as long as the hunter continues *his* generosity.

“Wolves, it appears, were—and are—so common on the great Western plains and in the mountains, that the hunter never cares to fling away a charge of ammunition upon them, although the ravenous animals are a constant source of annoyance; creeping to the camp-fire at night, gnawing his saddles and bridles, and eating the skin ropes which secure the horses and mules to their pickets.

“During the night the cayeutes watch incessantly; and the traveller not seldom starts from his hammock with affright, as their mournful and eery howling breaks suddenly upon his ear. They seldom attack the traveller, but if an emigrant-train should lose one of their number, and bury him in the savage wilderness, all their righteous cares will be in vain. The cayeutes will soon discover the sepulchre, scratch away the earth, and pounce upon the dead body.”

“From America,” said Seymour, after expressing his approval of Vernon’s contribution, “I beg you to accompany me

to the province of Brittany, where, some hundred years ago, occurred an incident which, I think, is worth narration. There lived in that wild province, and in one of its wildest districts, the forest of Dualt, a gallant hunter named St. Prix, whose adventures were a constant theme of marvel. But of all his exploits, none equalled that which I am about to describe.*]

THE WOLF AND THE HOUND.

A huge wolf of unusual rapacity had long been the terror of the sabôtiers and charcoal-burners in that neighbourhood. He had snatched away the goats bound by a thong from their very door-post, and had carried off the dogs of the verderer by daylight before his face. So daring were his depredations, and so marvellous the mode in which he contrived to escape from bullets and traps of all kinds, and even from St. Prix's hounds, that the scared and superstitious peasantry came to the firm belief that the monster was indeed the *Loup-garou*. On several occasions St. Prix, officially invited by the mayor of the commune, had brought his hounds from Morlaix expressly to hunt this scourge of the forest. As often as they met at Callac, and drew the deep cover of Dualt, so often a hound was missing from the pack, and was never heard of afterwards. At length it was observed by St. Prix that this wolf, which was always found in a particular quarter, made a long round before he quitted the cover; and then it occurred to him that the wary brute had overtaken the tail-hound and destroyed him, while the forward pack was engaged in the chase. This proved to be really the case; the wolf turned round, and, although pursued, became the pursuer himself, and easily overcame the weakest or the slackest hound of the pack; then, having wreaked his vengeance, he broke

* 'Paul Pendril; or, Sport and Adventure in Corsica.'

away, as old wolves do break, for a strange country, and so escaped with his life. St. Prix, however, having discovered the stratagem, was at no loss to baffle it by a counter-plot. The next time and the last time that wolf was found, he ordered Charon to be coupled up for twenty minutes after the wolf was roused; then to be slipped and laid upon the line of the forward hounds. In the meantime St. Prix rode ahead, and posting himself at a point just passed by the pack, he awaited with intense anxiety the appearance of Charon, now coming on the foiled scent. He had not been a minute at his post before he viewed the gaunt wolf in the rear of Charon, actually hunting the hound and running into him with a headlong rush, which the hound, he thought, could hardly withstand. Then came the tug of war; Greek met Greek, silently and fiercely, and over they rolled fast locked in each other's jaws. Now the wolf was uppermost, and now Charon; then, as they struggled and reared up together, the wolf seemed a head and shoulders bigger than the swarthy hound. St. Prix could hear the clash of their teeth; and as he hurried on, with his *couteau de chasse* drawn, the combatants caught sight of him. Again they rolled over and over; but this time Charon rose from the ground, like Antæus, with renewed vigour, and, with a desperate effort, seized the wolf's throat. Under that vice-like grip he seemed to stagger and gasp for life. St. Prix was at hand, but the brave hound no longer needed his help; the wolf's eyes were starting from their sockets; his mouth, with its chasm of huge teeth, was wide open; and in another minute the gaunt beast fell motionless and lifeless to the earth. St. Prix's blade was again sheathed in all its bur-nished brightness; the good hound had done his own work, and there the wolf lay—

'Tremendous still in death.'

I remember to have read about an incident that occurred to a party of sportsmen somewhere in Sweden. They started on a wolf-hunt, well provided with guns and ammunition, and driven in a sledge. On reaching a likely spot, they pinched a pig which they carried with them for the purpose. Of course, it squealed tremendously; and, of course, the cry of the savoury pig soon drew a host of hungry wolves around the sledge. As soon as the latter arrived within range, the hunters discharged a volley, and brought down several. The pack immediately threw themselves on their killed or wounded companions, and devoured them with infinite relish!

["What cannibals!" muttered Lambert.]

The blood with which they had gorged themselves, however, served but to stimulate their fury; and, in spite of the steady fire maintained by the hunters, the wolves dashed close up to the sledge, apparently with the intention of making an attack. The hunters, in order to preserve themselves, now threw the pig to the wolves, and in this way effected a temporary diversion; of which they took advantage to turn towards home. But the horse, in the excess of his terror at the close neighbourhood of the wolves, struggled so violently and plunged so madly that he broke the shaft to pieces, rushed off at full gallop, and made good his escape.

By this time the pig had disappeared, and the wolves once more showed evident intentions of attacking the sportsmen. Finding the aspect of affairs so critical, the latter now turned the sledge bottom up, and took refuge beneath it; in which uncomfortable position they were compelled to remain for several hours—the wolves making repeated efforts to get at them by gnawing at the sledge with their keen strong teeth. Happy were the hunters when their

friends, alarmed by their long absence, came to their relief, and drove away their persistent enemies !

[“That,” said Douglas, “is a case of what I should call the biter bit ! They went out to hunt the wolves, and the wolves hunted *them* ! It reminds me of an anecdote I have read in some book or other. A Lieutenant Oldenburg was in pursuit of game in the neighbourhood of a large lake, which, as it was winter-time, was completely frozen over. At a little distance from the shore, he observed that a small aperture had been made by the peasants for the purpose of procuring water, and at this hole a pig was drinking. Casting a glance around, to see if any other animal were in sight, the lieutenant’s attention was attracted by what seemed to be a speck or ball, which rapidly grew larger, and could be seen to move swiftly along the ice. It proved to be a large wolf, which had scented the porker, and was careering towards it at the top of his speed—like Lambert, when he is late for dinner ! Lieutenant What’s-his-name seized his gun, and rushed to the assistance of the pig ; but before he could reach the spot the wolf had got up with his longed-for prey, and, though he was a large animal, tumbled him over and over like a nine-pin. His attention was so entirely devoted to this pleasing process, however, that Lieutenant Oldenburg was able to approach within a few paces, when he fired, and brought him to the ground, dead. I regret to state that a piece of considerable size was missing from the porker’s rear ; and the animal was so stupidly terrified that he followed the lieutenant home like a spaniel, and could hardly be induced to quit his presence. There’s a tragic story for you ! The humane rescuer, the murderous assailant, the gratitude of the rescued, —all so nicely mixed up together, that the most romantic taste ought to be satisfied.”

“It may be very pathetic,” said Beauchamp; “but you have told it so as to make me feel more inclined to laugh than weep.”

“Ah,” exclaimed Douglas, with a humorous sigh, “my best efforts are never appreciated! What can be said of the dulness of an individual who does not see the difference between the comic and the tragic?”]

You have all, remarked Fisher, been dwelling on the ferocity, treachery, cunning, and other bad qualities of the wolf. It is but fair to remember that there is another side to his character. A writer says, in a passage which I have transferred to my favourite commonplace-book, that wolves, like dogs, are capable of strong attachment. The instances of such attachment seem to be rare; but one is recorded by Cuvier, the French naturalist, as having come under his own notice.

The wolf, in this case, had been brought up in much the same manner as a young dog. He grew quite friendly and familiar with those persons he was in the habit of seeing; and as for his master, so strong was his affection for him, that he followed him everywhere, showing the deepest regret at his absence, obeying his voice, and in every respect displaying the submissiveness that one expects from a well-trained and thoroughly-domesticated dog. His master being obliged to leave home for a considerable period, presented his pet to the menagerie,—where, of course, he was confined in a den. Here, at first, he was very disconsolate, refused his food, and pined greatly; but after a while he became reconciled to his new situation, recovered his health, showed much attachment to his keepers, and seemed quite to have forgotten ‘the days that are no more.’

Eighteen months had passed away, when his old master

returned. But at the first sound of the well-known voice, the wolf, like the dog of Ulysses,* evinced the wildest delight; and being released, lavished upon him the tenderest caresses, just as the most loyal and affectionate dog might have done. Indeed, it was not without difficulty that his keepers got him back to his den.

A second separation was followed by another period of sorrow and pining, until time had once more healed the wound.

Three years glided away, and the wolf had learned to live contentedly enough with a dog which had been brought up beside him, when his master reappeared; and again the long-lost but unforgotten voice awakened cries of the most joyous impatience. The poor animal, being set at liberty, rushed to his master, placed his fore feet on his shoulders, licked his face with the most unmistakable expression of affectionate delight, and even threatened the keepers when they wished to remove him. A third separation occurred

* Ulysses, or Odysseus, returning to his Ithacan palace clad in the disguise of a beggar, is recognized by none but his dog Argus:—

“ And the dog Argus raised his ears and head,
Whom the much-toiled Odysseus long before
Reared with his own hand, but enjoyed no more.
There lay the dog.....
Who, when he marked Odysseus in the way,
And could no longer to his lord come near,
Fawned with his tail, and drooped in feeble play
His ears. Odysseus turning, wiped a tear,
Hid from the noble swineherd, and made question there.”

Argus dies immediately after having recognized his old master:—

“ And upon Argus came the death-fate drear,
Just having seen Odysseus in his twentieth year.”

—Homer, “Odyssey,” book xvii., translated by Philip Stanhope Worsley (vol. ii., pp. 115–117).

soon afterwards; but this proved too much for the poor creature's temper: he grew morose and surly, refused his food, and for some time it was thought he would die. Time, however, deadens the grief of wolves, as it soothes the wounded hearts of men, and he gradually recovered his health; but, as if convinced of the duplicity and falsehood of humanity, he no longer allowed any but his keepers to



AFFECTION IN A WOLF.

caress him,—and, in fact, in the presence of strangers fully maintained the reputation of his race for savageness of temper.

Mr. Lloyd, in a book about Sport in the North, relates another instance of the occasional affectionateness of the wolf. A Swedish friend of his had reared up a couple of young wolves until they were fully grown. They were male and female. The latter grew so tame that she would play with her master and lick his hands, and often accompanied

him in the winter on his sledge-journeys. Once, when he was absent, she broke loose from her chain, and was absent for three days. On her master's return, he went out on a hill and called, 'Where's my Tussa?' as she was named; when she immediately came home, and fondled with him like the friendliest dog.

["Exceptions prove the rule," said Beauchamp; "and these few instances of an affectionate disposition do but show that in general there can be no doubt as to the wolf's ferocity. Oh, I hate wolves! I have seen them at the Zoological Gardens, and never could bear to look at their crafty cunning countenance and fierce treacherous eye!"]

"So great is his savagery," said Seymour, "that he will feed on his own kind. It is asserted, on good authority, that if he should be so wounded as to draw blood, or if he should besmear himself with the blood of a victim, his companions will immediately kill and devour him."]

I recollect another anecdote. A Norwegian peasant, looking out of his cottage window, saw a large wolf steal into his bit of pasture and seize one of his goats. At the time he was carrying in his arms a child of eighteen months old. Without a thought, he laid her down in the porch, and seizing a cudgel which happened to be close at hand, he sallied forth and made an onslaught on Mr. Wolf, just as he was trotting away with his prize in triumph. The wolf dropped the goat, but in galloping past the house caught sight of the child, seized it, threw it across his shoulders, and sped away with the speed of the lightning. He made good his escape, and the poor child was no more seen!

Even in the winter of 1875,—only a few months ago,—a tragic incident which occurred near Moscow proved that

the traveller in Russia has still to dread the attack of the 'wolfish herd.'

It appears that severe frost and hunger had compelled the rapacious beasts of the forest to leave their accustomed haunts and draw near the centres of population, displaying so much ferocity that they did not confine their depredations to the sheep-fold and the poultry-yard, but pounced upon any living creature they might happen to encounter. The *Moscow Gazette*, describing one of the latest exploits of these terrible animals, said that a caravan of six sledges, carrying twenty-four travellers, had been attacked within a few miles of the 'Holy City' by a band of wolves, numbering many hundreds. It might have been thought that twenty-four resolute men could have repulsed their charge; but they were less fortunate than Robinson Crusoe and his companions. The whole of the travellers and their horses were torn to pieces and devoured, one only succeeding in effecting his escape. This was the conductor of one of the sledges, who owed his safety partly to his presence of mind, and partly to the good condition and swift-footedness of his horse.

On reaching Moscow, he gave a most graphic account of the scene he had witnessed, and of the hazards through which he had passed.

The moment of the attack was something terrible to witness,—the wolves, as they advanced, forming one black and compact mass, covering many acres of ground, and completely encircling the sledges and their ill-fated occupants. The latter had heard the distant howls of the ferocious beasts echoing over the dreary frozen waste for some time, and had heard their cries growing louder as the animals advanced—yells so fearful, cries so melancholy and dismal, that some of the travellers felt inclined to turn back again

towards Moscow. The majority, however, rashly decided to proceed upon their journey. A rash, and also a fatal decision, involving the death of three-and-twenty persons!

As they galloped across the plain, the wolves closed in upon them by tens, by scores, by hundreds—at first in the rear, then in front, then on every side! The little caravan was quickly encompassed by a howling, raving mass. No preparations had been made for resistance. A few shots of revolvers were heard, but these produced no impression on so dense a host; and for one wolf killed hundreds immediately rushed forward to the charge. They fell upon the horses first, tearing them to pieces, and then overthrew the sledges, and— But the picture is too horrible to dwell upon. The conductor who escaped, lost no time, at the beginning of the attack, in cutting his horse free of the encumbering sledge, and, mounted on his back, dashed off at full speed—the full speed of horse and rider threatened with a terrible death—towards Moscow. The main body of the wolves remained on the field of carnage, struggling and fighting with one another for a share of the bloody feast; but about a dozen caught sight of the fugitive, and started in pursuit. The conductor had but a couple of bullets left; but both took effect, and stretched two of the foremost wolves dead upon the snow. The others halted in their pursuit, to devour the carcasses of their dead companions, and the hardy rider was thus enabled to get a long distance ahead of them, and effect his escape. For some time, as he galloped across the frozen ground, he heard the heartrending cries and appeals for succour on the part of his fellow-travellers; but at length a dead silence followed. The victims were—five Polish Jews, a Leipzig locksmith, a Bavarian bookbinder, a weaver of Zittau, five Russian servants, and five sledge-conductors.

[“ Three groans for the wolf !” cried Douglas ; and all the company joining in right lustily, the groans echoed through the glen, with a sound which would have struck terror to the heart of any wolf, had one been within hearing.]

The only plea that can be put in for the wolf, said Fisher, has been well stated by an agreeable writer. ‘ The wolf and jackal tribes,’ he says, ‘ are by no means without their use in the economy of nature ; though, from their predatory habits, they are justly regarded as pests in the countries they infest. That they will disturb the dead and rifle the graves, is true ; but they also clear away offal, and, with vultures, are the scavengers of hot countries. They follow on the track of herds, and put a speedy end to the weak, the wounded, and the dying ; they are the most useful, though most disgusting, of camp-followers,—and after a battle, when thousands of corpses of men and horses are collected within a limited space, they are of essential service.’ So the poet Coleridge says :—

‘ I stood in a swampy field of battle ;
 With bones and skulls I made a rattle
 To frighten the wolf, and carrion-crow,
 And the homeless dog ; but they would not go :
 So off I flew—for how could I bear
 To see them gorge their dainty fare ?’

The writer I have already quoted goes on to say :—‘ Revolting and heart-sickening though such scenes may be, the evil is less than would result from the undisturbed decay of the dead ; were that to take place, the air would hang heavy with pestilence, and the winds of heaven, laden with noisome exhalations, would carry death and desolation far and near, rendering still more terrible the horrors and calamities of war.’ But, in spite of all this, I say with Douglas, ‘ Three groans for the wolf !’

[“ Yes ; I have no doubt he answers a very useful purpose : so, I suppose, does the crocodile.”

“ And the mosquito,” interrupted Douglas.

“ You turn everything to fun, Douglas,” said Beauchamp. “ But what I mean is, that his answering a useful purpose does not make him a bit milder, braver, or more honest. So, down with the wolf !”

Here the discussion ceased, for it was getting late. Just as the boys were preparing to depart, Seymour addressed them, saying they had spent, he hoped, some pleasant afternoons in the cave, and all had learned something which they had not known before, while assisting to make each other happy. But, as they were aware, the midsummer examination was coming on, and most of them would have hard work to do in preparing for it. Therefore, he thought they must give up their talk about wild animals for the present. It would not do to neglect their cricket and other out-of-door games ; and the leisure time not devoted to these would be required for their extra lessons and repetitions. They had done him the honour to elect him as their chairman ; and he was proud to say that the audience on each occasion had been large, well-behaved—

“ Hear, hear !” exclaimed Douglas—

had been large, well-behaved, and enthusiastic. To their friend, Mr. Fisher, they were particularly indebted for the vast stores of information he had placed at their disposal. With respect to the others, each had done his best to promote the general entertainment ; and it would be invidious to particularize. He now begged leave to offer them his warmest thanks, and to say that, with their assistance, and the support of their friend Fisher, he hoped at some future time to assemble them again in the Cave of Adventure, for occasional afternoons with Wild Animals.

Douglas proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Seymour, for his courteous and dignified behaviour in the chair; and then, with loud shouts and merry laughter, the boys returned to Dr. Birch's.

Afterwards it was determined to record the stories and conversations for the benefit of future pupils of Dr. Birch; and the result of this determination is to be found in the present volume.]

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