

## RINGING A MALAYESE TIGER.

By Dr. J. H. PORTER.

Author of "Wild Beasts," Etc.

IT was dark, dark even for a Malaccan jungle, which is the darkest place on earth. Red, fantastic gleams from fires sped through the solid blackness around, but they only made its presence more overpowering. By dint of intricate divinations we had passed the evening interviewing devils, and it now appeared that Alang Rasak, thirteen years old and recently made a bride at much expense, had been carried off by a *real* tiger. That was clear to us from the first, because an entire history of the tragedy was printed in the damp soil and such fragments as remained of the native girl were found. But no certainty could exist in the minds of our Malay attendants without sorceries. Malim, spirit of the forest, might have done it, they argued, or some tramp from Kovinchi—whose ill-disposed inhabitants were always turning themselves into tigers and killing people—might have been the evil-doer.

Thus spoke Bilal Abu, and when Alang Rasak's uncles guaranteed the costs, those functions at which we had been assisting took place. Che Mat and Bali Patin were the victims' nearest male relatives, respected persons, descended from a long line of pirates and head-hunters. They stipulated that all the stray devils in the vicinity should be examined as to their complicity in the mysterious affair.

When the truth that an actual tiger was guilty had been announced, the whole kampong resolved upon vengeance, and began to confer upon those means by which it might be carried out; but when Major Baker sought me I was not to be found, and that bold Briton became indignant. Salamah fled before his roars. He declared the "infernal niggers" (which is Anglo-Indian for all nations not blonde) would scare every tiger out of the district.

His remonstrances were stopped short, and both of us stood rigid. For out of the darkness close by arose so wild a cry, a shriek of despair so heart-piercing, that anyone might have been stricken aghast. Screams of "The tiger! the tiger!" were heard on all sides, and we

knew that another unfortunate native was lost as effectually as if his weighted body had been sunk in mid-ocean.

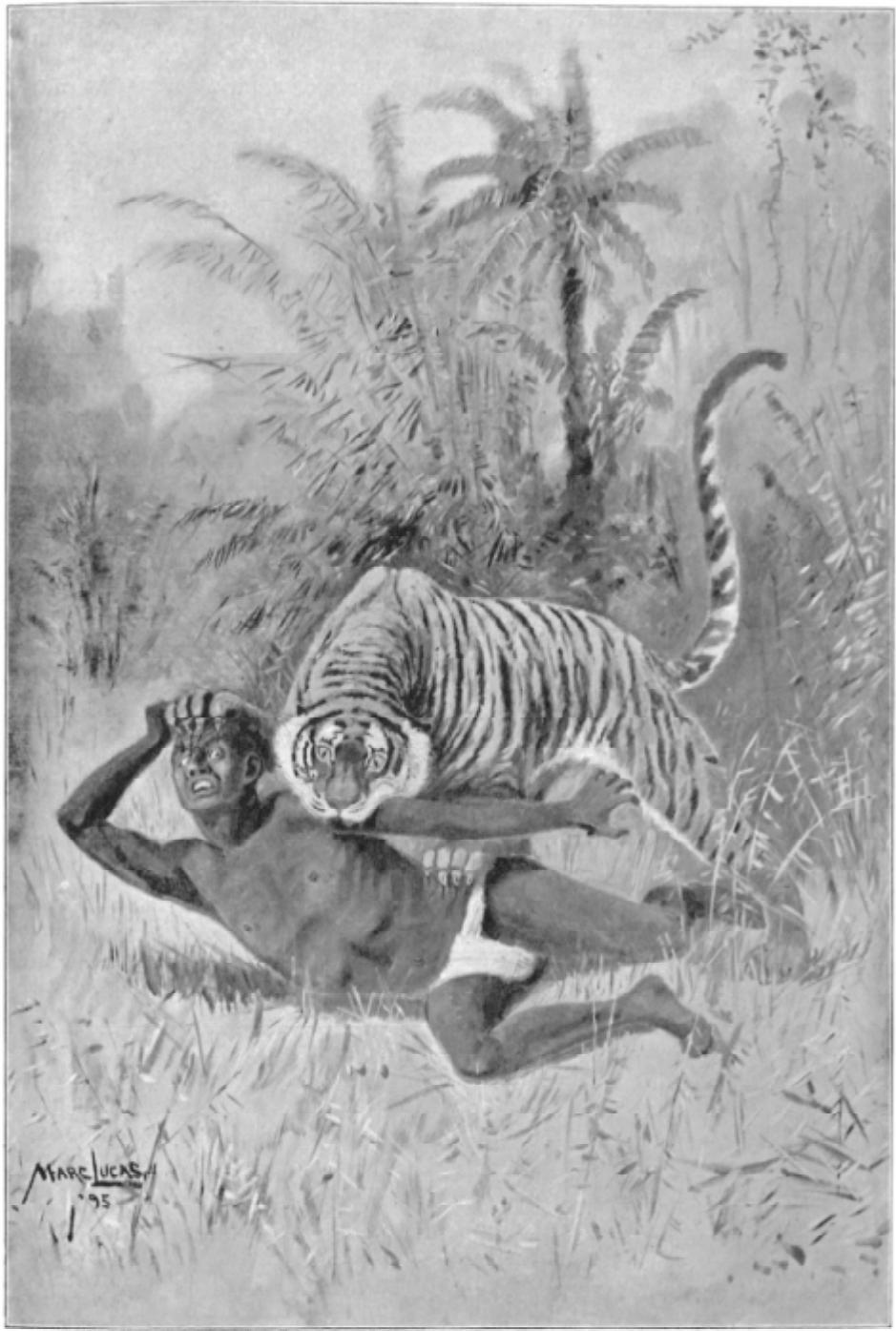
Superior persons who know all about wild beasts from the current literature on the subject, will perhaps sneer at this. They are aware that tigers keep away from clamor, lights and crowds, and, in short, have as correct an idea of man-eaters as they have of the Minotaur. Yet these timid creatures I have known to raid villages time and again, scour the lines of English cantonments, kill soldiers at main guards, and tear troopers out of their saddles while on the march.

Dawn was at hand, and when the light allowed of trailing, parties went out by the elephant paths that intersected the otherwise impenetrable jungles. Tigers are not usually hunted in this country, as we knew; its poorly armed inhabitants know too much about them, and prefer to dig pitfalls or arrange loaded spears so that the marauders may transfix themselves. But we saw that there was to be an exception here; these men were going to close in on the beast and fight.

The Major and I took our double rifles and joined separate bands into the forest. Everything was done quietly and in deadly earnest. Seeing that every tiger carries a complete topographical map of the locality in his head, it was quite possible that the brute might lurk unseen close beside any of those who were floundering about in semi-darkness and mostly in muddy ruts.

We had pushed forward for some time in a detached way toward an open or comparatively clear spot to which the tiger must be ultimately driven, if he did not break through, when a full, round report from my friend's rifle was instantly followed by a harsh, fierce roar that showed the shot had told.

Matters now became serious. Unwounded tigers are sometimes desperately aggressive, but it needs an injury to let loose the supreme ferocity of this animal's temper, and show it in an altitude which none who have seen it ever



Painted for OUTING by the late Marc Lucas.

"THE FURIOUS ANIMAL CHARGED HOME." (p. 370.)

forgets. In a few moments there was a commotion in front. We broke out of the jungle into open forest, set here and there with clumps of brush. It was over in an instant, for as the scene opened before us we saw the tiger spring at a man half-way up a tree, drag him down, and stand in awful majesty. The instantaneous collapse of the native's form and his faint, gasping cry were terribly distinct. His body hung in the tiger's jaws, head and feet down, for a moment shielding the beast's chest so that we could not shoot. Then, with a shake and a crunch, the tiger dropped his victim, and disappeared behind some hanging vines. But only for an instant; then the furious animal charged home with resistless force.

Nobody can describe the details of such a scene. Nothing lasts long enough to reveal itself distinctly. Yells

and roars filled the somber, solemn wood with a hideous noise. The conflict of lance and sword with claw and fang was brief. The crowd burst asunder. The bleeding tiger was standing over a dead man, with blazing eyes. It was an open shot at very short range, and two heavy rifle balls from the Major's gun and mine tore through his vitals, both from the front side. With a half roar he reared, tossed his fore-paws on high, and fell.

There also lay other bodies beside the tiger's: that of Kasim, with a shattered skull; of Mat Aris; of Musah and Ngah Prang, desperately wounded. Casualties were looked for, however. The disabled and dead were gathered up, and the procession filed back through the forest, and if any mourning took place among the natives in the kampong, I did not see a trace of it.

## TWO HANDICAPS.

By Caroline Shelley.



### III.

**M**ISS JOHNSTONE, in an airy creation of silk and lace, stood before the mirror, with a small box in one hand and vigorously rubbing her pretty nose into a vivid crimson with the other, when Lily Davis tapped at the door, perhaps an

hour after lunch. She held her operations suspended while her visitor came in and closed the door, and then proceeded to work again.

"It's freckles," she explained. "I am worried nearly to death. Look at them all across the bridge of my nose. I am trying this lotion; it is really wonderful."

"Possibly you sat out on the raft too long. One is apt to tan when the face is drenched with salt water," suggested Lily, with a sudden remembrance of a well-proportioned figure in a blue suit, with a broad, white belt, and a smaller one in black—a girl—rocking idly out on the waves half the morning. "However, I don't see any freckles to stop your Herculean task a moment, and tell me if you are coming on the drive this afternoon to the Point. Every one is going. Amy's mother is chaperon."

"Why, yes, of course," said Eve, immediately deserting the sunburn cure. "When do you start? Will it be cool enough for a coat? Oh, I forgot!" She turned to put some laces away in a drawer. "I am going to ride with Mr.

SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTERS I.-II.—Mrs. Johnstone and her daughter are at the seaside with Colonel Greene, whom Mrs. Johnstone is anxious her daughter should marry. Miss Johnstone is there introduced to Noel Blake, a Southern sportsman, of a class entirely new to her experience. She is very much interested in him, when he adds to the favorable impression by relieving her opportunity of the persecution of a rejected suitor. Ruffini.