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# BIG GAME ENCOUNTERS

## CRITICAL MOMENTS IN THE LIVES OF WELL-KNOWN SHIKARIS

EDITED BY

STANLEY JEPSON

*Editor of "The Illustrated Weekly of India"*

FOREWORD BY

COLONEL A. I. R. GLASFURD, C.M.G., D.S.O.

**With Explanatory Chapters on Wild Life**

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# FOREWORD

By COLONEL A. I. R. GLASFURD, C.M.G., D.S.O.

(Author of *Musings of an Old Shikari*, *Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle*, etc.)

IT is with diffidence that the writer undertakes to introduce these stirring narratives from men whose experience and knowledge probably much exceed his own.

The sole excuse that he can offer for the presumption, even in his close approach to that " threescore and ten," is a lifelong intensity of hunting instinct—exercised and developed in those wild and primitive surroundings in which much of his life has been passed—a " ruling passion " in which he will yield to nobody until " his days are all done and he's shouldered his gun for the Hunting Grounds Happy and Free."

These gripping pages from the principal actors in many a stark affair cannot fail to carry their own recommendation as long as human nature lasts. Yet, ere the reader impatiently skips this preliminary, let us garrulous old hunters pluck his sleeve a moment with the aphorism that circumstances alter even such cases as are related in this book—be they actual tragedy or merely narrow escape; and remind him that such have become less frequent, owing to immense improvements in fire-arms.

Thus, " Daddy, shooting tigers in India," is far from going in constant danger of his life: anyway, it will very largely depend on the way daddy does it.

On the other hand, all being part of the game, nothing can eliminate the intrusions of chance—the " split-second " error of judgment—a moment's over-excitement—failure or mismanagement of one's weapon—the folly of a companion, of a beater, of oneself—the turn of Fortune's wheel.

Again—the glory of galloping down a lion on an African plain, and springing or not from one's horse for the shot, might appear to be a much shorter cut to suicide than a vigil from tree or *zariba*, a quiet deliberate " plug " at short range, and a sleep till dawn before investigating results. But such is by no means necessarily the case. Indeed, to be " hoorooshed " and run to a breathless standstill is, for a few decisive moments, far more disabling for a " king of beasts " than to lie in his natural shelter, licking a painful but not immediately vital wound, silent, invisible, watchful, furiously vindictive—and then to be approached by a very obvious and detested biped. Also, there are some things that seem better done in hot blood than in cold !

That one experienced *shikari* should have declined to contribute to this anthology on the grounds that half of such " contretemps " are due to bad work, ignorance or carelessness, seems a pity ; for to err is not only human, but instructive. I also venture to suggest that, however much at fault they may or may not have been, most of our contributors prize rather than regret their " experience "—provided that it was not gained at somebody else's expense, or too serious to self.

Pigsticking " adventures " will, it is hoped, be included in future editions of the volume : for here, surely, is the very apotheosis of all hunting—no scientific, easily death-dealing, long-range, modern engine of precision ; only the simplest of age-old equipment, the primitive (though exceedingly deadly) spear, and the grand old combination of man and horse in very intimate encounter with probably the most courageous animal

on earth. Just a man's hands, a horse's legs, roar-roar of wind in ears, and a splendid fighting foe in front. The acme of physical —and mental—uplift. The cavalry spirit!

In conclusion, all credit to the Editor; not only for his idea of so unusual and arresting a compilation, but also for the perseverance with which he has carried it out—a task not lightly to be undertaken in . . . these days. That he himself is a keen and practical *shikari* is clear: but this, together with the success of his wider journalistic career, does not surprise the writer—whose most efficient young Quartermaster he was, in and after the War.

A. I. R. G.

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TO

MY WIFE

CONSTANT COMPANION AND HELPMATE DURING

INDIAN JUNGLE TRIPS FOR MANY YEARS

# PREFACE

THE foundation of this book is a careful selection from a number of articles, which appeared over the course of two years in the news magazine I edit, *The Illustrated Weekly of India.* An appeal was made to well-known sportsmen to send in accounts of what they considered their most exciting moments with dangerous game, and the result certainly made good reading for a popular news magazine. In this book something more has been attempted, and I have added five chapters. One of these is an experience of my own; and of the others, three constitute an attempt to analyse the principles which may be found in the accounts contributed by various authors. I am indebted to that well-known sportsman Mr. A. A. Dunbar Brander for the suggestion that these underlying principles should be dug out from the "tense moments." In this way I have endeavoured to analyse the animal mind, and to show how it reacts in its relationship with man the hunter, as well as with the non-hunter. The reader who studies these chapters will realise what a marked difference there is in animal mentality between the two contacts.

In this attempt to produce yet another shikar book, which may be different because it gives many points of view instead of one, I am greatly indebted to all the contributors of this series. Each one has consented to the inclusion of his article, and I wish to express my appreciation of this valuable co-operation. Nearly fifty articles were originally published in this series, and about half have now been selected for the book. There is nothing in the order of arrangement beyond a desire to vary the subject matter from animal to animal in order to avoid wearying the reader; though it must be admitted that the first chapter, which was the first article published, from the

pen of Mr. Smythies, would be hard to beat from the point of view of tenseness !

The author of each chapter guarantees that it is true in detail and some of the experiences prove the old adage that "truth is stranger than fiction." For instance, if any film scenario writer or fiction author had pictured a tiger being found under a table in a bungalow, even experienced naturalists might have been pardoned for dismissing the yarn with a contemptuous smile. Yet this experience is given by Mr. Wimbush, a member of the Forest Service, while camping in a Madras Presidency forest bungalow. Other instances of astonishing escapes are plentiful. There was Capt. C. R. S. Pitman, Game Warden of Uganda, tracked relentlessly by a herd of wild elephants led by a large cow determined on revenge—quite a different affair from the average wild animal which always seeks to avoid the company of man: until wounded, of course. There is an almost equally thrilling incident related by Mr. Randolph Morris, a big game man of long experience in one of the best stocked forests of Southern India: elephants determinedly attacked his camp at night. Then there was an unprovoked attack by a monster S'ladang in the Malay States, related by Major M. C. Maydon.

I am well aware that there are excluded from this book many remarkable incidents in the annals of shikar which ought to be included. That is not the fault of the Editor. The reader must blame the modesty of the big game man, who more often than not dislikes talking about his experience. The memories may be painful ones; or it may be that long months of life in the wild have developed a dislike of publicity equal to that of the animals themselves.

Col. A. E. Stewart, the author of that invaluable tiger shooting manual *Tiger and Other Game*, excused himself from contributing an article because he believes that all tense moments are a confession of error—generally of error which the sportsman ought to have avoided. This may be a counsel of perfection, but it is an original viewpoint, especially to those who believe with the Editor that tense and dangerous

moments are unavoidable sooner or later in the pursuit of big game. Says Col. Stewart in a letter to the Editor: "All along I have avoided, on principle, giving details or exciting pictures of hairbreadth escapes, etc. Fifty per cent. of these are the result of bad shikar, ignorance or carelessness.

"But you may argue that in describing tense moments they act as a warning to the novice, and there I must agree with you. Any I had were when I was a youngster, and twice I nearly lost my life with bear; but both times it was because I was young and ignorant. And if I send you an article, it won't be in any bravado stunt, but more in the shape of a warning to others not to do what I did on these occasions."

Few people will subscribe entirely to the viewpoint in the first paragraph. For the pitcher that goes to the well daily is sure to be broken in the end, be it handled ever so carefully. Were there no personal peril in the pursuit of dangerous game, few of the contributors to this series would have spent their hours in the jungle. It is safe to say that most of them tire sooner or later of the pursuit of those big horned trophies of non-dangerous game, however arduous and wearying the trial. Many, like Mr. Champion who contributes "Tense Moments with a Camera," have forsaken the rifle altogether. But most big game men return with unquenchable zest to the pursuit of that wily animal the tiger, or the rogue elephant.

No apology is made for the inclusion in this book of a final chapter on the Preservation of Wild Life. The matter sadly needs publicity, and I have always endeavoured to give it as much as possible in *The Illustrated Weekly of India* as well as in other ways. Nor is there anything inconsistent in the inclusion of this chapter in a shikar volume. It is generally recognised by people in a position to talk on the matter that the shikari is nature's best gamekeeper. His movements enable him to gather personal information and form opinions at first hand. The sportsmen of India have taken a lead in this movement, and there is nothing incongruous or selfish in their attitude. The sportsman, of all people, is in a unique position to help. His hobby takes him into the jungle, brings him into possession

of the facts of the case, and enables him to detect and expose cases of ruthless slaughter, poaching, netting, or other mistaken activities. The few heads which he may select in the course of a year are of old males, and if he takes up the pursuit of the wily tiger, he is actually contributing in a very direct way to the preservation of those animals on whom the carnivora prey, such as sambhur, cheetal, etc. Nor should it be thought that sportsmen who interest themselves in the movement for the Preservation of Wild Life do so from selfish motives. Restricted shooting is not inconsistent with the preservation of game. What is needed is protection from wanton butchery over water holes, salt licks and such places. If this volume does nothing more than educate public opinion on the habits of those wild animals which appeal to the popular imagination, and stimulate opinion and thought on the subject of Wild Life Preservation, then it will have served its purpose.

Bombay, 1936. S. J.

* * *

The Editor acknowledges with thanks the help of Mr. S. A Vahid, I.F.S., of Khandwa, in reading through the Second Section of the book, Mr. Vahid's long jungle experience proved most valuable; also of his former Commanding Officer Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd, C.M.G., D.S.O., the well-known shikari-author, who kindly added the footnotes shown besides writing the Introduction. Thanks are also due to Mr. W. G. Adam, an honorary Game Warden of Ceylon, for his most useful notes on exactly how certain wild animals attack

# SECTION I

## Chapter I

# A TIGER THAT CLIMBED A TREE

By E. A. Smythies, I.F.S.

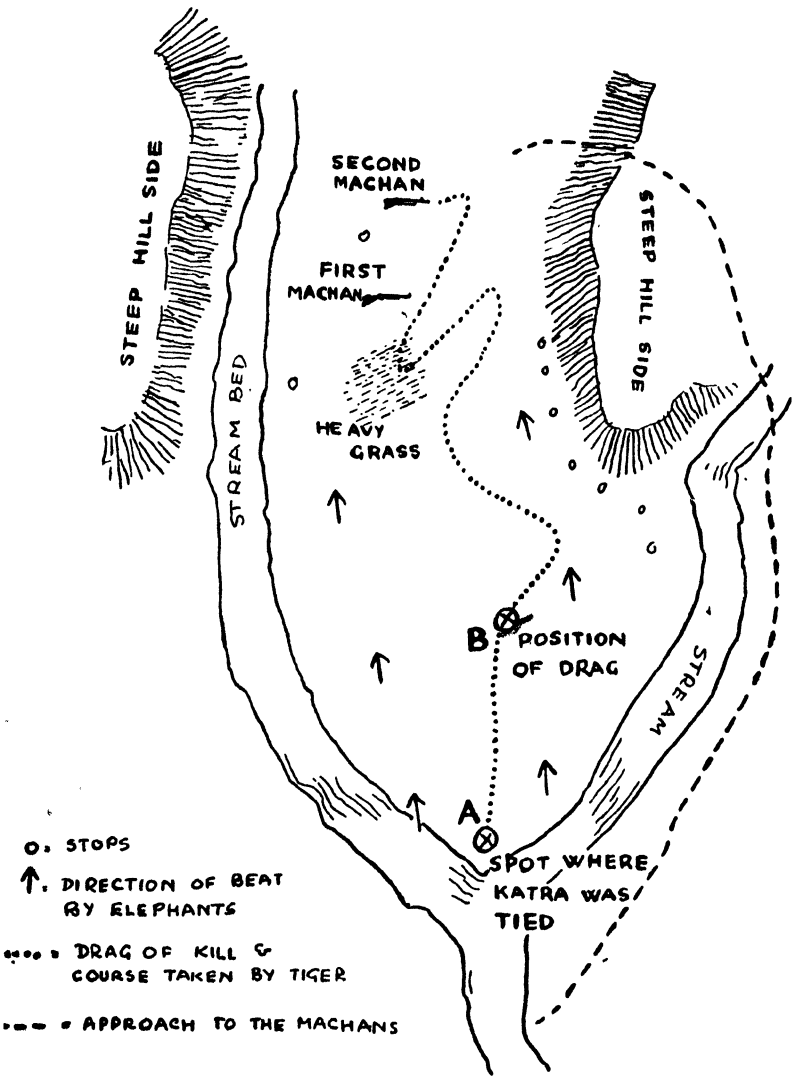
*Mr. E. A. Smythies, of the Indian Forest Service, tells how his wife was attacked in her machan by a large tiger while he himself, in a neighbouring machan, had only one cartridge left. The tiger fell off one side of the machan just as Mrs. Smythies stepped back and fell to the ground also.*

An adventure that in several aspects is believed to be unique and is certainly one of the most exciting in the annals of big game shooting in India, happened to my wife and myself on the last day of 1925. Many garbled accounts of this incident have been published in the press in Europe, Asia, America, and Australia, but the following is an authentic first-hand account, based on an article which I wrote at the time.

As a prelude to the story, it may be of interest to describe the general theory of tiger beating as practised in the submontane forests of the United Provinces, with two or three elephants, and a few stops, and the accompanying sketch map of the actual beat will serve to illustrate the general theory.

The first essential is to locate or fix a tiger in an area suitable for beating and where he is likely to lie up undisturbed. For this a young buffalo (*katra*) is tied up night after night until a wandering tiger finds and kills it. In this particular beat, the *katra* is tied up at the junction of two bare stony streams as they issue from the foothill (marked A.)

When a tiger has killed and dragged the carcase into the heavy cover in the beat, the chances are that he will lie up nearby during the day, and can be beaten out at leisure. The




whole art of the beat lies in anticipating his most probable line of retreat, and by the judicious use of stops on either side bringing the tiger up to a *single machan*, placed on the natural line of retreat.

In this particular beat, one of the most famous death traps in the province, where to my knowledge over thirty tigers have met their doom, the left side is naturally protected by a bare stony stream, which no tiger would willingly cross, and where therefore stops are superfluous. The right side, however, is a well-wooded slope, at the foot of which a line of stops is necessary to prevent the tiger from slinking off into the hills.

A tiger, lying up near his kill somewhere about the position B, when disturbed by the approach of the elephants—moving in the direction of the arrows—either slinks off through the thick undergrowth in the direction of the first machan, or if he goes off towards the hill, is faced with a line of stops, who turn him back into the beat, and the elephants drive him slowly and inexorably on to his doom. This is the famous Riala beat of the Jaulasal shooting block.

Let the reader imagine himself on a brilliant cold-weather morning in that glorious country where the first rampart of the Himalayas without warning leaps out of the great alluvial plain of northern India to form a broken medley of ridges and foothills, cut up by deep ravines and boulder torrents. Here in the sub-tropical vegetation, with trees festooned with orchids and entwined with gigantic creepers, the sambhur swarm in their natural habitat, and nightly the boulder-beds, paths, and firelines are patrolled by the great carnivora seeking their meat from God.

Let him join us in spirit at the forest bungalow a few miles away, when the news arrives that a tiger has killed and dragged into the Riala beat, and all is bustle and excitement, collecting the stops, elephants, rifles, and the inevitable rope ladder for my wife. We started off, and when still a quarter of a mile from the point A, we dismounted from the elephants, and made a long detour quietly in single file on foot, to get to the top of the beat without disturbing the tiger.

* * *

Arrived at the spot, hot and dishevelled from the rough scramble, I fixed up my machan in position of the first machan

(as my wife had shot a tiger a few weeks before, and wanted me to shoot this one) and selected a tree for my wife's machan in the position of back stop, about forty or fifty yards behind, so that if the tiger went away wounded she might see where it went and possibly be able to finish it off.

### Fourteen Feet High

The tree selected was a stout *tun* tree, four feet to five feet girth, and the machan was tied up at the first fork *fourteen feet above the ground*. She sat in the machan with her back to the tree and her legs dangling over. These details are important in connection with what followed.

When we were both comfortably ensconced, the orderly went off to place the stops, and we waited for the beat to begin. Presently away in the distance I heard the elephants moving through the grass and trees, and almost at once a stop started clapping and a tiger roared twice. Just in front of my machan was a patch of very heavy *narkul* grass about twenty-five yards in diameter; after a few minutes I heard the tiger coming through this patch, and presently it broke cover in a fast slouch. I fired and, quite inexcusably, clean missed one of the easiest shots imaginable—a tiger broadside on at about twenty-five yards!

Instead of dashing away he turned round and bounded back into the patch of *narkul*, with a second shot (also a miss) to hurry him on his way, and lay up—invisible but quite close to me—snarling hideously. When the elephants came up to this patch, things began to get painfully exciting.

The tiger refused to break again, and vented his anger in continuous and terrific roars, one of the elephants of a somewhat timid nature was trumpeting shrilly, and both were crashing down young saplings and poles to try and drive him out. Then one of these saplings crashed down right on top of the tiger, and with another terrific roar he charged the two elephants. The timid one tried to fly, but was gallantly stopped by her mahout, while the other, as staunch an elephant, with as brave a mahout as one could wish to have, surged forward

to the attack. Whereon the tiger turned and once more galloped past me; and yet once more I made an exhibition of rank shooting and missed him clean.

He went flashing past my wife, about thirty yards away, and as it was nearly past her, she fired and I saw the brute drop, the bullet just missing the spine. I saw her fire again, but the second shot appeared to miss.

It is here that the incredible part of the episode begins, which lifts it from the commonplace into the region of the unique. As she fired the second shot, apparently some movement attracted his notice, for with a crescendo of the most appalling roars I have ever heard he turned round and charged towards her, climbing the tree for all the world like a colossal domestic cat, with his gigantic forearms almost encircling it!

"Good God," I shouted a warning, "look out, it's climbing your tree," and as I turned round hurriedly, I knocked all the loose cartridges out of my machan to the ground.

As things were, I had no option but to take the risk of hitting my wife. I fired at the brute, when it was half way up the tree, but only grazed it. As I looked down to work the bolt and re-load, I realised I had one cartridge left, and looking up again I saw my wife standing up in the machan with the muzzle of her rifle in the tiger's mouth—his teeth marks are eight inches up the barrel—and he was holding on to the edge of the machan with his forepaws and chin.

In this position she pulled the trigger—*and had a misfire.*

* * *

You must realise that, at least, two-thirds of the tiger's weight was now on the machan, for except for his back claws, he was hanging out from the tree by the width of the machan which was rocking violently from his efforts to get on to it. The next thing I saw was my wife lose her balance and topple over backwards, on the side away from the tiger.

The beast did not seem to notice her disappearance, and as I again aimed at him, I saw him still clawing and biting the machan—the timber was almost bitten through, and the strings

torn to shreds. I fired my last available cartridge, and by the mercy of Heaven the bullet went true.

It took the tiger in the heart and he crashed over backwards on to the ground immediately below the machan, where he lay hidden from view in the grass. I did not know at the time he was dead; nor, of course, did my wife.

All I knew was that my wife had disappeared from the machan on one side of the tree, and the tiger on the other, that I had no cartridges left; and that I was helpless for the moment to give any further assistance. In fact, I expected every second to hear her screams, and to hear the awful noise of a tiger killing his prey.

* * *

WIFE'S OWN STORY

Whether my predicament was as bad as my wife's can be judged from her view of the incident. I quote her words:

"As I fired again, apparently my movement caught the tiger's eye, for he turned round and charged straight at my tree, roaring worse than ever. I thought he was dashing past, but *suddenly realised he was climbing up the tree vertically under my machan*, and had just time to scramble to my feet, when his huge striped face and paws appeared over the edge, and he was evidently attempting to climb into the machan itself.

"His great mouth was open and all his teeth were bloody, and bloody foam came up at me with his roaring and spattered my hat and clothes. I pushed the barrel of my rifle into his open mouth and well down his throat (his teeth marks are eight inches up the barrel to this day) and pulled the trigger, and *had a misfire*.

"Then I really began to feel desperate, and did not know what to do. We were having a regular tussle with the rifle, and he was shaking me about with it, when suddenly his huge paw came up through the bottom of the machan, cutting the strings to shreds, and in stepping back to avoid it, I must have stepped over the edge, for the next thing I knew I was falling.

"I thought I was falling straight on to the tiger, and it flashed through my mind, 'surely I am not going to be killed like this.'

"I never felt hitting the ground, but my next conscious impression was that I was running madly through the grass and undergrowth and over fallen trees, expecting at every step to feel the tiger leaping on me and (I don't mind confessing) feeling absolutely terrified."

* * *

Meanwhile I was yelling myself hoarse for an elephant, when suddenly my wife appeared at the foot of my tree apparently unhurt, and we stared at each other speechless. Almost simultaneously one of the mahouts arrived, who had rushed up his elephant regardless of wounded tigers or anything else, and she hastily scrambled up, and cleared off into safety, unhurt but for a slightly sprained wrist and a few minor scratches and bruises from her fourteen-foot fall.

One of the back-stops, who had seen the whole incident (and had in consequence climbed up to the topmost twig of a sixty-foot tree) was shouting that he could see the tiger lying dead, and went off with her to the bungalow, leaving the stops to bring in the tiger.

## CHAPTER II

# TRACKED BY A HERD OF WILD ELEPHANTS

BY CAPT. C. R. S. PITMAN

Game Warden of Uganda Protectorate

(Author of *A Game Warden Among His Charges*, etc.)

*The author of this story had the unenviable experience in Africa of being hunted by a herd of elephants which he was following up. How he saved himself from a desperate situation makes exciting reading.*

"TENSE moments with big game" is what I am asked to write about, and during twenty-four years of intimate acquaintance with a variety of God's wild creatures, both peaceable and dangerous, in India and Africa, there are many tense moments which pass in review in one's mind.

There was that first tigress in Chanda, C.P. (1911), shot from a "machan" sited far too low, and the never-to-be-forgotten vision of a tawny, striped fury, thrashing wildly around with its huge paws, biting, clawing, towering over the occupant, but fortunately, with its head pointing in the opposite direction; the man-killer sloth bear, virtually dead, a gaping cavity where its heart should have been, racing down-hill, hurling one aside in that last convulsive rush; the old gaur, stalked laboriously most of the day, which turned the tables and in the late afternoon suddenly came out behind the trail, taking one completely unawares; those hideous thirty seconds beneath a wounded buffalo when "man born of woman" was speedily reduced to pulp; the enraged elephant, provoked unnecessarily by an imbecile gun-bearer with a shower of small-bore bullets, its trunk

mercifully pulled up by a frontal snapshot as it stretched out to grasp mere man, helpless to move and in a state of semi-collapse, the muscles of his right calf split in half when jumping aside and landing in a concealed hole.

They were all tense, and there are many others, but the worst was the occasion which provoked desperate fear. The extent of fear is, I consider, a genuine gauge of the degree of intensity.

Bitter, painful experience has given me a very wholesome respect for the African buffalo. I would never take liberties with the creature, I have learnt my lesson, but it is in connection with the elephant that I have to acknowledge the meaning of real fear. It is so big, so rough, so terrifyingly noisy, and those who profess contempt of this amazingly powerful and awe-inspiring creature do so either from bravado or from folly bred of ignorance. "For all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword" is an oft-used biblical quotation which seems peculiarly apt in the case of those who habitually hunt the African elephant, for if they go on long enough they almost invariably come to grief.

* * *

In 1925, I knew a great deal less about the African elephant than I do now. Though never foolhardy, I was, as is only to be expected, for some while decidedly ignorant. Experience is usually bought; some find its acquisition dearer than others.

I had just taken over the post of Game Warden of the Uganda Protectorate. The control of enormous herds of elephants which are a source of incredible damage to the crops, was my primary responsibility.

In the most important areas the far-reaching control organisation was particularly efficient, but there were numerous outlying localities in which it did not operate.

It was from one of these distant areas that appeals for assistance were most frequent, coupled with horrifying tales of the ferocity of the elephant herd in question. I could not help feeling that the most was being made of a bad business,

though at the same time I did not discredit all the tales of savagery. Personal investigation was indicated, and light-heartedly I set forth on a venture which all but had a tragic ending.

Many so-called "concerted" attacks on the part of wild animals are recorded, but when analysed it is usually found that the mob follows a leader (or leaders). Kill the leader and the danger disappears. This particular elephant herd was renowned for its evil temper, and apparently it was notorious as far back as the days prior to the advent of British Administration. The cruel pastime of ring-firing the elephants, which used to be indulged in freely by the natives each dry season, is undoubtedly the origin of this unpleasant state of affairs.

The country the herd frequented is savannah interspersed with regions of woodland. It is neither difficult nor the grass unduly long; the bush rarely thick and the cover, with the exception of a few small patches, by no means dense. The grass at that time of year averaged three to four feet. It was believed that the herd did not total more than a hundred, though it normally moved about in parties of twenty to thirty.

Having been informed that every European who had been in contact with these elephants in recent years had had experience of their aggressive ways, I was not ignorant of what to expect.

* * *

## Lost Spoor

Although a herd of about seventy had been in the vicinity for several weeks, a few days prior to my arrival it had moved right away and apparently all that was left was a big bull accompanied by a couple of cows. There had been rain during the night and the early hours of the morning, and so it was not difficult to estimate the age of the tracks once they were picked up. Purposely the trail had been taken up late, as it was hoped to find the elephants in their mid-day refuge. It was preferable to tackle such bad-tempered beasts when at rest, rather than when on the move.

For the first half-hour, the tall grass and tangled vegetation

was high above our heads. Through it the elephants, moving in single file, had beaten a highway. From time to time they wandered in aimless circles; at one point they had uprooted a great tree, fully fifty feet high, with huge trunk girth and roots four to six inches in diameter, and had left it flat on the ground. All this energy had been expended for the sake of a few tiny, fig-like fruits. At noon the spoor led to a small puddle of red, liquid mud where the trio evidently had had great fun, and from the freshness of the muddy tracks leading away from it, the quarry could not have been far ahead.

Unfortunately, the tracks then entered an area of short grass in which large numbers of elephants had been feeding a few hours previously, and it was soon evident that the spoor of the three we were following had been lost.

In fact, the evidence on every hand indicated that we had reached the place from which they had started overnight, and when they had rested and fed the previous day, but all the tracks had been mingled with those, not many hours old, of another herd.

Eventually we followed the most recent tracks of a fair-sized herd. However, tracks of about the same age were also plentiful, and after moving for a while towards almost every point of the compass, it seemed as if none were really fresh, and that hours might elapse before we came up with any elephants. Also, the general direction was leading us from camp.

We had been moving steadily for five hours through tiring country, and reluctantly I decided it was time to abandon our quest and retrace our steps, a decision which was extremely unpopular with our guides.

In spite of the protestations of our followers who seemed very convinced that elephants were not far distant, homeward we turned. We had been moving for less than a quarter of an hour, when we cut the fresh tracks of a small herd—about a dozen animals, mostly cows and calves. This surprise acted like a tonic, and after traversing a short three-quarters of a mile the herd was viewed. The cows and calves were feeding—it

was about 2.30 p.m.—and a couple of bulls sheltered under a huge, evergreen fig-tree. The bulls rested while the remainder of the herd browsed, but as soon as the feeding animals moved too far away they followed them and took up a new position.

While having a good look from the top of a huge ant-heap to see which animals could be tackled most favourably, I fortunately detected the two bulls, partially concealed by the thick foliage, a hundred yards away to the left. I had only to move forward a short way and I could not have failed to have given them my wind.

Instructing my followers as to what was happening and slightly retracing my steps I made a wide detour in order to approach them up-wind. I thought that if I could get rid of these two, the remainder of the herd, leaderless, might leave the neighbourhood. It was just after this that dramatic events began to follow each other with remarkable rapidity.

* * *

Exercising a little caution, it was easy enough to get right up to—and this means within a dozen paces of—the two big fellows, but they were screened by bushes which concealed most of their bulky bodies. All that was clearly visible were two huge heads looming over the top. One, the nearer, was facing; the other was turned away to the left and mainly obscured by its companion. Neither offered an easy shot, and eventually I decided to take a facing shot, a risky proceeding, as even the expert is inclined to shoot high.

This is exactly what happened, for though the elephant collapsed to the bullet, it was on its feet again instantly, and the thickness and height of the bushes made an effective second shot practically impossible. Though it staggered to the second bullet, the bull rushed off in headlong flight.

For some moments after the shooting there was pandemonium. The two bulls disappeared up-wind and the rest of the herd followed, the wild trumpeting and loud crashing as the panic-stricken beasts hurled themselves through the scrubby woodland becoming fainter and fainter until it finally

ceased. In our turn we were about to follow, when suddenly there was a renewal of the noise which rapidly increased in intensity—*the herd was returning.*

I told my fellows who were unarmed, that they had better look after themselves, and they accordingly scattered. At the same time I took the precaution of shifting my position so that I would be clear of the rush of the elephants.

I had hardly stood to await developments when I saw the main mob charging madly up the way we had come; not only that, *but the brutes were actually following up our tracks with their trunks, for all the world like a pack of hounds in full cry after a fox.*

* * *

### Relentless Trackers

When they arrived at the spot where my followers and I had parted company and where the former had scattered, without a moment's hesitation they opened out and began to nose their way along individual tracks in a most disquieting and uncanny fashion. They were led by a large cow and seemed determined to find us, and kept on feeling the breeze with their trunks.

Fearing for my weaponless followers I decided to create a diversion, and although the shot was a long one I brought the leader to her knees, but I had no time to see more, for with an enraged squeal the two bulls unexpectedly burst out of the bushes just in front of me and charged the sound of the shot. They really meant business, but fortunately had not got my wind, so followed up my tracks comparatively slowly.

One bull was tracking with trunk to the ground; the other accompanied him shoulder to shoulder. Reloading as I moved, I took up a fresh position.

My pursuers suddenly caught sight of me, and with an ear-splitting trumpet hurled themselves at me. I just had time to jump aside, push my rifle into the face of the nearest elephant and fire. To my utter relief he dropped.

Number two—the one originally wounded with the

frontal shot—was, fortunately, sufficiently discouraged at seeing his companion crash to the ground, to make off. Replacing the fired cartridge as I went I took up a commanding position on a flat-topped, roomy ant-heap and awaited further developments.

* * *

The herd continued to trumpet furiously and were in no hurry to clear off. I have never before nor since come across elephants so malicious and evil, and it was most disconcerting to watch their methodical efforts to pick up the tell-tale scent of their quarry.

The stricken bull staggered painfully to his feet, but a bullet in the head laid him low for ever.

After the initial flight the herd had circled round deliberately so as to pick up the human scent. Failing to find it on the breeze, it was chance which led the herd across our tracks with such startling results.

In the absence of a spare weapon, it is an excellent maxim when using a double-barrel rifle against dangerous game, never to fire off the second barrel unless absolutely necessary. Throughout the episode, with the exception of the two barrels fired successively at the nearer of the resting bulls there had always been the second barrel in reserve.

The value of a heavy bullet backed by a high charge is indicated by the instantaneous collapse of the elephant which received a .450 bullet point-blank in its face. The missile from a small bore rifle, unless very accurate, would not have had this result, and in instantaneous effect may lie the difference between life and death.

## Chapter III

# WOUNDED AND TREE'D BY DYING TIGER. BRAVE SHIKARI'S DEATH

By A. A. Dunbar Brander

(Author of *Wild Animals of Central India.*)

"*A Jungle Dilemma.*"

Anyone who has consistently hunted big game has had tense moments. Such can often be portrayed in four lines, and cannot be expanded. The following incident in my sporting career lends itself to this purpose, and although it is not claimed to be in any way extraordinary—rather the reverse in fact—it nevertheless projects itself on my sporting memories; and being "ordinary" it may have a certain value as a background to the extraordinary happenings portrayed in the present series.

During the war, owing to lack of guns, tigers increased at an alarming rate, especially in the Khandwa District. "Takkavi" advances to purchase plough bullocks for forest villagers chiefly resulted in free meals for tigers. Something had to be done about it. Officers who had been invited to help had failed to make much impression. At long last I found it possible to snatch ten days, and visit one of the worst tracts.

Tigers were so numerous, it was generally necessary to arrange two different beats in the day, and to trek seven or eight miles to sit up over a third kill: personal supervision was often impossible.

In the incident which I am going to describe, I arrived at dusk to find the "machan" placed in the worst possible position. The local man had tied a bedstead into a tree, which was growing out of the bank of a deep, narrow, straight-cut

nala, and the kill was on the top of the bank at the foot of the tree itself.

"A MISPLACED MACHAN"

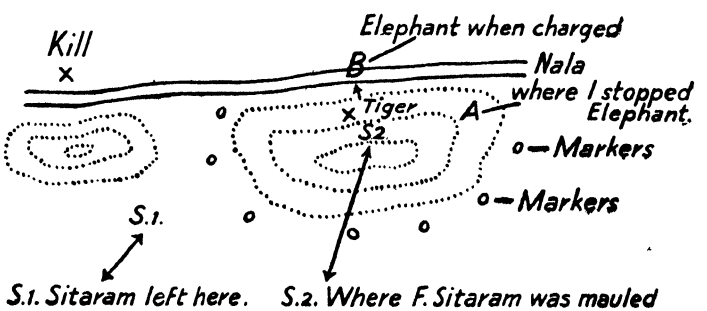
Anyone with any experience will appreciate the errors and difficulties; but it was too late to make any alterations, so I settled in with two advantages—no shade and a beautiful moon. In about two hours' time the tiger walked slowly up the nala, where I could see him, but could not possibly bring my gun to bear without movement resulting in disclosure. So I sat frozen. He jumped out of the nala directly beneath my feet, and hit his head on the end of a camel rope, which had been left dangling from the machan.

He dropped straight back into the nala and retreated at a brisk walk. All concealment was immediately abandoned. I whipped round and knocked him down, but with a couple of "wallops" he was into cover, where he lay down and maintained a continuous and awesome demonstration.

There was much difficulty in getting the elephant up to the tree. The tragedy developed next day. It was at once apparent that the tiger had lain all night where I left him: that he was very badly wounded, that my approach had moved him, and that he was highly dangerous.

It was also obvious that he had crossed a depression and gone into a small hillock, some four or five acres, bounded on one side by the straight-cut nala.

A rough sketch is more illuminating than any verbal picture.



I at once surrounded this hillock with men in trees, taking them round personally with the elephant for safety. I left Sitaram at $S_1$, with a herd of buffaloes and two fox terriers on a leash, with strict orders to remain where he was until he got direct orders from me to move. I then went into the circle with a very nervous elephant, and a lot of long grass and "Bauhinia" creeper to deal with. The men in the trees were splendid, they were watchful and absolutely silent.

It was at once obvious that I had circled the tiger and that he was skilfully avoiding me until his chance came. I must have been in that circle at least half an hour hunting round. Save for the terriers there was dead silence. I had stopped the elephant as a queer feeling came over, an intuition, and I was listening. The dogs' barking seemed nearer and more continuous, I then distinguished a low moaning and felt convinced of tragedy, somehow, somewhere. I was then at position "A." I pushed the elephant into the nala as the easiest and quickest way towards the sound. When I got to "B" I saw the tiger lying on the top of the bank, slightly above me and quite close: I stopped and fired.

The tiger was lying flat on his belly with his head resting between his forepaws. The position can be gauged by tracing the bullet, which raked his forearm, then blew out both canines on the left side, passing through his check. He jumped up, bolted ten yards, whipped round and charged me, I sitting on a pad, flush with the bank and about three feet from it. It is very rare for animals to change their minds in this way, but my defenceless position had evidently impressed the tiger.

My left barrel upset his charge, and his body, as it somersaulted, took the elephant fair in the ribs just below the pad: the elephant promptly bolted. It was not until we reached the fire-line that I was able to disengage myself from the elephant, which, in spite of our efforts, insisted on going back to camp at a smart shuffle. So that was that!

I at once returned to $S_1$ to find the "gaoli" (herdsman) and the buffaloes, but no Sitaram, and no terriers. The gaoli explained that Sitaram had got bored waiting and had gone

into the danger zone with the terriers: this was evident from their continuous barking.

All organisation, all nerve, had by this time vanished from the hunt. Most of the markers had vanished. I was able to make contact with the Ranger, who was in a tree and had a gun. He acquiesced readily with my shouted instructions that on no account was he to leave the tree. I then entered the circle alone, and shouting, got a moaning response, barely audible between the continuous barking of the dogs and awe-inspiring retorts from the tiger. Pushing on, I found Sitaram some eight feet up a sapling and his left thigh more or less a large fleshy flap: a horrible smother of blood and a still more horrible drip, drip, of more blood. The dogs were entwined by their chains round the sapling, and the tiger was in a dense and impossible clump of Bauhinia about twenty yards off.

### A Dilemma

It is very easy sitting here writing these words to review and criticise my action: but there comes a time in the life of all men who have had adventurous lives, when instant action is imperative, and the first impulse of thought persists and is acted on. Your readers can gauge for themselves what they would have done, what they should have done: I can merely relate what I did.

My first impulse was to finish the business, get the job over in fact, so I promptly unleashed the dogs, bitterly regretting that I had, in a very short time. They promptly attacked the clump and kept running back and fore between me and the tiger to tell me where it was, but I was quite unable to induce the tiger to charge or show himself. I then told Sitaram to drop into my arms, which he did and then collapsed. All thought of finishing the tiger had to be abandoned, Sitaram's case was paramount. I then found that I could not carry both Sitaram and my rifle. I do not think in the whole of my life I disliked anything more than having to put down my rifle and pick up Sitaram, and, disarmed, turn my back on that tiger and walk away, with the probability of being charged whilst doing so.

The wiser course would have been not to have unleashed the dogs until I had got Sitaram out.

It is a dreadful business having to carve a man with inadequate equipment, without the assurance of trained knowledge, but I did what was obvious and within three hours Sitaram started for Khandwa (thirty-six miles) with every comfort I could devise and an S.O.S. relay of coolies at every village.

I ate no breakfast or lunch, and at 3 p.m.—although still intolerably hot—I went back to the jungle to "finish the business" with the two terriers and the elephant, my instructions to the mahout having been, that the elephant was to be "tyar" (ready), and that he could dope it with anything he liked short of killing it. Both he, and it, just kept within this limit!

I retrieved my rifle by borrowing the Ranger's gun. The terriers at once found this magnificent tiger, with the flies already busy on him.

Could he not have died just as well twelve hours sooner? Of course, camp had been broken and I chased my man in to find him dying of shock and blood poisoning. His last words were an injunction to care for his widow—his wish was fulfilled.

So died a brave and faithful servant.

## Chapter IV

# WHEN ELEPHANTS ATTACKED MY CAMP AT NIGHT

By Randolph C. Morris

*Few sportsmen can have had so thrilling an encounter with elephants as did the writer of this article. His camp was besieged on three sides by threatening pachyderms, and the scene is best described in his own words : " The sholagas feverishly made a ring of fires round the camp, and shots were fired. Every now and then an elephant would crash through the jungle with a shrill trumpet to within a few yards of the ring of fires, to be met with yells and shots . . . then the whole herd seemed to advance, and once or twice it looked as if they would charge the camp* en bloc." *A thrilling sequel was a duel between two of the mammoths, and we leave the author to tell the tale.*

Scene: Camp Namagundi, Billigirirangans.

Four of us were in camp: two men and two ladies. Soon after nightfall a herd of elephants started trumpeting near camp, and shortly after this the herd entered the patch of evergreen jungle in which the camp was, from the western side, surrounded the camp on three sides, and commenced to demonstrate.

Things looked decidedly nasty. The Sholagas (a jungle tribe and excellent trackers) feverishly made a ring of fires round the camp with all available firewood, and shots were fired. Every now and then an elephant would crash through the jungle with a shrill trumpet, to within a few yards of the ring of fires, to be met with yells and shots.

It was a weird and wild scene; the glare of the fires round the camp lighting up the figures of the two sportsmen standing

with guns at the ready (shot guns were being used) with loaded rifles at hand for any elephant that might break through the ring of fires, the two women standing behind trees, and the Sholagas running from fire to fire, waving fire-brands, banging kerosene tins and yelling vociferously.

There was not a tree in the vicinity that an elephant could not knock down with ease.

Beyond the light shed by the fires was inky blackness, and from here issued roars, trumpets, and a medley of other sounds and crashes.

Every now and then the whole herd seemed to advance and once or twice it looked as if they would charge the camp *en bloc*.

It was a succession of advances and retreats, sometimes by the whole herd, at other times by elephants singly or in twos and threes. One tusker, bolder than the rest, very nearly broke through the ring, the rifles were quickly seized, but it turned and went back into the darkness.

After full three hours of this, the whole herd finally retreated, but could be heard venting their rage on trees in the vicinity; then a series of trumpets and thuds gave the impression that two tuskers were fighting, which turned out to be correct on the following morning. Still later the noise subsided, except for now and then low grumblings like the rumblings of a distant thunderstorm.

There was, however, no sleep for the party in camp as there was a possibility of the elephants returning to the attack, but this fortunately did not occur.

Morning dawned on a scene of destruction for about two hundred yards to the south, east and north of the camp, where the jungle had been smashed up and trodden down by the elephants for several hours.

Sholagas reported that the elephants were still within half a mile of the camp; the two men went out with their rifles and watched a homeric fight between two tuskers—a struggle of the giants. One, rather smaller than its adversary, but with larger tusks, distinctly had the advantage, finally defeating

its opponent, and could be seen chasing it through the jungle away from the proximity of camp, slowly followed by the rest of the herd. A broken piece of tusk was later picked up. Thus ended an extraordinary incident.

It was supposed that the elephants finding the camp on their path decided to oust the intruders, and it is possible also that the two tuskers, having already commenced their battle, were in no pleasant frame of mind when they discovered the camp pitched on the elephant path, and led them on to the attack.

It is stated that African elephants have been known to do this, but with Indian elephants a case such as this must be rare.

The ladies decided that they had had their fill of shikar experiences for the time being and were escorted back to the estate by one of the men, encountering on their way a cow elephant with a calf. The elephant demonstrated, seemed for a moment about to charge and then retreated.

* * *

### The Dodsampagai Rogue

The following incident occurred some years ago. While camping with my sister, who had elected to remain in camp one morning, I went out for a stalk.

A rogue elephant, known as the Dodsampagai rogue, was said to be wandering somewhere in the vicinity.

At mid-day, while returning with my trackers past thick evergreen jungle, I was startled by a short, sharp trumpet, and out charged the Dodsampagai rogue. Seizing my .500 Express I just had time to fire at the charging rogue's head. It swerved and, as it passed, I fired the second barrel close in behind the shoulder. This proved to be a lucky shot, passing through, or in the region of, the heart. Rushing on for another two hundred yards or so, the elephant collapsed dead.

Thus were avenged the deaths of Dod Toddy Madda and his son, Jeddia, two Sholagas who had walked right into the rogue on a misty monsoon day near the same spot a year before, and were torn limb from limb.

* * *

SCENE: In Camp

My wife, a friend and I had retired to bed.

At midnight my wife awoke me with the words, "I am sure there is an elephant in camp." "Rats!" was my unfeeling and sleepy reply, but the word was hardly out when our Irish terrier, lying just inside the door of the hut, rushed out, barking furiously. Followed a shrill trumpet and crashing as an elephant careered out of camp with the dog after it!

For a few moments pandemonium reigned, shouts and yells from the camp Sholagas helped to speed the departing intruder! It turned out that this elephant was one of a herd feeding near, and had unsuspiciously wandered into the camp.

A VINDICTIVE TUSKER

On another occasion the three of us went into camp after bear. As it was getting dark, when we were within a mile of camp we stopped at a nala to light a lantern, and I rested my .375 Mauser against a rock.

Absent-mindedly I picked up the lighted lantern, leaving the rifle behind.

When within two hundred yards of camp, shouts from Sholagas up trees warned us that the Bellagulla rogue elephant was temporarily in possession of camp; and to make matters worse "Peter," the Irish terrier, scented the rogue and, possibly with memories of having chased an elephant out of camp on a previous occasion, rushed in and bayed the brute.

Followed a devil of a to-do, a nasty situation, for it was now pitch dark. The rogue could be heard kicking up the dickens of a hooroosh, and "Peter" barking wildly. Soon "Peter," realising that he was up against a different proposition altogether, raced back, followed, however, by the now infuriated tusker!

Shots were fired into the air, and the Sholagas yelled and tried to light the grass, which, however, was too green to burn.

Luckily the elephant turned aside, and we reached camp without further trouble.

Seizing my .450 H.V. rifle on hearing the elephant, I had not had occasion to think about the .375 Mauser and it was not till camp had been reached that I remembered leaving it in the nala.

A man was sent to bring in the rifle in the morning, and on returning from our morning stalk my rifle, or what remained of it, was lying in front of the hut, literally smashed to smithereens. The woodwork was matchwood, and the barrel and breech and bolt were hopelessly damaged.

The rogue had apparently gone along the path we had taken to camp and, possibly scenting the human taint on the rifle, in passing had given vent to its rage by smashing it to pieces on the rocks.

Not satisfied with this, proceeding further the rogue had come on a cow tied up for tiger and killed the wretched animal.

We vowed we would do the tusker in at the earliest opportunity; this soon came, and the elephant was marked down and laid low—an enormous brute ten feet in height at the shoulder, with a large single six-foot tusk.

## Chapter V

# WITH A TIGER "IN CAMERA"

By A. Wimbush, I.F.S.

*It would be difficult to visualise a tenser moment than stretching your leg under an office desk and touching a tiger which had strolled in from the jungle for some extraordinary reason.*

The following unusual incident occurred at Iskagundam on July 19, 1928, in the Nallamalai Hills of Kurnool district in the Madras Presidency, where the writer was camping with Rao Sahib K. R. Venkataramana Iyer Avergal, Conservator of Forests, and Messrs. B. K. Roy and S. Raghunatha Rao, the District Forest Officers of South and West Kurnool divisions. Mr. Venkataramana Iyer was occupying one room in the Forest Rest House, whilst the writer occupied the other, the two District Officers being in tents close by. About 7.30 p.m. Mr. Venkataramana Iyer was doing some office work by the light of a petrol lantern in his room whilst the other three officers were talking in the adjoining room.

* * *

Suddenly Mr. Venkataramana Iyer appeared, in a state of some excitement, saying that a tiger had just walked into his room. The statement sounded singular if true, but investigation as to whether the "pi dog" had merely passed through his room or was still there seemed to be indicated. A rifle was standing handy, so after loading it, more as a sign of respect for Mr. Venkataramana Iyer's veracity than with any expectation of using it, two of the officers proceeded to investigate through the door leading on to the back verandah which, luckily, was *propped open, about nine inches by means of a stone.*

That truth is stranger than fiction was proved by the unmistakable fact that the tiger was underneath the office table diagonally opposite to the back door. It was examining the window behind the table which, though open, was protected by bars. It did not present a perfect shot owing to the fact that it was partly screened by the office chair and a table leg.

However, the petrol lamp gave a good light. A few inches of shoulder, though not the neck, were clearly visible. A shot was, accordingly, taken which was followed by a brief moment of pandemonium, after which all was still. The pandemonium resulted in the extinction of the petrol lamp and, as was found afterwards, the disposal of most of the Conservator's office work.

* * *

A fairly lengthy consultation then ensued as to what was to be done next. All concerned were extremely anxious to have dinner, but the feeling that the tiger might also be in the same state ruled out any idea of asking the servants to take the dishes backwards and forwards between the kitchen and the house.

The supposition was that the tiger was dead, so the only natural thing to do seemed to be to try to verify this supposition. Fortunately, another petrol lamp was available, so one officer with the rifle and another with the lamp approached the door and peered in.

No tiger was to be seen, so with a walking-stick the brick which was preventing the door from opening more than *about nine inches was pushed further in.* As the door opened a tiger's tail became visible on the floor. As the tail did not move, the door was pushed further open with some confidence. It immediately became apparent that the tail belonged to a live tiger which was squatting on its haunches more or less behind the opening door.

This presented a quandary which led to a discussion as to what on earth had ever induced the officers to join the Forest Service. Something, however, had to be done, so after considering all possibilities, including that of making a hole in the *thatched* roof, it was decided to go and fetch a crowbar from

the Ranger's camp close by and make a hole in the mud wall separating the two rooms.

* * *

This decision was given effect to, but before the crowbar arrived the fatuity of the proposed procedure became apparent and the idea was dropped in favour of making a hole in the roof. Consequently, a ladder and an electric torch were obtained and a Forest Guard very shortly had the hole made, whilst the back and front doors were kept under observation.

The Guard, after examining the room by the aid of the torch, and after making several loud enquiries of the tiger as to whether it was dead or not, called for an officer to come up on the roof with the rifle. On arrival up aloft the officer was able to see the tiger, apparently dead, lying with its head resting against the corner of the room.

However, the officer, realising that a tiger killed twice is better than one not killed at all, put in another shot, whereupon the tiger, which was not dead at all, proceeded to expire somewhat leisurely.

The party then hauled the animal, which proved to be an extremely emaciated tigress, measuring 8 ft. 2 in., on to the verandah and forthwith enjoyed a well-earned dinner.

During the process of skinning, which took place immediately after dinner, it was found that the tigress had a bullet wound full of maggots in her stomach, as well as having one of the smaller pads on a back foot badly lacerated. The first shot of the evening had broken her near shoulder to pulp, the bullet having emerged from the base of the neck towards the front.

Mr. Venkataramana Iyer, who, in retreating from his office table in the first instance, had actually brushed against the tigress, found, on returning to his room, that the letter which he had been writing was bespattered with blood. With this satisfactorily sanguinary ending to a somewhat unique experience the writer retired to rest at 4.30 in the morning, having pegged out his tiger skin, washed off the innumerable ticks resulting from the skinning, and recorded the events of the night whilst they were still very fresh in his memory.

(*Reproduced by courtesy of the "Indian Forester."*)

## CHAPTER VI

# FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER'S POINT OF VIEW

BY F. W. CHAMPION, I.F.S.

Author of *With a Camera in Tigerland*, and *The Jungle in Sunlight and Shadow*.

*Mr. F. W. Champion, the famous photographer of big game, shows here that his own hobby is by no means devoid of tense moments. Two such are described : one when a tiger was disturbed at a distance of five yards and crouched to spring. The second was when Mr. Champion and his wife were charged by a wild " musth " elephant. How they escaped on each occasion is explained.*

THERE are some people who claim that big-game photography is much more dangerous than big-game shooting, but I am of the opinion that on the average such is not really the case. My reason for this statement which, being a photographer myself, I suppose I should not make, is that I hold the view that most wild animals want only to be left alone, and they will leave you alone.

The photographer does not, or should not, wound or harry his subjects, so that in most cases the animals have no cause to bear him ill-will; but when animals are pursued and wounded they naturally show resentment and become much more dangerous than they are in their normal and undisturbed state.

In the case of a really good shot very few animals are wounded without being killed almost at once, so that the danger is no more —indeed, it is often less—because it is possible to shoot at greater ranges than are satisfactory for the production of really good photographs.

But many good sportsmen are not such accurate shots,

and, in such cases, they often "ask for trouble," and the possibility of this "trouble" is really what appeals to them in big-game shooting. There are unfortunately a few, an increasing number it would seem, who are content with potting tigers from motor-cars or safe machans, and yet who talk a lot about the danger of big-game "hunting," when there is really no danger whatever involved in their kind of hunting.

As regards big-game photography, for the ordinary man it tends to be on the average, for the reasons I have given above, somewhat less dangerous than the more sporting forms of shooting, but it all depends upon the individual.

If one likes to creep up to tiger kills on foot and unarmed in the day-time and to try to take photographs at close range of angry and disturbed tigers, one can certainly claim that one is indulging in a really dangerous form of sport, because in most cases the kills will be in thick cover among which it is possible to take photographs only at a range of 10 yards or less. Clambering about steep and dangerous precipices burdened with a heavy camera trying to photograph the sheep and goats of the Himalayas is also dangerous—as is stalking wild elephants to close ranges.

In Africa it is highly dangerous to try to take daylight photographs of rhinos with a lens of comparatively short focal length and with no white hunter behind, so there are really plenty of opportunities for the man who likes a spice of danger in his photography.

As regards myself I make no claims to being a particularly brave man, and now-a-days, as a married man with a wife and children dependent upon me, I have to be more careful than perhaps I used to be. Even so, I still get my tense moments and thrills, and, if I were sufficiently careless as regards my own life, I have no doubt but that I could get as many more as I wanted when trying to take animal photographs.

I will now describe two thrills that I have had in recent years, one with a tiger and the other with a *musth* wild elephant. I sometimes set automatic flashlight traps over tiger kills and the tiger episode occurred in such a case. I would mention in

passing that I use auto-photography partly because I became so riddled with malaria as a result of sitting up all night in the jungle that I had to give it up, partly because I couldn't spare the time, and partly because it is possible in certain cases to obtain artistic pictures with its use which are quite unobtainable in any other way—although auto-photography really needs no apology and is just as dangerous or undangerous (except as regards malaria) as sitting in a machan to shoot. Anyhow, what happened in this particular case was as follows.

* * *

I obtained a kill by a particularly fine tiger—subsequently shot by Mr. (now Sir) W. L. Stampe and measuring over 10 feet between pegs—and I set my automatic flashlight traps over the kill in the usual way, requiring about two hours' silent work on foot at the kill, with the tiger hanging about all the time.

I then left the kill for the night and returned in the morning on foot and with no weapon, to see what had happened. On reaching the spot I found that the tiger had returned and had removed the kill *without* firing my flashlight in a way which seemed to me quite impossible.

I was so astonished that, without thinking what I was doing, I silently followed the drag, accompanied by my Garhwali orderly, Mahendra Singh, up a steep slope culminating in a small plateau. On reaching the plateau we found that the drag went round a big rock, so we went round the rock too, and suddenly blundered right on the kill—with the tiger in possession! The distance could not have been more than five or six yards and the tiger had apparently been so engrossed in his meal that he hadn't heard us coming.

As we turned the corner, however, he suddenly looked up and immediately crouched with a horrible snarl, lashing his tail from side to side and ready to spring at any moment. The situation was critical and it really looked as though our number was up this time. We had no rifle. The tiger had been suddenly disturbed and was obviously very angry.

Retreat was very difficult either for the tiger or for us.

But instinctively we both did the only possible thing in such circumstances and " froze," staring the tiger straight in the eyes. This continued for a minute or so, the tiger snarling and lashing his tail and we standing motionless with our hearts beating like sledge-hammers. Then we began gradually to move backwards inch by inch, hoping that the tiger wouldn't notice that we were moving.

The snarls increased.

We stopped, fearing the worst. But as opportunity offered we continued our almost imperceptible retreat, until finally with sighs of relief we disappeared behind the rock.

The tiger did not follow and we beat a hasty retreat ! This was, I think, one of the nearest things I have ever had, as the slightest sudden movement on our part would have precipitated an attack which we could never have met, with no weapon between us.

Anyhow, " All's well that ends well," but I shall always remain thankful that I had a staunch man with me, who instantly realised without being told—indeed, there was no opportunity to speak !—what was the only chance of escaping from a really critical situation.

I think that most shikaris will agree that this sudden meeting with an angry tiger would have been a tense moment, even if I had been armed with a heavy rifle. Without a rifle at all, " tense " hardly describes the situation.

* * *

So much for an encounter which came my way largely as a result of my unfortunate habit of wandering about tiger jungles unarmed. Now, I will describe my meeting with a wild elephant—an animal which tends to be more short tempered than the average tiger.

Accompanied by my wife, I was wandering about one day on a tame elephant seeking photographic adventures, when we came across a small herd of wild elephants feeding on their favourite food of juicy bamboos. We first saw the herd from a distance and we paused for a moment to study the position,

our pulses throbbing as they always do throb when we approach close to wild elephants—animals which are so large and so uncertain in temper. We were half hidden under a tree and we were watching several of the mighty beasts standing in a half-dried pool and throwing dust and muddy water over their bodies. We were just considering the best method of approach when quite unexpectedly a fine bull, followed by a large cow and a delightful little calf, strolled across our front at close range. The mahout, Karim Baksh, who had vast experience of elephants, sniffed the air, and, gazing at the bull's cheeks, whispered, " Take care ! He is *musth !* I can see and smell the oily discharge." Normally we would have hesitated before attempting to approach too close to a *musth* elephant, since such elephants are proverbially dangerous, but we had been searching for this particular beast for years and the words of warning went unheeded.

* * *

We continued to approach gradually and silently, closer and closer, watching the family party enjoying itself in peace and even seeing the battle-scarred veteran fondle his baby with his trunk. At last we reached within a few yards and the heavy *musth* discharge was so obvious that we were beginning to

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DOES TIGER EAT TIGER ?

(*See opposite photo.*)

During a 1935 shikar camp, north of Jubbulpore in the C.P., Mr. A. C. P. Wadia, of Bombay, was told that two tigers had been fighting in the near-by jungle. The noise could be heard for a considerable distance, and the next morning a dead tiger was found which had been dragged for some distance. There were the pugs of another tiger round about, and of no other animal. Mr. Wadia and Mr. G. Daruwala sat up over the tiger and in the evening a second tiger appeared and was shot over this strange " kill," much of which had been eaten, as shown in the photograph. Cynics may suggest that the two tigers fought and one killed the other, after which hyenas and jackals may have had a meal before the arrival of the party at 9 a.m. the next morning. This does not explain why the live tiger started to drag the dead tiger just before being shot; nor why he dragged it in the first instance. It seems as though about fifty pounds of meat had been eaten, but the stomach was left, and this would have been taken by vultures or hyenas or jackals, etc. The tiger drags, of course, in order to conceal and preserve his food from vultures.

think that possibly it were better to retreat while the going was good. But it was too late. Something warned our quarry that all was not well. He turned quickly. He saw us, impudently standing within a few yards of him. His whole body gave a start. His ears turned back like those of an angry dog. His trunk began to curl. Then came a tense moment of indecision.

Mechanically I released the shutter of the reflex camera, while we had a terrifying vision of little pig-like eyes, vicious and angry—of a great menacing head covered with scars of many a battle for the mastery of the herd—of a broken tusk which looked as though it had gone septic. The thought flashed through my head that I should find it difficult to explain to my father-in-law why I had brought his only daughter to her death in this way, forgetting that I should not be there to explain! My wife thought of our little daughter and what would happen to her after we had gone.

Karim, on the spur of the moment and as the result of a lifetime spent among elephants, shouted out, " Hat jao ; piche " (Get out ; go back). This was probably the worst thing to do, for the sound of a human voice only incensed the enraged beast even further ; but the mahout quickly covered his initial mistake by firing a barrel of a twelve bore shot-gun (our only weapon) just over the elephant's head.

Nothing daunted, the great beast thereupon charged straight at us, looking just like a great lumbering omnibus bearing down upon us. All seemed over. We held our breath for the shock of the impact, expecting to be knocked over like nine-pins. Then, at the last moment, Karim fired the other barrel of the gun, and caused the tusker to swerve slightly and miss his aim. He shot past us with a swish at a distance of only a foot or two, whereupon our tame elephant (which had behaved magnificently) turned and fled.

By the mercy of God, the tusker did not follow and we pulled up some few hundred yards away, thoroughly shaken, but grateful to have escaped with our lives. The incident was over and we were still safe and sound, which seemed very unlikely at one time, for a really angry wild elephant will some-

times kneel and trample on the object of his wrath and will even tear the battered body limb from limb !

* * *

I think that these two episodes will serve to show that even bloodless hunting with a camera can provide its thrills at times. I would also point out that in both cases a happy ending was due very largely to the pluck of the Indians with me—if Mahendra Singh had not stood absolutely motionless, the tiger would certainly have attacked us, and if Karim Baksh had not fired that second barrel at exactly the right moment the *musth* tusker would certainly have knocked us over, and, his blood once up, would probably have trampled or torn us to death. Lastly, I would emphasise that I do not bear either this tiger or this elephant any grudge. After all, we all feel cross sometimes and in both these cases there was ample excuse for the animal's actions. The elephant was *musth* and he probably also had bad tooth-ache, quite apart from the fact that he was defending his harem. The tiger was hungry and was suddenly startled and cornered at close quarters. He really behaved very well for he merely cursed me and told me to get out, whereas other tigers in such circumstances might well have preferred giving punishment first and abuse afterwards !

## Chapter VII

# THE MYSTERIOUS YELLOW MAN-EATER OF PACHWARA. BABY SEIZED FROM BED AND DROPPED

By Mrs. E. Minshull, of Mussoorie

*" Suddenly an enormous yellow monster with a great ruff of yellow hair round his neck crept through the door, sprang upon the charpoy and seized the child." This is one of the astounding incidents in a true story of a chase after a man-eating lion in Indian jungleland.*

We hastily gave orders for fires to be kept burning all night round the camp. Rifles were left ready loaded beside our beds in case of any *khubber* being brought, but nothing happened and we marched on to meet the D.S.P., who was also out to bag the creature. Then began nights of sitting up over *puddahs* and days of chasing off in all directions after the latest news. But still the creature killed and killed, and gave no sign by which it could be identified.

The memory of that chase will live with me for ever—stalking a ferocious and unidentified man-eater of the jungle. It happened some years ago—actually it was in the cold weather of 1928, but the incidents were so thrilling that it seems as if they happened only yesterday. I remember that we were on our usual cold weather tour, and eventually came to Bansi—a small village in the Jhansi district, lying at the foot of a low range of hills covered with scrub jungle. The camp, as usual, had marched the night before, but when we arrived in the morning our surprise and indignation can be better imagined than described when we discovered that no tents had been pitched, and pandemonium reigned everywhere.

We were not left long in doubt as to the cause of this

apparent neglect of duty on the part of our staff, as our car was soon surrounded by the servants, headed by our venerable khitmagar. Throwing himself almost under the car wheels in his agitation he moaned pitifully, beating his breast and crying :

" Huzoor, let us be gone from this accursed place as soon as possible. A fearful demon haunts it and has killed hundreds of villagers. Yet no one has seen it, and down in the village they tell us that it is the spirit of a dhobie, who lived on the banks of the river.

" An evil spirit entered into him," continued the cowering khitmagar, " and he slew his wife and devoured her. Now he wanders through the jungle with matted hair and nails like claws, going on all fours and destroying all he meets." He told us more in this strain with frightful embellishments, but sifting his story, we realised that something unusual was happening. So we sent off the duffadar to Bansi village for more information. He more or less confirmed our khitmagar's story on his return, and was quite definite that an animal of a ferocious nature had been haunting the range of hills that ran up to Pachwara. It had killed twenty people in Bansi alone.

* * *

One of its favourite methods was to steal up behind a cart travelling through the jungle paths, and snatch the poor unsuspecting occupants. Then again it made a speciality of carrying off the lonely watchers from the machans in the fields. The night before our arrival, we were told this fearsome prowler had entered a village, where all the terrified inhabitants were safely behind barricaded doors, with the exception of the village chowkidar. The latter—sad to relate—provided the evening meal for that day. His headless body was found near his charpoy.

* * *

Then it was that we decided on immediate action, as the beginning of this story tells. But all to no purpose. We were very disappointed at not finding any trace of this weird creature,

and almost gave up in despair, but our hopes of a kill were revived when an old man appeared at the camp. He came from a village twenty miles away, running practically all the way. After he had calmed down he told us that the previous evening he was sitting by the fire in his hut, with his grandson lying on the charpoy behind him. The door was open as it was still only six o'clock. "Suddenly," he went on, "an enormous yellow monster with a great ruff of yellow hair round his neck crept through the door, sprang upon the charpoy and seized the child."

This brave old warrior was too bashful to tell us the sequel, but by judicious questioning we learnt that with flashing presence of mind, he seized a burning faggot from the fire and dashed it in the creature's face. With a roar of fear and pain it dropped the child and fled. We found out afterwards that no permanent harm was done to the child, except that it suffered a good deal from shock—in fact, it nearly died from fright.

This incident, therefore, only served to intensify our longing to get at this monster, but we were impotent. Every day brought fresh news of a kill—generally forty to fifty miles away from the last, but none of the khubbar was of any use to us in identifying the beast. Then we heard that it had killed a woman in the fields. So we went there and found the marks of its pads. The creature was obviously lame in the off foreleg—but the marks were not those of either a leopard or a tiger !

* * *

Excitement now ran high among the seasoned shikaris, and many were the arguments as to what it really was. After many consultations, we decided that the beast must have been a lion.

Now that part of the mystery was fairly easy compared to the subsequent question. How did it get there ? A possible explanation was offered by one of the party who said that some years before the incident of which I am writing took place, Gwalior State, hoping to raise a fresh stock of lions in their jungles, had let loose four of the animals imported from Kathia-

war. They were not seen again until one was shot in 1928. The one that was giving us all this excitement was probably another.

Be that as it may, one and all were determined to seek out this beast of the jungle. Government offered a reward of five hundred rupees, but our quarry scented like a sambhur, and even when one was lucky enough to happen on a kill within an hour or two he was away. Finally it was decided, at a round-the-camp-fire conference, to make an attack in force on his favourite haunt—Pachwara. Officials collected in large numbers, and tents, ringed with camp fires, were pitched in the valley. The baby and I were parked in solitary state in the bungalow on the ridge, this being deemed the safest place. Night after night we dined at five p.m. and the men were in their machans by six o'clock sitting over the juiciest puddahs that could be found. But never another sight nor sound of our jungle friend did anyone get.

He had disappeared into the blue, and to this day has not been heard of since.

*Editor's Footnote :—*

THE MYSTERY OF THE LION MAN-EATERS SOLVED.

The Administrative Officer, Forest Department of Gwalior State, writes in reply to an inquiry that " His Late Highness the Maharajah for the sake of experiment had imported four pairs of lions direct from Africa into this State, and not from Kathiawar. These lions were let loose in the State jungles of Sheopur District, so that they might get used to our jungles and breed there. But as time went on, it was found that for various reasons these African lions and their progeny did not like the environment ; and later on most of them turned into man-eaters. They have now all been accounted for except for a lioness, which is still at large.

" Out of these lions, a few strayed away into our other neighbouring Districts, and out of these one must have gone over to Datia State border, and from there found its way into Jhansi District. But I cannot say with certainty that this lion that was killed in Jhansi District was a man-eater or not."

## Chapter VIII

# GADARENE BEARS

By Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd, C.M.G., D.S.O.

*The author's reference to being held at pistol's point is to the Editor's insistence that Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd should not be excluded from this series. Col. Glasfurd has had a life-time of shikar in India and Africa, and his "Rifle and Romance in the Indian Jungle" and later "Musings of an old Shikari," are on every keen sportsman's book-shelf.*

*The Colonel has reason to be very respectful of the black bear. Those who imagine that "Melursus" is a good introduction for the beginner to big game shooting had first better read this article and then ponder on the truth of the saying that you never can tell what a bear will do. At all events, Col. Glasfurd was lucky to escape with his life and he still bears an ugly scar on his leg through the encounter.*

When an old shikari is held at pistol's point on demand of an account of the "greatest thrill" of his shikar experience he is likely to do some indecisive fumbling in the pockets of reminiscence.

If ever he had any "thrills" of the kind desired, what caused them? And which will provide the reader with the better shudder?—actual misadventure; or mere might-or-might-not-have-been?

Mishaps with wild beasts have become rarer during the past fifty or sixty years of increasingly accurate and hard-hitting firearms; and although mistakes, foolhardiness, or sheer misfortune will always exact their toll, the likelihood of getting oneself or assistants into serious trouble has generally lessened. Nowadays, also, there is more risk in the unwary crossing of a street—and much more in meeting Miss Lipstick

or Master Anzora at the cross-roads—than in half a life-time of the happiest-go-lucky pursuit of dangerous wild animals.

However, there seems to be more " romance," greater fun for the looker-on or listener-in in an encounter with fang or claw, horn or tusk, than in merely taking a radiator-cap in the neck or being flung through the windscreen. The viewpoint of chief actor and of bystander also differs, in that whereas the strong physical disturbance of a jungle catastrophe is liable to interfere with the former's " thrill-perception," the latter is never so enjoyably entertained as when the principal lad fails to extricate himself from trouble. This easily settles the choice of my own little try at the requisite thrill. And, since the business of the story-teller down the ages is to pander to this reprehensible interest in the affliction of others, I will refrain from Mr. Jabberjee Libelwala's—" Sir ! This is fault of Editor ! "

* * *

Once only, in a " lifetime of shikar," has a wild beast succeeded in turning the tables of adversity on me. Let the reader decide for himself whether this was due to consummate skill in venery, to an exquisite markmanship (" Yes, sir ! Right through the heart every time, sir ! "), to a fund of low cunning, or mere fleetness of foot. " Once only," I repeat ; and she was a bear, a so-called " sloth " bear, in the Central Provinces of India.

As soon as I was able after the occurrence—which took place on the first of May thirty-five years ago—a little song and dance, an opportunity not to be missed, was made for the dear-old-long-since-dead-and-gone *Asian*, once the premier sporting weekly of India and indeed of all the East. Into that now very old story, in which the writer figures as Queen of the May, every available drop of descriptive juice would seem to have been expressed, leaving nothing for to-day but a dusty desiccation of the Indian years. Yet it is possible that age, analytical and dispassionate, may get the picture in a different light, afford an aspect missed by younger eyes—or perhaps no

longer obscured by the *mauvaise honte* of having been caught napping by a mere bear.

I have therefore purposely avoided the influence of a re-perusal of my youthful impressions; and, here in my cottage in an old English village, long past midnight, silent save for the occasional hoot of owls from the old church tower, I turn the ancient pages of "Betul, 1902" to their last curt entry—"Bear got me!" and try to set the retrospective scene.

* * *

Nineteen hundred and two was not one of my good years, in a shikar sense. Stationed at Ellichpur in Berar, I had turned up my nose at a shoot in the neighbouring Melghat, our "home" jungles in that part of the Satpuras; and, hypnotised by *ulterioris ripae amor*, had fancied the more distant tiger country of the Betul District—once of great fame—and trekked across the Tapti to the valley of the Machna. On the way I visited the headquarters Civil Station of Betul—which happened to be my birthplace—and was most hospitably received by the three sahibs, district officials, there at the time. Guided by a letter from my mother, I located the room in the Deputy Commissioner's house where I had been born; and was also visited by some of my father's old servants.

Drawing the Machna jungles a blank, I made a number of marches in the direction of the Pachmarhi Hills, attracted chiefly by a proscribed rogue elephant, actually once a tamed animal that had run amok, killed his mahout, escaped into the jungle, and ranged those regions, so far without yielding up the price that had been set on his head. But 1902 was not my year, and I was soon on my way back across the Tawa.

Halting at a small village, Sataldehi, and hearing of bears some five miles to the north, I rode out early next dawn and found my young sepoy orderlies awaiting me near some low hills known as Chitra-Katra. These lie about six miles due east of Dhar, a village 18 miles south of Itarsi railway junction and on the Itarsi-Betul high road. My local native shikaris, the brothers Sawat and Bharat, were reported to be marking down

a bear on the hill. Well, the bear was there all right. And something quite surprising was about to occur.

Yet, although I believe that the onlookers obtained full value from the interesting entertainment that so soon followed, I can aver that it afforded me far less " thrill " than any of the fair share of " might-have-beens " that have fallen to my lot before—or since.

It was " so sudden," as the young lady used to say, and the trombone-cum-saxophone accompaniment so rowdy, that there was really no room for " thrill-appeal " ; and, as we know, the moral is to the physical as three to one.

* * *

To those who do not know him, the Indian " sloth "-bear (Melursus) needs a word of introduction. Zoologically different from all other kinds of bear (Ursus), he lives almost entirely on jungle fruits, roots, honey, insects, etc. ; climbs tall and difficult trees, and seems almost to enjoy heavy falls. He is about six feet long, weighs from fifteen to twenty stone, is covered with long, harsh, black hair, has poor sight and hearing but a very acute sense of smell, and is an uncouth, uncertain, unlovable, but far from slothful creature, liable to fly into hysterical furies on slight provocation.

Sloth-bears have an evil reputation for meaningless attacks on anything that may rile or startle them, females of the species accompanied by cubs being particularly savage, and having an extraordinary habit of carrying one or even both of their young clinging to the long hair of their shoulders on their forays abroad. Jungle natives seldom bother themselves about tigers ; but are terrified of these bears.

The only other wild animal of my acquaintance that has a somewhat similar disposition is the African black rhinoceros, but he is a slow-witted fool when compared with the bawling lunatic of which I write.

A curious fact is that Melursus, if he has time, nearly always attacks the head of a man ; and aboriginals have confided in me that this is due to his jealousy of man's upright carriage ; that, regarding himself as one of the *Adam-zad* or

sons of man (and the skinned corpse of this bear has a singularly human appearance) he bitterly resents the fact that God has made him plantigrade on all-fours.

There is, however, a funny side to this jungle maniac, and his crazy buffoonery, particularly, perhaps, his ludicrous death-song, an ululation laughably resembling an ill-executed Swiss yodel, introduces a ridiculous atmosphere, so that the pursuit of sloth-bears tends to a lack of seriousness, a facetious frame of mind that may lead to carelessness.

But let us cut the cackle and get down to business.

* * *

Briefly—and brevity lived up to its epigram that morning—I crept along a ledge on the southern face of a blazing hot sandstone cliff and shoved my head into a bear's cave, shouting (as I was told but certainly don't believe) "*La-la-lahitu!*" or words to that effect. My own recollection is that I arrived fortuitously in front of an unsuspected cave, saw fresh tracks of a bear leading in, and lingered a fraction too long in a hopelessly compromising situation.

Anyhow, the response to my "darkening the front door" was startlingly prompt.

There was an instant thunderous rumbling in the dark bowels of the hill: a quickly-swelling "GURGLE-WURBLE-BURBLE!" as I leapt back from the cliff-edge, pushing my followers away and telling them to run for it.

And I had barely turned and flattened against the cliff-wall before a frenzied yelling burst from the cave-mouth fifteen or twenty feet away, and a mass of black hair flew straight at me.

Just time to thrust my rifle-muzzle into it—the shattering blast of cordite right in the middle of the hairiness—a glossy black forehead (with eyes shut) buried in my right thigh, seemingly for quite a long time—then my legs swept back from under me, and my face, chest, fists and wildly-gripping fingers all mixed up with coarse, musky-smelling hair and a horribly strong back.

Then upside down and downside up, a confused thumping,

rolling, with hands scrabbling on stone—a hideous sensation of falling—a sickening bash in the ribs—a desperate wrapping of all my arms and legs round something that swung and swayed abominably—and the clatter of something far below . . .

* * *

That, no more and no less, undimmed by the lapse of all those years, is the nearest that I can get to the sensations of those few but crowded moments.

The rest is clearer, belonging to a less disturbed condition of mind and body.

* * *

CAUGHT BY A BRANCH

The sudden silence and peace that fell on that atrocious hurly-burly was the exact counterpart of an interrupted nightmare—blessed relief; and readjustment of values, mental and physical.

It is not the world, but I who am wrong side up, the hot sun burning my bare head and face . . . and it is a branch, a little bending tree, round which I am so tightly wound . . . and that hullabalooing devil has gone!

Though still useful on the "horizontal bar," one of my legs won't co-operate, and I can't get straight . . .

Then agitated voices, up above—"*Arre! Bhagwan! bach-gaya, bach-gaya!*"—(O Great God! he's escaped, he's saved!)—followed by a view of large naked toes and the dangling end of a loosened puggri. "*Shabash!* Well done!" It's Mallu and Kanhaya, my Jat orderlies. A double twist of *pagri* round hand and wrist, and up she comes. A bump. A scrambling knee-and-elbow struggle on the rounded cliff-verge. Eager, helping hands. And then, a bit "winded," the ledge once more, and the cave . . .

The *cave*, by Jingo! Blue Hell! *Any more of the swine in there?* Not likely now, after all that "hoo-ha!" Here! . . . shot-gun, anyway . . . load up with slugs; and move to healthier spot.

Everybody talking at once. "Where's the bally bear? Gone? Yes. Big one's gone. Big one! there was only one! Where

did he go ? He went slowly, slowly. There were two bears ! Slowly into jungle at foot of hill. But only one bear came out. Yes, but two bears fell down with the sahib. Yes, yes, I saw ! I too ! Two bears ? Don't talk nonsense. Oh, yes, two bears. First one—then the shot—then there were two. Oh, damn the bears—where's my waterbottle ? Oh, Mallu !—the sahib's water ! Here it is. Be pleased to sit in the shade and rest. Go, Sawat ! search for the sahib's hat. Yes, and the rifle too. Oho ! it is certainly broken. Yes, two bears and the sahib all rolled together, but the sahib— "

" Arré BÁP ! Oh, my father ! *How much blood has come out of your honour ! Look at the blood !* "

" Eh ? . . . blood ? . . .

Great Scott ! Am covered with blood all down right side, and front . . . breeches hanging in clotted strips . . . that's not all bear's blood . . . *thought* my leg felt funny . . . then he *did get* me . . . that head, with eyes shut, on my thigh !

Yes, dammit, he's got me all right . . . nasty hole a hands-breadth above knee . . . let's have breeches off . . . by gum ! *more* holes . . : bitten clean through . . . torn about too—that's when we came apart . . . but bleeding nearly stopped now . . . good . . . no pain, and feel perfectly O.K. . . . extraordinary !

H'm ! What happens now ? Back to camp, I suppose. Antiseptics. That perchloride, without too much delay. But better wash out wounds now. Boiled water from my bottle. Wonderful ! flows right through leg ; but only slight stinging at edges of skin. Bind up with handkerchief and strips of my cotton drawers, finishing off with ever-useful puggri cloth.

Munch some chocolate. Have some more water. Light up a large cheroot. Two more jungle men arrive. Mallu stages a little farce " featuring " Gadarene Bears. His round eyes, ridiculous postures, and slow-mouthing Jat utterance move one to—*agh* ! rather painful laughter. But Kanhaya, who has cut me a stout stick, shakes his head. " No good sitting here ! "—and he gives me his arm, pointing to the little tree, but for which, says he, my coconut would infallibly have been cracked.

"Wah!" he continues, "the sahib's luck is very very good; his star potent indeed! Undoubtedly the sahib must have deserved this, earned great merit by some outstanding act of piety . . . in another life," he adds, "in another incarnation."

For the moment, I miss his point, and hobbling to the edge, look down in thoughtful silence.

Quite solitary, sole excrescence in all that smooth face of rock, rooted in a cleft, it is barely six feet in length, about as thick as one's forearm, with soft, fluted, cork-like bark, and has a few straggling branchlets with acacia-type leaves. I know it by sight, a dwarfed, useless (useless ! !) jungle growth of marvellous elasticity. Bharat says it is called *bhiria.*

"BHIRIA ! Shan't forget that ! Can't touch my hat to you, *Bhiria*; as I'm wearing my folded coat instead. But *salam Bhiria ! Salam ! Long live Bhiria ! Bhiria bahadur ki ja-a-a-e !*"

A long and bothersome one-legged descent to the foot of stony Chitra-Katra, meeting Sawat and another man with my poor old rifle, and—hullo !—the carcase of a bear cub ! Nasty, hairy little replica of its horrid parent. *Now* I understand. Neither time nor mood for "autopsies"; but can see that the little brute's head has been shattered by the soft-nosed bullet, which, with that high velocity at the very muzzle, must have flown into fragments, blowing him from his dam's shoulders and failing to arrest her rush at me. The evidence is out. The whole affair clear. An extraordinary mixture, my men argue, of *dhoka* (trickery, deception) and marvellous luck; a combination of evil influences on the one hand and supernatural intervention on the other. For who but the gods alone could have provided that *bhiria*, at that time, and in that exact place, the one and only conceivable means of simultaneously snatching me away from the bear and of safely arresting my certain and fatal fall—for any less yielding tree would have broken my back.

And with their simple faith who will greatly disagree ? Not I, assuredly. For only nine months later, when returning with

my Regiment from the great Delhi Durbar of that year, I revisited the scene of disaster, with a brother officer, a coil of rope, and a camera ; and I find it described in my diary as an appalling place, much worse than I had realised at the time, the position of the providential tree showing that when I struck it I was falling perpendicularly.

Should this meet the eye of somebody in a position to follow my description and sketch, and visit Chitra-Katra, it would be extraordinarily interesting to me to know whether my little patron *Bhiria* still grows there.

It was additional good fortune that the bear seized me in about the least vulnerable place, breaking no bone ; for it might easily have been knee, groin, or abdomen—or (if the brute had had the time) face and head, according to Melursine practice.

I need not labour the lessons learnt ; nor the leaky and almost empty bottle of perchloride solution that taught me to carry a proper medical outfit thereafter. The forty-mile journey to Betul on a native bedstead, with a leg like a balloon, a couple of cracked ribs, and the reaction to serious loss of blood, is not of any interest ; and it is about time to draw to a close. I parted with a nice little cut of steak to the doctor, after I got to Betul ; where, also, my superstitious retainers stood aghast at my being placed in my very birth-chamber. I also caused my wife a lot of bother. She underwent an arduous hot weather journey by jungle tracks, in order to nurse me ; and we still smile when we remember how exceedingly firmly she intimated to me, on her arrival, that I was to consider my horrid shikar-ing ways definitely at an end.

Finally, on eventually returning to Chikalda, our little hill-station, it appeared that some of the she-bear's temperament must have been imparted to her victim ; for, when the first of my old *shikar* cronies looked in, grinning, he had barely got out " *La-la-lahi*—" when I rose in livid and staggering wrath, and only his superior agility prevented my getting him good and proper with my crutch.

## CHAPTER IX

# AN UNPROVOKED ATTACK: NARROW ESCAPE FROM A FIGHTING S'LADANG

BY MAJOR H. C. MAYDON

Author of *Simen : Its Heights and Abysses*, *Big Game of Africa*, and Editor of *Big Game of Africa* in the Lonsdale Library).

*Credible stories of unprovoked attacks by big game on man are almost like ghost stories—it is hard to get first-hand information. It is generally a yarn by a third party, yet, as with ghosts, the wise man prefers to take no chances. From my own experience of many trips in Asia and Africa (writes the author of this chapter), I know of only one authentic case.*

Two of us were shooting in the Malay States, not so very far from Kuala Lumpur. We had never conceived that anywhere in the world the jungle could be so thick, so muggily damp, so full of leeches. We were on leave from India, inspired with hopes of a good bag and rare, unknown heads in this new country. By steamer, train, motor car, and finally, by three or four Chinese porters, we had at last been dumped in almost virgin forest.

Local villagers were rare and untrained as shikaris. Camp sites, as we know them, were impossible owing to constant rain, snakes and leeches. We lived and slept in abandoned huts built on piles, and as each half proved a failure, moved on to the next clearing, linked to the last by a bush path.

Unless you know it, it is difficult to describe the Malay jungle, for nowhere else have I met bush and undergrowth so thick and impenetrable. The whole place reeked and dripped

with wet, and, in the fine intervals, a tropical sun blazed down fiercely and spread a curtain of mist and vapour.

So thick was the jungle that it was impossible to leave the bush path or game tracks, and one's range of vision was confined to a radius of a few yards.

Game tracks there were in great numbers, s'ladang, elephants, rhino, sambhur, tiger, and lesser deer, but as always in a damp climate with a muddy soil, deep in decayed leaves, so it was hard to decide how fresh they were. Again and again each day we would hear a heavy crash in the undergrowth and some beast would break away unseen. Be it remembered that our guides were not shikaris and we had no experience of such jungle shooting.

After a week or so of barren hunting, when we had seen no game at all, it began to dawn on us that there was only one hopeful plan, and that was cautiously to explore all the open clearings at the first streak of dawn. From the spoor it seemed obvious that much game visited the clearings by night to graze and were swallowed up in the bush by day.

We acted on this plan. We worked separately, of course, accompanied each by two or three natives.

One morning as I approached a clearing by a game track, I was just in time to see the last of a herd of s'ladang disappearing into the surrounding wall of bush. I dashed after them across the clearing and into the maze of bush. I could hear them all round me but I could see nothing. I could scarcely force a headway, tied, hampered and choked as I was by entwining creepers and low branches. But the grass was thinner here, and finally by lying on the ground I made out a few mixed legs of s'ladang—patches of tawny red, of black, of points of white within a few yards of me. But no sign of bodies, far less of heads.

I wormed my way on my " tummy " a yard or two, I heard a snort and saw a leg stamping in disquiet, and then came pandemonium and a series of crashes as the herd stampeded and broke away.

But as I returned to the clearing I heard the reverberating crash of a heavy rifle not far away to a flank, and soon after a

second shot. This could be nobody but my friend T., and the roar of his cannon was unmistakable. I call it cannon advisedly. He had landed and reached Taiping armed with a double .400 and our host had insisted that it was not big enough.

He had borrowed locally a double hammer eight-bore by Holland with a few rather ancient cartridges. During practice near camp he had learnt not to fire his cannon needlessly, for it kicked like a horse, cut down trees like a thunderbolt and had a voice unmistakable.

* * *

As that part of the jungle was now thoroughly disturbed and he must have seen something, which was a rare event, I cut across towards T. at once. I found him within a quarter of an hour, he and his three men. They were at the edge of a clearing and they were gathered round the body of a monster s'ladang. That I saw at a hundred yards. First blood anyway, and such a dark, big body must carry a fine head. So it did, but as I came nearer the group I sensed that all was not well.

T., as he greeted me, looked a bit pale round the gills, shaken and breathless, his men were eyeing the dead beast with respectful awe, as if expecting every moment to see it leap up and become aggressive. The grass was trampled. A yard away a solitary big tree reared itself.

"What's up, T.?" I questioned; "you've been lucky, you've got a damned fine head."

T. smiled wanly. "Yes. But he damned near got me first. I've had the nearest touch in my life."

"What happened?"

"We came out of the bush over there to explore this clearing. It looked absolutely empty when I searched it with my glasses before we left the bush. The pengula was leading, I came next carrying the eight-bore in case there was anything, the other two men came behind, all in single file. We had just passed this tree, there was rather long grass ahead as you can see. Suddenly the pengula hissed, pointed and vanished behind me.

"Next moment I saw a great dark head topped by those

wicked looking horns, staring at me furiously from ten yards ahead. Before I could do anything, that great beast, who had been lying down, scrambled to his feet with a snort, lowered his head and came straight for me, baldheaded.

" I just had time to throw up the rifle and pull the trigger. But the gun misfired. I don't quite know what happened then. I suppose, I tried to dodge to one side, tripped up in the grass and fell almost under his feet. I fancy that fall saved me; the next thing that I remember clearly was seeing the infuriated bull pull up under that solitary tree and trying to get at the legs of the last of the three men, who had all clambered up it and were now hanging on like grim death.

" I do not know how long this lasted. The bull was ten yards away from me. I still had my second barrel. You know I dare not cock them both together for fear that the shock of the first barrel going off should cause the second hammer to drop as well. I dared not move much nor risk the noise of opening my breech to replace the misfire, the bull was too close. He might tire of poking at the men up the tree any moment and come to look for me.

* * *

" Well, still lying flat, I cocked my second barrel, gingerly raised the rifle and tried to take aim. The beast was so close that I could have almost touched him with my outstretched rifle at arm's length, but, believe it or not, I could not keep him covered with the bead of that rifle long enough to press the trigger !

" I do not know how long this state lasted—probably less than half a minute, though it seemed like hours. I was watching the brute poking with his horns at my Indian orderly's legs. The man was well out of reach, but not unnaturally he was scared to death. The expression of all the men's faces made me want to laugh. Suddenly my orderly's puggri came unwound and fell off. It startled the man and infuriated the bull; it also amused me so much that I suddenly found myself cool and steady.

"I raised the rifle again and pulled the trigger. There was no mistake this time. It nearly broke my shoulder, but the gun went off and the bull collapsed. I gave him another later on, but there was no real need for it. There is one thing about the old-fashioned bundook, it may be heavy and kick like sin, but it hits like a sledge hammer. So that's that."

On examination the bull proved to be a very old one, with a fine pair of massive horns. But instead of the old native bullet wound that we expected, we found that the base of his horns and his forehead were all lacerated, bruised and gory, and it seems safe to assume, that after a fierce fight with another bull he had been turned out of the herd. So perhaps he had every reason to feel ill-tempered and itching for a fight on that fateful morning.

## Chapter X

# RIDING DOWN A PANTHER

By Lieut.-Col. R. L. Kennion, C.I.E.

(Author of *Sport and Life in the Further Himalaya; By Mountain Lake and Plain; Diversions of an Indian Political*, etc.)

*The wild pig is often a formidable animal to the pig-sticker; but what shall one say of an attempt to ride down a wounded panther in difficult country? The panther has, of course, all the courage of the pig with the added advantage of remarkable agility and low cunning. In this particular case, the panther was ridden down, escaped into cover and came out later in a terrific charge. Fortunately for the rider, Col. Kennion, his mount remained firm and sprang forward to meet the charge—which ended in the panther being "stuck" through the neck, the spear pinning to the ground—tense enough for anybody!*

There are, I suppose, few of Diana's devotees who have not had experience of "tense moments" in one form or another. When, for instance, a big fish takes your line screaming out and you are going to be broken—or think so.

Who would question that moment's suspense? When the "head of heads" gives you your chance, at long last. When, in the stillness of night, you hear a soft tread under your *machan*.

Every sport has its particular thrill. For a moment really to deserve the adjective there must, I suppose, be a crisis—touch and go—success or failure trembling in the balance. Of course, if your own or someone else's life is in the balance too, as in that account of Mrs. Smythies' marvellous adventure with a tiger on her *machan*, the tenseness may become rather too painful. But such experiences are exceptional; at any rate they have not come my way.

To be sure, I have been knocked over by a wounded bear,

but the beast was intent on escape, not attack. I have crawled into a cave and seen the end of a wounded panther's trail—and retired—to smoke him out. I have taken many thousands of steps in bad ground behind shikaris more sure-footed than myself. Tense moments these all of them, but I doubt the Editor thinking such ordinary adventures worthy of this series.

There was again a night many years ago when my shooting bivouac was surrounded and " shot up " by Pathan gunmen, an adventure from which I was lucky to escape; but this would hardly make a hunting story—at least I was not one of the hunters myself.

*Faute de mieux*, therefore, I will tell the plain story of a man, a horse and a panther which I look back on as one of my most interesting shikar experiences.

One hot weather I had a camp on the left bank of the Narbudda river in the State of Barwani, my task the delimitation of the boundary between the State mentioned and two other Central India States on the opposite bank. The point at issue was whether the boundary ran mid-stream, or whether one or other of the parties concerned had exclusive rights over the whole river. This, however, has nothing to do with my tale. A few miles south of the camp the Satpura ranges began, a wonderful shooting ground; while between these hills and the river lay an area cut up by little ravines, with cultivation here and there, and a few Bhil hamlets.

I was sitting one day in the huge tent which served for a court. The States' representatives were there with their advisers and a crowd of pandits, witnesses and " whatnots." The floor was piled with the records to be produced in evidence. It was stifling under the hot-weather sun, and everybody there was sighing for a quiet hubble-bubble, and a siesta.

A witness was being examined. He was a Bhil, a real jungle man, black, round headed, dressed in a dirty loin cloth and a scrap of twisted red puggri. By profession he was a *paggi*, a village functionary whose hereditary task was the tracking of criminals and stolen cattle. He was giving evidence as to the exact point where it had been the custom for him to hand

over the line he was following to the *paggi* of the opposition State beyond the river.

* * *

Suddenly there was a commotion at the back of the crowd and another almost naked Bhil was pushed forward who, after pouring some imaginary dust on his head, told an interesting story. That very morning he and some fellow sportsmen had been walking the high grass (bir) with their bows and arrows for hares. Someone had caught a glimpse of a spotted hide and had loosed an arrow. Later on they had come to a Bhil's hut where an old woman was lying moribund. She had been mauled by a panther. It was the heat of the day, and the panther in all probability would not have moved far, but at this very moment might be lying up in a near-by ravine.

The court " rose "—rather hurriedly !

An orderly from my old regiment, the Central India Horse, who was with me in camp, a keen and good shikari, went off with the *paggi*. The latter was to *pag* ; that is to say, his job was to look for tracks and ascertain where the panther had gone ; and if he had entered the ravine, whether he had come out again. The orderly was to collect beaters and tom-toms and generally " *bandobast karo.*"

When I got out to the spot an hour later I found that all was well. The *paggi* had decided that the panther had certainly gone into the ravine and as certainly had not moved out. The beaters were ready in position. The ravine ran generally in a north and south direction ; and southward, at a little distance towards the hills, was heavy jungle. To the north the ground was more open, intersected by shallow ravines till the wide bed of the Narbudda was reached.

The odds were, therefore, that the panther would break south. The beat was arranged on this presumption, and I took up a position with my rifle from which I could cover his probable exit. Here too, stops had been posted in trees in the ravines to make him break. Now on the off chance that the panther would cross some open ground, or better still make for the river,

I had brought a hog spear with me as well as a rifle. Indeed, I must have had some premonition I was going to have a ride after the panther as I had considered very carefully which of the two horses I had in camp I should ride out on. One was a grey "Gulf" Arab horse, a good goer but a stolid rather "henterpriseless" brute. He was, moreover, somewhat bad-tempered, and had a sour eye.

* * *

The other was "Horace Hayes" a bright bay gelding, flecked with grey, about 15.2, nearly thoroughbred, nervous and excitable, always fretting and sweating. I had bought him from a brother officer when I was sent on boundary duty, as the Colonel of the C.I.H. did not like to see him on parade as he would neither walk nor trot. But Horace had a snaffle mouth, handled like a polo pony, and was active as a cat. And he had a big; kind eye.

But what would he think of a panther? However, it was Horace I took, nerves and all.

The beat had barely begun when contrary to all expectations I saw the panther clamber out of the ravine some 150 yards short of the expected point. And by all that was lucky, he made off towards the river! Shouting to the syce I ran towards the place where he was standing with Horace under a tree. Some precious seconds were spent girthing up and I galloped off in the direction the panther had disappeared. Presently I came to the river bed. The Narbudda was at its hot-weather lowest and before me stretched a broad, flat, boulder-covered beach with streaks of sand and little clumps of *jhow* (tamarisk) here and there. To my surprise I saw the panther walking quietly along some 200 yards or more away. What a chance! As I sent Horace clattering over the boulders the panther looked round and began going off at a leisurely gallop. So we drew up to him pretty quickly, and I could see that the beast in front was a big one.

* * *

So came the tense moment. There were unknown factors. What the panther would do; still more what Horace would do,

for after all it was a novel experience for both. For my part I was only conscious of one determination, and that was to keep the panther on my off side. About Horace my anxiety was soon relieved, as getting nearer he had his ears pricked forward till the tops nearly met, and ...rtened his stride and roached his back as if he intended to deal with the panther himself!

I had made to come up a little wide of the panther with the idea of then closing in to spear on my off side, when he suddenly turned round and came at us with an angry "ough, ough." As I was going fast, I had to check Horace to avoid having the panther on his quarter. This made him prop and plunge, and my jab at the panther's mouth did little damage. But it turned him, and he threw himself into a small, thick clump of tamarisk and disappeared.

* * *

The first round was over. What was to be done next? To push the horse into the tamarisk after the panther would have been asking for trouble. For he was a beast it seemed that suffered from no inferiority complex whatever. The question was not left for me to decide. I walked Horace right-handed to have a look at the tamarisk clump from the other side—but no sooner had the panther heard Horace's hoofs rattle on the boulders behind him, than he began growling, and there was a violent agitation of the bushes, the danger signal made by an angry tail.

Suddenly out he came, straight at me, making a panther's terrifying noises.

"Never take a pig's charge standing" is an honoured maxim —and I suppose it must hold good for a panther. Anyhow, Horace bounded forward, and next thing I knew was the panther had impaled himself on my spear. The point had caught him just behind the base of the neck, and had gone right through and into the ground the other side. The gallant fighting beast struggled round and seized and splintered the shaft with his teeth, but could do no more.

And when all was over, a very brave little horse put his nose down to sniff his fallen foe and snorted!

## CHAPTER XI

# THE JALNA TIGER: INVADER OF THE CANTONMENT

BY BRIGADIER-GENERAL R. G. BURTON

Author of *The Book of the Tiger*, *A Book of Man-eaters*, *Sport and Wild Life in the Deccan*, etc.)

*Brigadier-General R. G. Burton tells the story of his encounter with the Jalna tiger. Visitors to Jalna are still shown the compound from which the tiger was driven, and the banyan tree beneath which its carcass lay to be viewed by thousands of villagers who assembled from the countryside.*

THE cantonment of Jalna in the Dominions of His Exalted Highness the Nizam now presents an aspect far different from that of thirty-four years ago, when I arrived from leave in England on the 10th November. The regiment had marched from Hingoli during my absence, and had already been nearly a year in the new station of which it furnished the whole garrison.

Jalna was ninety-six miles from the railway at Nandgaon, a weary drive in days when motor vehicles had not made their appearance, and when the journey was accomplished in a tonga drawn by a pair of ponies, changed for fresh ones every ten miles or so.

To-day the railway runs close to the cantonment. Its first aspect in 1898 was inviting, with its fine race-course, its spacious, well-built bungalows occupied by the officers, each house standing in its own compound—some of many acres, containing noble banyan and pipal trees, gardens, and extensive grass and bush jungle; and the regimental lines and remains of old barracks of English troops, used as regimental stores and

offices. On the far edge of the cantonment was a solitary tomb, dated 1808, said to be that of an officer killed in a duel.

On the evening of my arrival I went for a walk with my brother A. R. Burton, and remarked on the tigerish-looking nala which ran behind a bungalow on the outskirts of the cantonment. Close by was the bazaar, which had grown up to supply the needs of the troops; beyond it, the walled city, and an old fort of red sandstone still marked by the shot of Colonel Stevenson's guns which had battered the ramparts in 1803. The district was of historic interest. That greatest of English soldiers, the Duke of Wellington, had encamped within sound of Stevenson's guns on his way north to encounter with his small force the Mahratta Army at Assaye.

Afterwards, for many years, Jalna was occupied by a mixed brigade of the Hyderabad Subsidiary Force, and the numerous nameless graves in the cemetery, as well as those of officers and their wives and children, afforded a melancholy testimony to the unhealthiness of the climate, and to the last resting-place of the forgotten dead. The cemetery was interesting.

One tomb recorded that an officer had been killed in the neighbourhood in an encounter with a band of robbers in turbulent times gone by; another marked the grave of a subaltern of artillery killed a hundred years ago by a tiger at Malegaon, eight miles off.

* * *

But no tigers now inhabited the inviting jungles which lay among the low hills and in the valleys to the north, although they were infested by panthers of which I afterwards shot a score in the neighbourhood. But tiger! No such animal had been heard of within sixty miles for thirty years past.

My remark as to the tigerish nala was made with no expectation that a tiger could possibly materialise. Yet even at that moment one was padding through the fields.

My old friend, the sporting Mullah of Malkapur-Pangra, thirty miles off, told me long afterwards that about then he was watching over a pool for antelope. And his "liver turned

to water" when a great tiger, an animal he had never before seen, appeared in the bright moonlight and lapped at the pool within a few feet of his ambush. He did not move. He wisely did not shoot, for his matchlock was a poor weapon against such a monstrous beast.

On the 18th November, 1898, the gardener from the adjacent compound of an unoccupied bungalow came to say that a panther was sitting in the verandah. My brother and I went out with my sepoy orderly, Shaikh Karim, and a few servants, taking our rifles. We thought that if there was no panther, there might be a wild cat! The verandah was empty; there were no tracks. But there was an extensive patch of grass and bush close by. We stood at the far side of it, perhaps forty yards from the men who entered the cover in line to drive out whatever might be lurking there.

There was a rush, a roar, a shout from the men whom we could not see, and a tiger dashed out and leapt over the hedge in front of us into the next compound. There was no time to shoot. The tiger—true to the derivation of his name[1]—passed like a flash of a spear, or, as Byron puts it, "swift as the hurled on high jerreed." We did not realise that he had seized a man in his charge; Shaikh Karim had been borne to the ground and bitten severely about the arm and shoulder. He was at once sent off to hospital.

* * *

Meanwhile the tiger disappeared in a ditch in the next compound. Joined by two or three other guns and the noble bull-terrier, Sal, we followed.

Sal put up the beast, which fled along the hedge pursued by both dog and a scattered fire from the guns, by one of which he was wounded. He disappeared in a dense and wide hedge, into which we peered in hope of getting another shot.

But already the evening was far advanced; night fell with sudden swiftness. Lanterns were brought, but failed to reveal

[1] Tiger, like "Tigris," is said to be derived from an archaic Persian word "tigra"—swift as a javelin.

the lurking tiger. In the darkness no more could be done, but at dawn we explored the ground for tracks. There were footprints and a few drops of blood on the dusty face of the road, and as they were going in the direction of a nala containing water, half a mile off, I followed in search of tracks.

There was no more blood. The tiger had quenched his thirst at a pool, but his tracks were lost on hard ground. I rode over the surrounding country not only that day, but every day, in search of tracks and information. On the 23rd November, I rode into the village of Dhyri, five miles off, and was told that a man had just been mauled by a wild beast close by. I saw him in his hut, evidently badly hurt, being bitten through the body and clawed in many places. He said he was scaring birds in the jowari (millet) field when he heard a peculiar noise, and, on going to the spot, was set upon by a monstrous beast.

Little could be done for him and he died two days later.

I went to the field where he had been attacked, and found his shoes, turban, and staff, and the rattle for scaring birds. There was a strong smell of wild beast. The jowari was six feet high, and covered many acres so thickly that one could not see a yard.

I sent to the cantonment for arms and men, and was joined by Lieutenant W. H. Lane and others, including Subadar-Major Shaikh Dade Hayat of my regiment. We beat through the field and found footprints of the tiger. The trail, showing a limping hind leg, led out of the field where there was a dry watercourse and beyond it stony hills where tracking was impossible. But no tiger could be found.

* * *

What was to be done? It was most important to kill the beast before it did further damage, and also to hearten the wounded men, for it is well known that the victim expects to die unless his assailant is slain. In company with Lane and Shaikh Dade Hayat, I pitched a camp at the seventh milestone on the Jalna-Buldana road.

The tiger had become a terror of the countryside, for the

news of the tragedy of Dhyri had spread and the people feare( to work in the fields or leave their villages after nightfall. I1 the afternoon next day we found tracks by a pool of water ; w( visited the next nearest water in the direction the tiger ha( evidently taken, five or six miles to the north, and went straigh to it, for no tracks could be seen on those stony-hearted hills In a nala near the water were fresh " pugs."

Sal was with us, for my brother, having gone to England had left her with me ; she and the sepoys who accompanied u: beat through the cover, and the tiger broke with the dog ir hot pursuit. Lane fired an ineffectual shot, and the beast bolte( into dense bush cover, followed by Sal and all of us racing behind. Sal limped back to us, badly mauled and covered with blood, her chest deeply scored with claw-wounds, but she had to be forcibly restrained from going in again.

* * *

The pursuit had taken all day, and evening was already closing in. Showers of stones and small shot failed to make the tiger leave cover. We three, Lane, the Subadar-Major and myself, crawled into the thicket on hands and knees, with rifles in one hand ; suddenly the tiger appeared crouching, facing us a few feet off, and a fusillade finished the business.

The beast had one hind leg broken just above the ankle by a bullet fired on the 18th ; this was the 25th, and the wound, well-licked by the tough tongue, was already healing. Dade Hayat's shot from a .303 rifle had punctured the centre of the forehead, and our heavy rifles had done their part.

The tiger was a male about 8½ feet long ; its death was hailed with delight by the whole countryside. The victims of the episode were—Shaikh Karim, who recovered after some weeks in hospital ; the unfortunate peasant, for whose widow a liberal collection was made ; and Sal, who lingered for a fort-night before her gallant spirit departed for the Happy Hunting Grounds.

If you visit Jalna to-day, as I did nineteen years ago, you may be shown the compound from which the tiger was driven,

and the banyan tree beneath which his carcass lay to be viewed by the thousands who assembled from the countryside.

There, too, you may hear the story from that fine officer and man-at-arms, the Subadar-Major, who, after his long service in the Hyderabad Contingent and in the State Police, has settled down there to pass the evening of his days. But you will find no tiger and no troops.

The cantonment has been abandoned these thirty years, and the echoes are now silent which resounded to the Great Duke's guns, and the tramp of horse, and foot; those who bore arms there have passed away for ever.

*The noble steed, the harness bright,*
*The gallant lord and stalwart knight,*
*In rich array,*
*Where shall we seek them now? Alas,*
*Like the bright dewdrops on the grass,*
*They fade away!*

## Chapter XII

# TWO MAN-EATING TIGER AFFRAYS IN TWO DAYS

# MY ESCAPE FROM THE CLUTCHES OF A WOUNDED TIGRESS

By B. W. Drury
(Late Indian Police.)

After six months' almost continuous camping in a hot Mahratta district, I had just returned to head-quarters, contemplating iced drinks and a little society, but this was only short-lived. In the southern corner of the district, the raids of man-eating tigers had become a scourge to the locality, terrifying the aborigines into abandoning their villages. I therefore decided that it was more urgent to attempt to deal with these pests than to sit in my office devising schemes to promote the better reporting by village officials of petty thefts of grain, worth two annas or so.

Next day, May 30th, I decided to make a start, as the rains might break before I could get back, there being several rivers to cross. I was able to motor the first 95 miles, where we left the road about midday. I travelled very light, as I was acquainted with the country into which I was going, most of the jungle being traversible only on foot. The equipage consisted of one cart only, containing a servant, an orderly, a single fly-tent, and the barest necessities; also a local horse for myself. We intended to take the cart thirty miles or so, and then proceed on foot.

The heat was terrific as I bestrode my mount, a tall pale-faced male of the species, with a blackguardly, roving, pale-

blue eye, long curly ears, and a high tenor voice, which somehow reminded me of my school-days, when I was promoted from soprano to tenor. He passed through villages trumpeting loudly, casting yearning glances at every female *tattu*, and the district just now seemed to abound in them; most of them, not being able to resist the glances of the pale-blue eye, clustered around, and the scene must have resembled one of those wild-west pictures with which Hollywood frequently regales us. The saddle, too, was of the cow-boy variety, and to prevent being disembowelled I discarded this, so that my long, lamentable legs dangled without support towards the ground. The gay Lothario and his following insisted on drinking long and loudly at every pool, Lothario sucking up water through his nostrils like escaping steam.

It was nearly midnight when we had finished this lap of the journey, the first day, about thirty-three miles from where we left the car. Next morning we abandoned the cart and continued on foot into the infested country, not far from the confluence of the Godaveri and Indrawati. My boy was a low-caste fellow, half Dher, half aborigine, worth a million of the usual lazy servants. He could cook up a meal of dal and rice or anything handy in no time, and never complained of long marches without carts. He also wore an old tea-cosy as headgear, no more out of place on his head than on a teapot in India.

By midday we had reached a village of fair size for that locality, containing about thirty souls from the oldest greybeard to the smallest pot-bellied kid. The village, like many aboriginal villages, was scrupulously clean, huts neatly built on each side of the path, and all newly thatched.

However, I decided to pitch my tent a few hundred yards outside, under a tamarind, which I think threw no shade at that time. This village was in the centre of the country devastated by man-eaters, a tract about twenty miles long by twelve miles wide. There were eight more or less able-bodied men, and these I told off into two parties to bring in the news, which was not easy to obtain as the villagers hardly dared to leave their huts. Up to the present, over two hundred persons

had been killed, mostly old people, and women drawing water or fetching wood.

I will draw a veil over the next ten days, nerve-racking, following up tracks, and sitting up over the grizzly remains of human kills, for there were several fresh ones over the whole area in those ten days. The nights were particularly trying, as I had to sleep outside the tent on account of the heat, the boy and orderly sleeping at a distance owing to their over-developed adenoids, or whatever it is that makes people snore.

The bell of the sambhur, the cry of the peafowl, the bark of the kakur, the cracking of a dry twig were all to my imaginative mind the warnings of the approach of a man-eater, who had a partiality for long, thin people with large feet and knobby knees. On the tenth day I decided to shift my camp to a hamlet on a river bank some twelve miles south. It would be cooler there and the man-eater had taken its toll there also.

The same day my luck changed. I had a glorious bath, shared by a couple of small crocodiles who discreetly moved over to the other side, and returned to breakfast to find news of a woodchopper killed not half a mile from my tent. I went there with my orderly and two villagers to find that the body had been dragged down to the river and from there the tracks entered the water. After investigation we came to the conclusion that the tiger must have swum the river with the remains in his mouth (the top half of the torso was left), the victim having been a big, upstanding young man, thereby disproving that man-eaters confine themselves to the old and debilitated.

* * *

The river here was seventy or eighty yards wide, and deep, so we returned to the village and crossed by the ford, taking up the tracks nearly opposite where we had lost them. We soon found the remains and I decided to sit up until the moon should set at about 9 p.m. One of the reasons for my failure hitherto was the absence of a moon. I climbed into a nearby tendu tree, thinking it better not to risk scaring the animal by putting up a machan, and commenced the vigil. It was not until the moon was setting that I heard the tiger approach.

He proceeded to devour the corpse underneath the tree without my being able to see him. As I was deliberating trying a lucky shot, I heard the tiger move down to the river, and into the water. There was nothing to do but go home and curse my luck again!

Next morning early I decided to sit up on a rock, which I had observed on the opposite side of the river, from where I was sitting up over the kill—that is to say the side on which the tiger had killed his victim, and whither he had swum back after finishing his meal. This rock was a little over six feet high, about half-way between the river and the top of the hill which sloped up from the river. It commanded a good view of the jungle, which consisted mostly of deciduous trees without much leaf growth.

Above the rock the hill-side sloped up to a sheer precipice, while below, the land fell away sharply to the river. There was just a chance that he might still be in the jungle, so I ordered my boy and half a dozen villagers to wait half an hour at the village, until I had made a detour and reached the rock, and then to just tap the trees quietly without entering the jungle, as it was quite possible he would come after them. I told them to get up trees and wait until I called.

After reaching the rock the heat had grown intense, and disgusted as I was, I must have dozed.

I woke suddenly to find a big male tiger staring at me, not fifteen yards away. *He* had heard the trees being tapped but *I* had not. He flattened his ears and, instead of charging, came towards me at a sharp walk. I fired one barrel but this did not turn him, and he sprang on to the rock, seizing the gun in his jaws. The " party " was getting rough, so I slipped off the other side in a desperate endeavour to get to a tree, but my orderly, who had seen this from the river bank, where I had posted him to discourage the tiger's tendency to bathe, shouted that the tiger was dead.

I looked round the rock to find a splendid specimen of a tiger, in prime condition, lying stone dead. The lethal bullet from the shot gun had entered the neck apparently too high to take

immediate effect, the result being the complete loss of a good shot-gun, which lay beside him, the barrels reduced to twisted steel. It was fortunate that he seized the gun instead of me, as I handed him the gun as if it were a peace-offering! It was here that the bees took a hand. With considerable chagrin, I had noticed them hanging in swarms to the rocky precipice above, and they now descended and created an inferno. No one was badly stung, however.

* * *

On arriving in camp there was more news. A tigress had killed an old man who was grazing his cattle near a river some nine miles distant. I was elated with my good luck, and was now certain that I would bag another man-eater before night. Arriving at the village, I found that the tigress had not eaten the old man, but in the meantime had killed one of his buffalo calves. I sat up there and then, as it was after 3 p.m. Vultures were on the ground and I was amused at the antics of a mongoose and a great repulsive condor, dancing about the dead calf. The little red eyes of the mongoose were furious as the big bird flapped at him. All the animals were obviously feeling the heat.

A bear and her cub ambled down to the water, groaning and cursing their luck to be so over-dressed. A big sambhur stag which had as yet shed only one horn, drawn out of its fastness very early, panted past, its coat all blotchy, and stubbed horn bloody. A string of pea-fowl threaded down, beaks agape, barely making way for a sounder of a pig who noisily sucked and rolled in the more; overhead threatening banks of cloud had collected and the atmosphere was stifling.

Suddenly like an aeroplane the condor and his companions taxied along the ground, preparatory to taking off, and a miserable, mangy-looking tigress appeared. I fired too soon, only wounding her, and she made off without a sound. Another execrable shot, I thought, so common since I had a serious accident to my right eye. I immediately took up the blood trail with my orderly and two trackers.

Before we had gone two hundred yards the tigress charged. My comrades displayed the greatest agility in making for the tree-tops. I fired one shot and turned to run, but fortunately the tigress had turned and disappeared. It was getting dark, so we closed down for the night.

* * *

Next morning we found blood tracks for only a short distance and then followed hours of hunting for spoor of some kind, to no avail. It was about 3 p.m. when I was resting, having worked back towards the village, that I was alarmed by the coughing grunt of the tigress near the village, followed by shouts of distress. Much perturbed I ran towards the village, and near a pool in the river found three men clinging to trees, yelling lustily. One had his buttocks torn, another an arm hanging by a thread, and a third slightly injured. I picked them off the trees and assisted them to camp and patched them up crudely. They underwent my primitive surgery with some stoicism.

I then returned with considerable misgivings to the fray. Apparently, the tigress had been lying up near the water and attacked the men when they went to drink. Two more men were festooned up aloft in the shrubberies, having been quicker at the hand-over-hand up the trees. They now proceeded to point out the tigress to me, as they said, lying about seventy yards upstream, under some jaman bushes.

Feeling that this was more the stuff for St. George arrayed in some nice claw-proof armour, or even a suit made of kerosene tins, instead of a flimsy shirt and slacks, I cautiously made a detour to get above the animal, but had not gone fifty yards when out sprang the tigress right on top of me (incidentally nowhere near the spot indicated by the watchers). Whether I fell, tripped or was knocked down, I do not know, but I felt the hair of her belly brush over me, and my topee knocked over my ears. I rose to one knee just in time to thrust the muzzle into her face and empty the .405 magazine into her head (perhaps

it was lucky that the shot-gun had been put out of action by the first tiger, though I think the first shot killed her).

The shot of the evening before had damaged one shoulder, disabling her somewhat. My topee had no claw or teeth marks on it, but was badly crushed. If I tripped as she sprang, it was providential. I can't think that I would have had the nerve to duck. The skin was mangy and the head shot to pieces, so we left her there. All three injured recovered quickly and they came to see me frequently afterwards.

* * *

In the morning we started long before light, heading for the nearest Police Station with the assistance of a horse, who from his roving ways and dastardly appearance must have been real brother to the ruffian who took me out. We covered the odd fifty miles before dark.

Nearing civilisation I encountered some American Missionaries, who described my entourage as a " dandy outfit," thereby embracing myself, steed, crushed helmet, etc.—very apt I thought. That night I slept in the cool east-side lock-up of the Police Station, under the astonished gaze of two prisoners in the west side. Doubtless they were speculating as to whether I was a dacoit, kidnapper, or merely a purse-snatcher. At any rate I felt secure. In the morning my car arrived, having been towed by a bullock cart from the place where I had left it twelve miles north. As no one knew how to steer, there had been a ding-dong battle all the way, not accelerated by some one occasionally pulling the gear lever, hoping it was a brake. Needless to say she presented an aspect of considerable gloom, radiator dinged, tyres ripped, transmission a trifle fatigued. However, three days of primitive travelling saw me back in headquarters and civilisation.

## Chapter XIII

# CHARGED TIME AFTER TIME BY INFURIATED TIGRESS: ELEPHANT'S NOBLE COURAGE

By Lt.-Col. D. E. Whitworth, M.C. (2nd Royal Lancers) and "S."

*This astounding story of a 1932 tiger hunt instances the remarkable courage of an elephant when charged time after time by a wounded and infuriated tigress. Two elephants were attacked in this manner several times in the course of the morning's shikkar, but they stood firm. One of them was terribly mauled.*

*In this matter-of-fact narrative, written in the form of three acts in straightforward fashion, S. tells of as narrow an escape from death as anyone could imagine. During one tigress charge the elephant toppled over (while trying to crush the tigress) and the author leant against the fallen elephant kicking at the tigress with his boot. The Indian mahout in some extraordinary fashion brought the elephant on to her feet again and rescued S.*

*S. is too modest to publish his name, but he is a well-known Government official. H. refers to Capt. Humfrey, Remount Department, Dehra Dun, and S. has compiled this account, which he says is accurate in every detail, in consultation with Lt.-Col. Whitworth, a colleague.*

*Scene :* Jaulasal (Haldwani Forests).

*Time :* May 27-29, 1932.

### *Overture.*

On Saturday, May 28, H. and I went on an elephant for a look round east and west of the bungalow. S. hacked down the Kalaria nala, which runs south from the bungalow. The nala has forest on its left bank, and an open grass plain, called a

" chaur," on its right for the first three miles. After this it has jungle on both banks. From this point the jungle is fairly open, all the undergrowth having been burnt. There is no cool lying for tigers except in the few patches of " rutwa " grass which exist in the bends on the left bank of the nala. This grass is twelve to fifteen feet high and gives cool, green shade. In the heat of the day it forms the only tolerable cover for tigers.

S. found a large patch of rutwa about one hundred and fifty yards long. Opposite this the nala was full of pug marks—a tiger and a tigress. They were lying out on the bank of the nala as he approached. He almost came upon them, for the grass on which they had been lying was still rising when he came to the place. He heard them moving off down-stream, or rather the deer, jungle-fowl and monkeys calling to them as they went into the rutwa and found three " kills," one of which was fairly fresh. It was obviously a regular tiger's " hotel."

He made up his plan for the beat and rode back to breakfast with his news. The two elephants and beaters were sent on and we followed along a forest road over the chaur in a car.

* * *

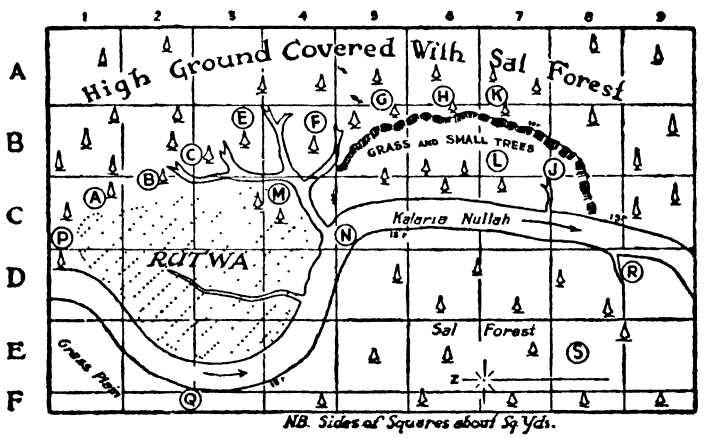
*Act I*

The beat began about 1 p.m. The three guns were sitting up on trees in C1, C2, B2 (squares). S. at A, H. at B and I at C. We were sitting on branches, not machans. Stops were up trees at F (B 4), G (A 5), and H (A 6). Their job, of course, was to tap their trees with a stick to keep the tiger from running out on the flank. There were also " rokhs " (flankers) at P and Q in case the tiger cut out to the west—an unlikely event. The elephants began beating from D 4 and C 4 towards the guns, assisted by two men beating tin cans on the nala bank at E 2 and E 3. These men were strictly instructed to retire on their own tracks the moment a shot was fired.

When the elephants had crossed two-thirds of the rutwa a male tiger came galloping from the direction of H.'s tree. I

had not time to fire as he approached me, so dodged my rifle over a branch to pot him going away. As he reached the foot of my tree H. fired. The tiger gave a little dip and went on. I had a quick snap at him as he went. I saw my foresight bead running along his loins to the right of his backbone as I fired (I was firing almost vertically down). I may have got him on the off hind. It was smashed up when we got him. Soon after, S. came along on an elephant and we had a whispered consultation.

What had happened was this. H. saw a tiger approaching through the grass, but could not at first see well enough to




fire. The tiger came out of cover with a bound and galloped in my direction. H. fired and heard my shot immediately after. At the same time another tiger which he did not see had walked quietly up on his right. S. did not fire as he thought H. had seen *this* tiger, and wished H. to get his first tiger. H., engrossed in the first tiger, did not see the one coming from S. The latter was a sitting shot. When H. fired, the second tiger galloped back in the grass in front of S.

Thinking it wounded, he took a flying shot into the grass, but thought that he had missed. S.'s shot was simultaneous

with mine and neither H. nor I heard it. It can be imagined that all this took some sorting out.

* * *

ON THE BLOOD TRAIL

After this I dropped on to the elephant behind S. and we went off, following the blood trail from my tree. The tiger had skirted the beat below the bank on which stops F, G, and H were. They reported him wounded and lame. We followed him quietly to L (B 7) and then lost trace. We returned by the same route and were told by the stops that he had preceded us and was in the rutwa again!

This ended the first act. S. collected us in the nala bed at Q (F 2) and reviewed the situation while we lunched. The prospect at luncheon was not an easy one. We had two borrowed elephants and naturally did not want to get them mauled. One had been in a stiff fight with a tiger six days before, and although uninjured was inclined to be "nervy." Neither H. nor I had shot a tiger before, much less hunted a wounded one on pad elephants. There were two tigers in the grass, less than two acres in extent, one certainly wounded but not incapacitated, the other possible. S.'s general scheme was to drive the grass in the reverse way, i.e., from up-stream from P and Q in a swing towards the quiet lower end at M where the first tiger had retired after being hit. He thought that the unwounded or slightly wounded tigress would probably slip away at the start, and leave us with only one adversary who would undoubtedly charge us.

* * *

*Act II*

At 2.15 S. went on an elephant to a small tree at M (C 4), into which he climbed. The elephant returned and H. and I, each on an elephant with a man behind us to shout, started into the rutwa at D 1 and E 2 and began to beat from west to

east.' We shouted and talked as we went. Immediately there was a rush about C 4 and a big tigress dashed out past S.

He fired.

It was a very awkward shot behind the trunk of the tree and he was sure that he had missed. The tigress went off towards B 7. From the fact that she had not charged, we concluded that she was unwounded or only slightly so. Great relief!

Only one tiger to deal with and he lame. The elephants had pads, not howdahs, and we each sat on the front edge of the pad, just behind the mahout. A few minutes after, there was a roar and the tiger charged H. along the nala at D 3. H. put in two good shots which stopped him, and he slipped into the small nala inside the grass.

Then began a prolonged dog-fight—the tiger, in dense grass, roaring and charging the elephants about once a minute. For the next hour I never saw him once, though he was seldom more than a few feet away. Occasionally we fired at the sound of his roar, or the moving grass.

The elephants were wonderful. Neither showed any desire to bolt. They went in, stamping down the grass and parting it with their trunks. For an hour and a half, or more, the racket of roaring tiger, trumpeting elephants and shouting men, punctuated with a shot now and then, went on.

At length we got him into a small bunch of high grass about twelve feet in diameter. He still roared away, but obviously could hardly move. At the same time we could not see him. By this time S. had joined H. on his elephant and the elephants were standing on each side of the tiger near M. At this time I thought I saw stripes and put in a couple of shots at twelve feet range. (I now think, I was then firing at some yellow grass stalks or brown mud.)

He died at last. After prodding him well with a long branch we got down to examine him. He was terribly knocked about. About eight hits, I think. We hoisted him on H.'s elephant and went down to the nala at N (C 5) for drinks. It was now about 4.30, blazing hot. We were dripping, but triumphant.

• • •

## *Act III*

In the middle of our jubilation came a clamour of beasts and birds from about B 7. Great excitement! The other tiger had refused to face the heat of the open forest and had returned to the edge of the stream. H. had fired his last cartridge. S. had two left, I had four. Convinced that the tiger was unwounded, we started off silently to round her up. S. and H. on one elephant, I on the other which carried the dead tiger. S. signalled me to go down the left bank of the nala towards C 8. He went from C 4 towards B 8.

The " general idea " S. had evolved was to " contain " the tigress by two flanking movements, I down the river to C 8 and he quietly along the edge of the hill to B 8, meeting there and, *if* neither of us had encountered her in so doing, drive the tigress back into the grass beat and either close with her or shoot her from the original trees. S. first contemplated walking round the lower beat, as he felt that the elephant would not be very steady to shoot off after her recent experience. Had he carried out this idea he would probably have had an even more thrilling story!

Two minutes after we parted there was a terrific roar and a squeal from his elephant, but no shot. I could not understand it and stopped to listen. Then I moved to the middle of C 7. Soon the others joined me. All looked a little shaken. Until S. pointed down I did not see that the elephant's head and ears were mauled and streaming with blood.

* * *

A whispered confab. At L (B 7) without a moment's warning and when they were moving silently through the jungle a big tigress (she proved to be nine feet with a short tail) had charged out and arrived on the elephant's head. The elephant promptly knelt down and tried to crush her.

The elephant then toppled over on her right side. S. slipped off but was too close to fire. Now he was standing, his back against the vertical pad, left foot on the ground, the other on the tigress's head, *kicking her mouth as she snapped at his foot.*

He told us afterwards that he was reserving his last two shots to blow the tigress's head off if she succeeded in seizing his leg ! H. and the orderly were sprawling on the rolling pad hanging on to the ropes as best they could.

The mahout said to S., " put your arm round my neck." Then, in some extraordinary fashion, he brought the elephant up on to her feet, taking S. with him. The other two went up too, clawing at the pad ropes. The tigress, released then, luckily for S., rushed at the elephant's off hind leg and mauled it slightly.

The elephant turned and chased her into the grass. The mahout hooked the " ankus " into her forehead and just managed to stop her.

All this took ten seconds ! Then they crept off and joined me. The elephant was trembling. S. thought she would not stand another charge and in any case would be too rocky to shoot off.

He maligned her (third acts are inclined to drag. This one did not !)

We crept gingerly, the two elephants together, to a tree at J (B 7). Here I covered them, while S. and H. climbed into the branches. My whispered instructions were to take both elephants round by the hill to near K and start knocking trees down to make a noise. S. hoped that the tigress would break south past this tree. I reached the east end of the grass patch and began pushing down trees. I should explain that an elephant can push down a thirty-feet tree eight inches in diameter fairly easily.

There were not many trees about just there and we had soon knocked down most of them without any result. The feeling in the air was a distinctly anxious one. Then I saw S. pointing down to where the tigress was. He had heard her heavy breathing. He signalled me to come up towards her. We moved slowly up, the elephants about twenty yards apart, the mauled one on the right. She approached quite a large tree, and, with two shoves, dropped it straight towards the tigress's hiding place.

* * *

A roar and the tigress galloped straight to her. I was swinging on the tigress. As my foresight bead reached her head she checked to spring. I checked abruptly and fired. She went down like a rabbit. The range was about twenty-five yards.

I put in the left barrel quickly to prevent her getting up, but I could not see her clearly and missed. I reloaded and moved closer. She seemed dead, but I did not want any more fighting, and seeing her head, took deliberate aim and shot her through the brain.

Then everyone went mad. Cheers and yells from all round. S. and H. looked like falling out of their trees. Never was such excitement. The two tigers were carried off to camp in triumph, and the elephant's wounds, which were luckily not as bad as they looked, washed and dressed; within a week she was all right again. S. retains his scratched shikar boot as a trophy.

## Chapter XIV

# CROCODILE FISHING IN SIND. CLEVER VILLAGERS WHO CAPTURE THEIR PREY ON THE RIVER-BED

By E. A. Farrington Evans

*There are queerer ways of capturing one's prey than most of us would imagine, but probably none to beat the unblushing tactics of a few Sind villagers who approach the sleeping "mugger" below the surface on the river-bed and beguile him ashore with rope and net. The fine points of the game are all given in the following description of the sport by an eye-witness.*

My friend Iqbal Mahomed, the Collector, looked at the dead crocodile; it was a large one and lay sprawled on the edge of the lake.

"It was a good shot," he admitted, "and it will make nearly a whole suit-case, but for excitement you should fish for crocodile."

"Fish for mugger! What rod would hold them?"

"Oh, you do not need a rod, only rope. If you come to Sind I will show you men fishing for crocodile."

I was interested to see this new sport, so one day duly disembarked at a dull, dusty town of white mud buildings set on a flat plain, the limitless horizon unbroken except for the tree-lined banks of a canal.

My friend met me in a car he had borrowed from a local zemindar, a Ford of early date lined with flowered cretonne, but it went well enough along the travesty of a road and landed us at a P. W. D. rest-house, whose garden filled with roses was an oasis in the desert.

The night was bitterly cold and we sat gratefully over a large log fire till it was time to go to bed. It seemed to me

I had only just gone to sleep, and certainly it was still quite dark when my host awoke me, saying that we would shoot black partridge on the way to the mugger fishing. He had camels waiting, large hairy camels gaily harnessed, with silver bells hanging from their necks; the sort of camels on which one should set out for Samarkand rather than a prosaic shoot.

The dry cotton fields were full of francolin and on the sand-hills and the hard putt were imperial grouse, so by the time we came to the lake I did not much care if the crocodile fishing were all a myth; already the morning had been a success.

We dismounted from the camels and walked along the flat edge of the muddy lake to where a group of villagers stood, shaggy, hairy men in enormous red turbans; some of them carried little hatchets, others held long thin sticks and on the edge of the water lay a lot of ghurras and a kind of leather basket. The lake stretched for some distance but it was shallow, not more than ten or twelve feet deep at its deepest; the water was thick with the fine clay of Sind.

My friend and I climbed cautiously into a boat that must have been primitive in the days of Noah and was rather more out of drawing than a modernist picture. There were no seats and we proceeded in circles because we could not make the craft go straight, and we had some ado to keep up with the villagers who were swimming in a leisurely way towards the centre of the water, each with a large *mussack* (goat skin filled with air) propped under his stomach to help him keep afloat.

* * *

"There can't be mugger or those men would not be swimming about so calmly," I suggested, but my friend smiled. "Seeing is believing, in your English proverb," he remarked; "you will see for yourself."

The sun glared on the water and on the wet dark bodies circling about in the middle looking for a likely spot to locate a crocodile having his morning sleep. At last two men with long wands in their hands dived under the water.

" When they find a crocodile," my friend explained, " they will stick one of those sticks in the ground on either side of him so that they know where he is from on top."

" But if there is a crocodile," I said, " he will attack them." But said my friend, not in deep water, and it was even unlikely that they would wake the beast.

The men stayed under water an unconscionable time before they came up puffing and blowing, to dive again as soon as they had gulped in sufficient air ; we saw the heads of the long sticks waving about above the surface till they were fixed in the mud and stood upright and the men came up again to breathe. Two other men slid off their mussacks and went down carrying a long rope, accompanied by a third whose rôle was, my friend said, to tickle the crocodile on the soft bit under its armpits, so that it would raise itself from the ground for an instant to scratch or shake off whatever was tickling it. In that second while its weight was lifted from the muddy bottom the other two would pass the rope under its body.

It seemed to me a most fantastic scheme, but is apparently almost invariably successful. The crocodile having got rid of its itch relapses into sleep again till the men trying to get the rope well up under its armpits wake it again, but by this time a fourth man has gone down with a strong thin net which he drapes over the beast's head and forefeet while the other two tug at the rope. The crocodile is by now distinctly peevish.

I saw the sticks shaking and quivering as it rolled about trying to get rid of all these small annoyances, only succeeding in enmeshing itself more thoroughly in the net which caught on its teeth and claws.

* * *

Rolling about and lashing with its tail the crocodile knocked down some of the sticks, but they were not wanted any more. The men floating on the mussacks grasped the rope ends and started to swim towards the shore, tugging and straining at the crocodile's weight, helpless as the creature was to resist, all tangled in the net and more and more so every minute. Grunting and pulling the men swam with their feet, slowly but

surely the crocodile was dragged ashore. As soon as they could touch bottom they ran from the edge of the water and all the inhabitants of the village, who had been waiting on the shore, rushed to give a hand on the rope to pull the crocodile out of the water.

Bumping and jumping and thrashing the dirty water to a scum of thick green bubbles with its tail, the crocodile appeared, its hideous head festooned in the net, lashing its tail and gnashing its jaws in fury and getting every moment more tied up as the villagers tugged and pulled to drag it out of the water. At last it lay gasping and roaring on the sand, its wicked tail flaying the air helplessly.

Killing it was an unpleasant business which the entire village much enjoyed, running in and giving a chop with a hatchet and running away again till at last the beast was dead, though the *coup de grace* was given by an old gentleman with an ancient muzzle loader from a distance of a couple of yards, thereby spoiling my friend's promise that I should see crocodile killed without the use of fire-arms.

However, I was quite prepared to believe that the gun was an unnecessary extravagance and that the villagers were capable of finishing it off with their little axes though the skin wouldn't be much use afterwards. My friend said he had seen this method of crocodile-catching nowhere else but in Sind. " Seeing is now believing ? " he asked, and I agreed that it was.

## Chapter XV

# CHARGED BY A ROGUE ELEPHANT. A NILGIRIS MAN-KILLER

By the Rev. E. E. Bull

*The risks run by anyone who attempts to rid a district of a rogue elephant are enormous. The Rev. E. E. Bull, Chaplain at Coimbatore, describes how he and a party were chased by a rogue which many people believed was a myth. The rogue specialised in murdering human beings, having "some especially fine top notes" when attacking.*

Somewhere away back in the early twenties a small tusker elephant began to make a sinister reputation for himself at the foot of the Sigur Ghat which terminates practically at the twelfth milestone on the road between Tippacadu and Ootacamund.

It was not an ordinary rogue, that Sigur one; though for that matter rogues are never cast in the ordinary mould.

This one being very small, as elephants go, had to make good in cunning and pertinacity. His range or beat was a comparatively local one. From Tippacadu across to Sigue and then through Annikutti and Serur to the Bhivani and back comprised the scope of his wanderings. Sigur was his head-quarters during the dry months of the year, and it was at Sigur that his blackest crimes were committed.

Those who have dared the Sigur Ghat as a quick motor-route to Mysore from Ooty will have noted with admiration the beauty of that quiet corner at the foot of the Ghat through which purl the cool waters of the Sigur River. A dense jungle has grown at the spot; for during the hot weather the region

around there is the only bit of country for miles round which sports verdure and affords an adequate shelter from the sun.

There gather herds of elephant to wander down the course of the Sigur River to cool retreats in the Mysore Ditch.

The Rogue, like all rogues, being outlawed by his own kind, frequented the higher ground adjacent to the river or some shady ravine in the valley at the foot of the Ghat. He was very small and could, when on murder bent, conceal himself in a clump of bushes close to a path and await his prey.

* * *

His tactics were to await the close approach of his victims and from a distance of some fifteen yards rush out upon them with a deafening scream of hate and rage. He had some especially fine high top-notes, and his pace was consistent with the noise made.

On one occasion he attacked a cart with two men in it, and having brutally killed both men and done away with their identification marks he turned his attention to the cart which he reduced to the proverbial matchwood. The bullocks, on this occasion, he graciously spared.

Singly, men and women were seized and brutally mutilated until their remains retained no semblance of a human body. One instance of his brutality was to seize an aged man and flog him to death against the trunk of a tree until he held only the legs of the battered body by his trunk.

He was fond, too, of persecuting the villagers of Annikutti by camping at the river-crossing near their village and chasing away all who attempted the ford, drew water, bathed themselves or washed clothes there.

He loved to exercise himself with " two hundred yards on the flat " in pursuit of a human being. One forest guard whom he managed to catch, he playfully hurled aloft on to the spiky fronds of a bamboo clump from where he was rescued in a dying condition the next day.

When he was in residence at Annikutti all " shikar " operations came to an abrupt end, as none of the bravest would dare to invest his retreat—which was in a valley at the foot of the

hills. On many shikar-trips to Annikutti, I was faced with this nuisance as we were restricted to hunt game then at a respectable distance from his lair.

As regards myself, I thought his existence was mythical. I had heard of his reputation and had interviewed the son of the unfortunate victim flogged to death on the tree-trunk, only two days after the tragedy !

I had never seen him and since he was proscribed for short periods only on the report of the tragedies imputed to him, it appeared to me that the authorities treated his individuality as a kind of " Mrs. Harris " ! But the notoriety of the flogging incident, with the poetical setting of the tragedy—so primitive in its conception as to rival the " stoning to death " of the nomadic Israelites—aroused the interest of the authorities at Ooty to put the culprit definitely " to the horn " in the shape of a Rs. 500 reward for his destruction.

But nothing happened, the terror gradually vanished away from the ken of the authorities and the reward again was withdrawn. I discussed this " nightmare " with Mullah, the old head-shikari of Annikutti who had been Government House shikari in the days when Governors were not vexed with the problems of non-co-operation and could indulge in health-giving recreations such as the chase of beasts of the field.

Mullah had grown old, but I had known him in the halcyon days of yore when a Commander-in-Chief went down before a tiger and Her Excellency could mark four notches on her roll of trophies of royal tiger-land ! Mullah is now reputed to be one hundred years old. He looks it !

In the days of which I am speaking he had then all but retired from the chase. He still condescended to accompany me on tiger beats only. I held conclave with him on the subject of this rogue which Mullah averred was " flesh and blood "—a very real danger. He himself had been chased and narrowly escaped death.

Nor would he ever allow me to go out when the elephant was said to be about unless I was prepared to hunt him with full sanction of the authorities ! Mullah knew that I knew

about as much about elephants as I did about mastadons, and Mullah put a high price upon his own professional dignity. I happened to be in camp at Annikutti in January, 1924-5, with Major M-B. and Sergeant M.—a very old and valued attendant of mine in the field. He is, alas, no more. We had had two weeks' sport and were about to bait for a tiger when the report came in that the rogue had again materialised and taken up his old quarters under the famous " Honey Rock." All shikar operations ceased. The bait was already tied up, and although Mullah promised it should be fed, no one except the tenders was allowed to go in that direction.

A few days afterwards, in the morning, the report was made that the cow had been killed by wild dogs. Now I am particularly fascinated by the habits and doings of the " jungly kutta." I had heard of him as occasionally demeaning himself to the pilfering of domestic cattle but I had never experienced a robbery of my baits at his hands. And so " I had me doots."

Mullah did not think the tenders would dare to lie to him, and gave it as his opinion that a panther might have killed the cow, but that it were madness to go over there. We were daringly restless all that day. We had suffered severely at the hands of this " bogey," as we deemed the Rogue. So I persuaded Sergeant M.—who wanted no persuasion—to accompany me without shikaris to view the kill, when we should be able either to establish some interesting facts or expose the fallacies of our followers. When it was known that we had started on our venture, Mullah sent his son Chetty with one Karrian—a good tracker—to attend us. We arrived safely —at about 4 p.m.—to view the kill. It appeared to have been killed by a panther.

Around the kill, however, were numerous pug-marks of " wild dog," which suggested that the pack, on their return from a morning hunt, had come upon the " kill " and investigated it. Having dared so much, the ruling spirit of the chase became too strong for our attendants, and Chetty suggested a " sit up " for the panther on some rocks close by.

The place was intersected with deep ravines, heavily wooded,

wherein the Rogue was said to be lying up. At 7 p.m., when the light was too bad to shoot, we started for the bungalow two miles away as the crow flies. Having climbed out of the ravine-country on to the flat we followed a path which skirted the decline into the ravines on the edge of which were clumps of bushes. We had handed our rifles to the shikaris. We were walking and conversing in ordinary tones, quite unaware that danger threatened us, when suddenly, half-left ahead of us, with a deafening scream that Rogue hurled himself upon us at the distance of about twenty yards.

Karrian streaked off with the Sergeant following. It was good that I had *them* in front and not Chetty, for I followed their lead. Chetty, whether on purpose or not, bolted to the right with my rifle. We seemed to hear the enemy thundering on our tracks and we ran, blindly, desperately. Now this Rogue generally chased the single one who invariably, in such circumstances, goes off on his own. He had caught all his victims by concentrating on the straggler, and after Chetty he went. This we were not aware of until we had raced half a mile, to stop breathless and alert. The Rogue made a bad choice in Chetty, who knew all about him and every jungle-path in that forest. Chetty literally threw him off. For, in about half an hour, he silently rejoined us. We were afraid to move in any direction.

" It is the bad elephant," he whispered, " you must follow me without a sound. Don't be afraid, but don't make the slightest sound. He waits for us and will never leave us until we reach the bungalow."

The lights in the bungalow were visible at two miles! Should we ever enjoy that shelter again! We followed Chetty with creeping tread and managed to cover over a mile without further molestation. We were within half a mile of the bungalow and where there were some ruined stables.

We had entered a sunken road leading to the stables—bounded by a formidable fibre-growth. So high and thick was this hedge that it formed a very adequate defence of our right-flank on which the end of the jungle stood.

We were well in this defile when our enemy, who had waited there, threw himself upon us from a height of eight or nine feet, and undoubtedly would have overwhelmed us had the fibre-growth not withstood him. He raged and plunged, but could not advance. In our panic both the Sergeant and I had nasty falls with our rifles in our hands. Mine bears the marks to this day!

The Sergeant sustained a bad injury to his eye. But it was "up-and-away" in spite of all this, and we reached the sanctuary of that stable-shed, hardly daring to hope we were safe. But so it was. The elephant was shy of those buildings, and must have retreated chagrined but resolved that he would "take it out" of the next for this defeat. So ended the adventure. We no longer doubted the existence of the "bad elephant."

When we arrived at the bungalow we found Major M-B. and various of our retainers lining the verandah and listening to the sounds of the attack. They had known at once that the "bad elephant" had got us, and were speculating on the extent of the casualties!

Three months after, we had our revenge when one midday I shot the Rogue, inflicting a serious wound at a spot in the head supposed to be mortal. From that date—though the elephant escaped immediate death—it has never been heard of again in those parts. A report of a dead elephant—small, with small tusks—being found twelve miles from where I wounded the Rogue and down the Moyar Valley seems to suggest that I had rid the world in those parts of a very nasty encumbrance to sport, and the jungle-folk of a real danger.

## Chapter XVI

# AT GRIPS WITH A WOUNDED LION. HUNTER GRASPS ANIMAL'S TONGUE

By A. B. Combe

(Lt.-Commander, R.N., retired.)

*Lieutenant-Commander A. B. Combe, who was in St. Thomas' Hospital, London, after a number of terrifying experiences in the African jungle, tells of his experiences under a lion.*

I was on the edge of the Okavango Swamp the last week in July. It is wonderful country, masses of game of all descriptions —giraffe, zebra, tessebi, sable, kudu, roan, lechwe, buffalo in hundreds, and elephant and lion.

The lions, though, were not much in evidence to start with, except at night, when their roars, the most wonderful and awe-inspiring sound in the world, would reverberate over the veldt.

As my main objective was lion shooting, I did not pay much attention to the other game except for the pot. For the first week I had no luck. There was plenty of sport, but of the wily leo himself not a sign.

I then hit on the idea of wading into the swamp. The local natives were all dead against it, saying there was far too much water, but I persisted and eventually gained my way.

It was lucky I did so. I discovered that the swamp was stubbed with small islands and on each I saw plenty of lion spoor. On the evening of August 1st, I shot a zebra and left him out. This was about four miles from my camp.

That night the lions roared from dusk till dawn practically without ceasing. It seemed a happy omen for me, and I felt

assured I should come across one or two in the early morning on the kill.

Consequently at the first streak of dawn I got up and we set out for the kill. It was just getting light when we came upon it. Imagine my joy when I saw a lion and three lionesses lying down beside the kill. I stalked on my hands and knees to within about sixty yards and waited.

The sun, which was just appearing over the horizon, was behind me, and showed out in bold relief the forms of the lions lying well fed and contented like the great cats they are, seemingly without a care in the world and certainly little realising that danger lurked so close.

I shot the old male first, and the rest in quick succession, one of the latter just as she was about to charge. That evening I again visited what was left of the kill, which I had covered with branches to keep the vultures away; but no more lions.

However, I had not gone more than half a mile further when I came across a group of ten which had just killed a lechwe ram. They were so intent on quarrelling over the kill, and as they were partially concealed in the rushes bordering the swamp, I was unobserved at first, when suddenly I was detected, and off they all went into the swamp, except an old male with a magnificent mane, who jumped on an ant heap the other side of the swamp and gave me a broadside shot.

The sun was setting, and with so many lions about I decided to collect him in the morning. I dragged what was left of the lechwe ram back to the kill, which made a big pile together with the four lions that I had got in the morning.

It was ten to one the remaining nine lions would return, and it would be interesting to see if they ate their own kind. I, therefore, returned to my camp.

* * *

Again, early next morning, I stalked up to the kill. My belief was fully justified. They were all there, two old males lying on each side of the kill and the rest in one long line about twenty yards apart.

It was a magnificent sight, and what a picture I could have taken had I the luxury of a small cinema camera. They all had their fill and seemed in no hurry to move with the oncoming daylight. It seemed criminal to shoot such magnificent animals, but the two old males lying on each side of the carcass had such magnificent manes that I could not resist. I had to wait some time before I got my shot. They seemed in no hurry to move, and except for an occasional grunt, pawing the air and scratching themselves in their contentment, they hardly moved.

At length, however, one sat up, leaning on his elbow. This was my chance, and I fired. The whole lot immediately sprang to their feet, and one of the lionesses, looking extremely nasty, came towards me.

* * *

I shot her and the whole lot made off, including the second male lion, who, after he had gone fifty or sixty yards, stopped to look back. I think he was wondering why his mate did not follow him. I now took a very foolish risk. It is generally accepted by men who really know something about shooting that a shot should never be fired unless you are sure of your shot.

This lion was a very difficult shot. He must have been 100 to 150 yards away and with his body looking away from me, though his head was turned in my direction. The size of his mane decided me and I fired. It was subsequently discovered that the bullet had gone through the fleshy part of the hind leg into his stomach.

Off he went into some long grass a short distance away. I did not follow him immediately. I decided I would try to recover the lion I had fired at the evening before. I found him a short distance from where I had seen him on the ant heap lying in the water.

But the most amazing thing about it was that there was only his head, mane, and forepaws left. The rest of him had been eaten. But by what? As far as I knew them, hyenas only could

have been the culprits. I searched all round for their spoor, but not a sign.

It then dawned on me that the remaining nine lions had returned and had a meal. It seemed incredible that lions would turn cannibal, but since then I have read Colonel Stevenson Hamilton's book, in which he says that although personally he had not come across a case of cannibalism he has heard of it on more than one occasion.

* * *

I now decided to follow the lion I had wounded. There was not much blood, and what there was seemed to get less and less. I had been after him about half an hour, and considered that he must have escaped into the big bulrushes into the swamp, which was only a short distance away. I therefore said to my boys: "Oh, well, we won't get him now. We'd better return." It was at that precise moment, with a roar, that he charged from about twenty-five yards away. I was carrying my 7 mm. Mauser with which I had shot all my previous lions, and my native gun-bearer had my 450 double-barrelled rifle, and another native my 12-bore shot-gun.

I fired with the 7 mm. and turned quickly to get the big rifle, but the boy had taken to his heels. I, therefore, turned to face the lion, but unfortunately not having time to reload, I was only able to thrust the rifle as hard as I could into his face.

* * *

His first action was to chew my left knee and shin bone. I was absolutely defenceless, didn't even have a knife. My one thought was to keep him as long as possible below my body level. I tried to put my fingers into his eyes, but it was difficult, the skin was so loose. I thrust my right leg into his face, which he immediately got hold of. During all this I was yelling for my boys to come and shoot him. There didn't seem much hope. They had completely disappeared. I then thought if I got my hand into his mouth I could grasp his tongue. I did

this and managed to hold the top of his tongue for a bit, but the saliva made it slippery and an elusive thing to hold on to, so my grip did not last long.

* * *

It was at this moment that I heard the voice of my old farm boy, Chimoyra, behind me. There he was, the plucky fellow, with my heavy rifle pointing straight at me, or so it seemed, stalking up to shoot the lion.

I managed to direct him to one side, and when within about five yards he fired. The shot went through the lion's shoulder, and he fell over on to his side, luckily not on top of me. It was a most noble act on the part of the boy. He had never to my knowledge handled a gun before, but without the slightest hesitation as soon as he had seen my gun-bearer (a local native) decamping he had run after him, snatched the rifle from him, and come to my rescue. I was, of course, now in a pretty helpless state. Both my legs had been badly mauled and also my right hand. They picked me up, however, and carried me back to my camp. Unluckily, through an oversight on my cook-boy's part, I had with me only lint and bandages. The bottle of iodine and a phial of anti-tetanus serum with a hypodermic syringe had been left behind at my main camp about twenty miles back.

* * *

I bandaged myself up as best I could, and with the corners of a blanket tied on two long poles in the form of a stretcher the journey to my main camp started. This we reached late that evening, when I untied the bandages, poured the iodine into all my wounds, bandaged them up again, and injected myself with the anti-tetanus serum.

We then started the journey back. The improvised blanket stretcher did not last long; either one or two corners kept slipping out; with somewhat painful results, till at last I made the boys fashion me a really strong one, weaved with bulrushes. This lasted well, and after three days and nights we

arrived at the road between the Victoria Falls and Maun, an out-station in Nganiland, 300 miles west of the Falls.

* * *

I was 200 miles from the latter and 100 miles from Maun. Every week I knew there was a lorry service connecting the two places, but whether I had struck the day they were due to pass or not I could not possibly tell. My two local natives, who were part of my stretcher-bearers, differed in their opinions. One said we would be lucky and the other said the lorries had already passed by. My amazing luck held, however. I had not been dumped beside the road longer than three hours before they appeared. There were two of them, both heavily loaded, and unfortunately coming from the Falls, where I wished to return. It was decided that the first one, belonging to a Mr. Frost (a transport rider at Maun), should proceed as quickly as possible into Maun and call the resident surgeon out to meet me, I following along slowly in the second lorry, belonging to Mr. Joel. The road being little better than a wagon track, we eventually met the doctor, Dr. Gerber, about twenty miles from Maun, being driven by the Rev. Sandilands in a light delivery motor-van, to which I was transferred.

I shall for ever owe a debt of gratitude to those two gentlemen. They drove back to Livingstone, about 270 miles, practically without a stop, over one of the worst roads I had ever been on. We arrived at Livingstone Hospital on August 8th at 4.30 a.m., and my left leg was amputated at the knee joint late that morning. Owing to the amazing skill of the Government surgeon, Dr. J. Harmer, who operated on me, my right leg was saved, and thanks to the wonderful care and nursing I received at Livingstone Hospital I was able to leave in three and a half months for my farm in Southern Rhodesia, ultimately sailing for England three weeks later.

Personally, I defy superstition, but for those who are superstitious it might be interesting to record the fact that the lion that got me was my thirteenth.

## Chapter XVII

# ON HORSEBACK WITH A CHARGING LIONESS

By A. Blayney Percival

(Author of *A Game Ranger on Safari*, and *A Game Ranger's Note Book*.)

*Mr. A. Blayney Percival, the famous Game Ranger of East Africa, gives the story of a thrilling encounter on horseback with a charging lioness. He was armed only with a colt automatic pistol, and fortunately escaped to tell the tale. The loyalty of his pony which walked up to him while the lioness was snarling will interest horse-lovers intensely.*

Looking backwards over nearly forty years among the big game of Africa as a hunter, a collector, and as Game Warden of Kenya, thrills seem to have been so numerous that they were taken as they came, and one was, if anything, more annoyed over them than anything alse.

But to ride at full gallop over a bit of a rise and to find oneself within a few feet of a lion, and later to find oneself on foot with only a revolver in hand and a lioness within twelve yards, all in a matter of minutes, did, however, put a notch in my memory that a quarter of a century of other thrills has not obliterated.

It happened during the Christmas holiday of 1905, when with a few days' leave in hand, I set out for the plains near El Donyo Sabuk after lion. After a couple of days' hunting with little success, I rode off with my mounted gunbearer, instructing the safari to carry on by a certain track. I arranged to meet him near the Athi river.

Several lots of lion were seen and galloped, but nothing with a good enough mane appeared to warrant a killing. I

looked round to get our bearing, our last gallop having taken us a long way out of our road, and I was a bit anxious about the safari. To cut a long story short, we failed to find the safari, and about half an hour before sundown I followed the old African rule to " camp in daylight." A nice dead tree, not far from the river, but clear of scrub, was selected. Horses were sent to water, while I strolled a little way, and killed a buck for food. Then a pile of firewood was collected and with the dead tree as a reserve of fuel we were soon cooking supper. My saddle-bag carried a few necessities and the blanket from under the saddle made a bed. Grilled meat under these conditions cannot be bettered, and after a feed I turned in, leaving the syce to take first watch and keep up the fire.

* * *

Lions started to roar in the neighbourhood, but none disturbed us in camp, though they were several times within a few hundred yards of us. At daylight we were ready to move and went in search of the safari whom we failed to find. Not wishing to spend another night out, I headed for Nairobi, sixty miles away. Luck was with us, however, and less than half-way we ran into friends, finding the late Lord Waterford's camp, where, with Lady Waterford, and Capt. and Mrs. Cyril Ward, he was spending Christmas. Welcomed with food and drink and pressed to stay the night, I was able to repay by offering to find some lion for them the next day. I was pretty sure of this, as not far from their camp I had seen signs of lion in a place they were not likely to forsake.

Early next morning we started out, and I very soon located some lion on a kill, apparently three of them in quite a good position for a gallop, if we could head them off from a nearby valley. We hoped to do this by rushing them, and got fairly close without being seen. From about 150 yards we charged straight at them.

There was a surprise all right, but it was not the lions that got it, for as we came into view not three but *thirteen*

lions sprang to their feet and bolted in every direction, most taking down the valley I had hoped to keep the three out of.

Lord Waterford and Cyril Ward soon had their guns in action, and a shot or two found billets. In the meantime I was watching to see what had become of the big-maned lion I had first marked, and presently saw him with a couple of females breaking away across the plains below us.

Calling to the others to follow, I put spurs to my pony and went away after them. I was not carrying a rifle, but my long Colt .45 was in its open holster as usual, strapped low on my thigh.

My pony, the most perfect of all shooting ponies I have ever seen, was a tiny little thing only 12.2½, but so fast that I raced him against 14.2 ponies without discredit. Not only was he fast, but wonderfully surefooted, as well as being keen on the sport, and I could trust him to take me anywhere.

The pony needed little urging, for he saw the lions ahead and fairly laid himself out; down the slope into a slight dip and up the other side he fairly tore along. On the top of the rise he almost ran over a big lioness, crouched on the ground and facing me at only a few feet. A quick draw and a snap shot into her face as we passed checked her. I carried on after the lion, yelling to the others to "go wide."

They, however, stopped and killed her.

In the meantime I was rapidly gaining on the lion and lioness, but before I could get up to them they had dropped into a slight hollow and were out of sight. When I came over the rise they had, in the marvellous way lions have, vanished.

* * *

That they were not far off I knew, and rode to an ant-hill to get a better view. After a look round from the saddle I jumped off to use my glasses. Again I was unsuccessful in finding the lions, and was still looking for them when suddenly, not more than eight paces away, a lioness rose to her feet with a grunting snarl and stood facing me. Her tail was going up and

down like a pump handle, and she looked about as ugly as any animal possibly could.

Drawing my Colt .45, I made no other move beyond a quick look round, which showed my pony eight or ten yards away, also watching the lion. I stood as still as I could with my eyes on the lion, waiting for developments; for how long I don't know, but it seemed a long time.

The lioness made one or two short jumps, pretending she was going to charge; then once or twice turned her head towards a reed bed. This gave me a little hope, and I thought I had one chance and one only. Would the pony come to my call, as he was trained to do? It was asking a lot of him, for the lioness was doing her best in the way of grunts and short snarling roars. I called softly to the pony, and almost at once the little fellow was alongside me. Stepping back a pace, I put my hand on his neck, and in a moment was in the saddle, racing away, with coughing grunts behind helping to keep us going.

* * *

Looking back, I found that the lioness had only followed us to the ant-hill where I had been standing and was undecided what to do. Some five-and-twenty yards away I pulled up, and being thoroughly frightened, I was naturally angry and foolishly let drive and hit the lioness.

That tore it! The lioness, in turn being angry, came straight at us and quick as Haibasha was, and fast as the little fellow went, the lioness literally covered twice as much ground as he did. Within another twenty-five yards, her head was up to the pony's hindquarters. Knowing that the beast was overtaking me, I pulled a bit to the right so that she had to come up on to my revolver side. As her snarling face looked up at me, two quick shots into her head stopped her. On looking back after going fifty yards or so, I saw her limping off towards a small reed bed!

The pace of a lion's charge for fifty to seventy yards is most extraordinary; I estimate that I had a good twenty-five yards start, yet I had not covered as much again in the time that the lion doubled it, and was alongside. This was from a standing

start, and here the lioness scored, for she was in full stride at once, while the pony had to get away into his stride.

But to return to my story, I now rode back and found the others busy with some wounded lions in long grass. These were soon disposed of and we went back to look for my lioness. Though we got another male lion, we did not find my beast—a disappointment, since I would have liked to have had her skin. The following morning we found one of our wounded lions, making five bagged, and during the day added a rhino and an eland to the bag.

At that time there must have been an incredible number of lions on the Athi plains for my diaries hardly show a day when lion were not seen. To-day, one must go further afield for the old lion grounds are now farms, better for the country, no doubt, but sad to the thoughts of the animal lover.

## Chapter XVIII

# A TIGER WILL TURN!

By H. J. C. Millett, I.F.S.

*Not the King's marksman from Bisley could guarantee to place a bullet neatly between the eyes of a charging tiger, and the author's story of his first expedition is a beautiful example of how not to shoot, how not to follow up, a tiger.*

Time is a great healer, and a dozen years spent in the Forest Service of this Presidency since the date I bagged (and was nearly bagged by) my first tiger, enables me to describe what might have been my first and last brush with Indian big game without that reddening of the ears which recollection of my initial mistake once used to bring. Besides, as a wise man will learn from his own errors, a still wiser reader may profit from the mistakes of others.

One of the cardinal rules in the shooting of all big game is, never take an uncertain shot. In the case of a harmless animal, to do so is not humane; and to its inhumanity is added, in the case of a dangerous animal, the certainty that it is asking for trouble for oneself.

But these moral reflections, if they had ever entered my mind, were not with me my first night of sitting in a high machan over a dead buffalo. I had no electric torch then on my rifle, for that practice—the ethics of which have since become a controversial subject for debate—was hardly introduced at that time; but relying upon a full moon to show me the tiger, I had committed mistake number one by cutting a small open patch in the undergrowth of *lantana* in which the kill lay, overlooked by my machan.

• • •

About an hour after the moon had risen, I heard a stealthy footstep or two in the dense black-and-silvery mass of *lantana* undergrowth around the kill. It was not many years since I had been in more exciting situations with regard to loaded firearms, but my heart, as it invariably does on such occasions, pounded as I prepared myself to shoot.

The rifle I was using, and *faute de mieux* still use for the purpose, was a souvenir of a French battlefield in 1918, being a .600 high-velocity Jeffery's, a few of which, with special armour-piercing ammunition, had been issued to the British front line troops following the appearance on the scene of German tanks. They were particularly useful, too, I understand, for smashing up trench sniper-plates of loop-holed Krupp-forged steel. But it was never contemplated that the rifle might eventually be turned against tiger in India, or it would have been made double-barrelled, or at least, fitted with a magazine.

As it was, it was a single-shot weapon—which may be accounted mistake number two. But why, you ask—surely one shot from a tank gun must be at least as lethal as two from any ordinary rifle? And the answer is—*not necessarily*. It generally happens that the huge high velocity projectile goes through the animal and expends the greater portion of its colossal shock upon the uncomplaining earth.

Why, I have known a red dog punctured right amidships by that same rifle, run half a mile before I tracked and found him dead—by the smell.

But to return to the machan, what happened took place in a very few seconds, and I never saw the tiger properly at all. Tigers have an instinctive dislike to settling down to eat in moonlight, and having no torch I had been compelled to cut away the undergrowth that was over the kill in order even to see it from my machan.

I heard a low deep growl, but all I saw was one huge paw come out of the shrubs to catch hold of the nearest portion of the kill. And then the whole bulk of a fully grown buffalo scraped and slid with effortless ease into the dark corner of the surround-

ing *lantana*! And in the light of subsequent experience in Shikar, I dare to say that in such circumstances this is what may be expected to happen nine times out of ten.

And then the tiger settled down to eat. Of course, I ought to have given it up as a bad job. I should have told that tiger what I thought of him in a loud voice, and then called up my men to come with lanterns and ladder to get me down to bed. But instead, I sat on listening for the first time enthralled to the voluptuous noise of a tiger enjoying his dinner, and hoping against hope for a glimpse of him.

Realising at last that such hope was futile, I lost patience with myself at being tricked. Locating the noise as well as I could by ear, I aimed the rifle in its direction and fired. The recoil nearly knocked me off the machan, but following the flash and the thunderous report I heard the scuffle of the tiger galloping away.

Then one angry roar in the distance—and silence. I called up my men who got me down from the tree, and by the light of a lantern we soon found the ploughed-up ground, where the bullet had entered. One of the men dug out the bullet. There was no blood, and giving the tiger best for cunning I went home disappointed to bed.

* * *

The next morning my wife came with me in my motorcycle-sidecar to visit the scene of the crime, it being within a quarter of a mile from a forest road. We were met on the roadside by some enthusiastic *gowlis* who informed me that morning light had revealed the tiger as having been well and truly shot! They had found blood and vomited meat not far from the machan, and at this moment—they said—the tiger was lying under a bush and only waiting for the *sahib* to come and shoot it. My wife, instead of turning pale, beamed with pleasure at the news, and together we raced home and procured the rifle. A tiger lying under a bush seemed as good as bagged, and, fool that I was, I believe I even suggested she might like to see me put in the final easy shot—but fortunately she demurred.

Three *gowlis* (cattle herdsmen) were anxious to lead me to the tiger, so leaving my wife sitting in the sidecar—I was to be back again in about ten minutes—we set out. Retracing our steps back to the machan I was shown where the tiger had gone the night before. We found the blood and vomit, and but a little further on where we found ourselves confronted by the usual forest undergrowth of thick, dense *lantana* covering innumerable acres—with a thin spoor of blood spots disappearing into the thicket—the leading tracker announced in a dramatic whisper that *this* was the bush under which the tiger was lying.

He seemed quite cheerful about the prospect. Diving down on his hands and knees he started to crawl along the blood spoor, pushing aside the *lantana* stems so that I could follow at a crawl with my rifle more or less free for instant action. There was another *gowli-wallah* crawling behind me who more than once, in the course of a hundred-yard crawl, tapped me excitedly on the shoulder, hissing " maro, saheb—MARO ! " For the tiger was moving on ahead of us and was more than once seen by these intrepid sportsmen who were crawling after him with me—a greenhorn unsupported and armed with but a single available cartridge. This goes to prove to my mind that a wounded tiger will not usually turn to charge in *very* dense undergrowth, that is to say, dense enough to hamper his speed.

Before I was expecting it we suddenly emerged upon the road again, opposite the very spot where my motorcycle and sidecar was standing. The tiger's footprints lay clear in the thick dust, crossing the road, *and the sidecar was empty*. My head swam, until I got a grip of myself, observing that the clear trail of those " pugs " passed well clear of the machine, and into the forest on the other side of the road. My wife, I subsequently learned, had begun to feel uneasy at my prolonged absence, and had very wisely gone to await events in the shelter of the *gowli* encampment nearby.

• • •

We followed the trail across the road, where it led into rather more open forest. Now that there was less *lantana* we could walk freely and see a little way ahead, and as gun-bearer I took the lead. Instinctively, the *gowlis* were by no means reluctant to concede it to me either—but we had not far to go. We had hardly advanced six paces into this more open forest, when in quick succession came three coughing roars; and the short roars of an angry tiger who means business are the most terrible sounds that the jungle ever hears. The tiger was right on us—but from where ? I never saw those *gowlis* vanish. They were with me one moment, and I was alone the next and not knowing it. I only knew that I had just one shot to drop the tiger with, that my rifle was half-way up to my shoulder, that the human angle of vision to watch from what direction the threatened danger may arrive can be acutely widened at such a moment.

Almost simultaneously with the roars, the tiger flashed into view, making straight for me, less than twenty yards away and going strong. One thinks quickly on such occasions, and I had the sense not to attempt to follow him with my foresight, but to hold the rifle steady and level and *to wait for his nose to get on to the sights.* The instant the tip of his nose appeared above the foresight, I pressed the trigger. The previous night the recoil of the shot had nearly thrown me out of the machan. This time, I hardly felt it, hardly even heard the gun go off: but miraculously so it seemed, the tiger dropped—skidded forward some inches along the ground by the sheer momentum of impetus alone—and lay five yards in front of me—*stone dead.*

When I could find my voice, I shouted for the *gowlis*, and after several minutes during which I was left alone with the dead tiger, they cautiously reappeared. Meanwhile I had been examining the beast. He lay with open eyes and mouth extended in a gaping snarl exposing his fangs. There was a raking vertical rip down one flank where my bullet last night had grazed him, and though it had been exposed to flies for only five hours' daylight since dawn, yet the maggots were already working in the wound. Reinforcements of men appeared on

the scene, and there were loud *wah, wahs* ! We turned him over to search for the killing shot, but no trace of that could we find ! I bethought me to seek out my wife, and her first remark must have dispelled any excess of foolhardy pride that I was feeling in the exploit, for she was quite horrified to observe how pale my face was.

* * *

Meanwhile the mystery remained to find where my final shot had taken him. There was no mark to show the smashing impact of a .600 calibre high-velocity projectile, and the mystery only deepened as the skinning of the animal proceeded. It was not until the very end, when finally the head and mask came to be skinned, that the discovery was made that my shot had hit him centrally between the eyes and, smashing brains and skull, had carried the splinters onwards down the neck. It has been the only occasion in a long subsequent experience of shikar, when a bullet from that rifle has entered in such a position that its entire energy was expended in the body of the animal without emerging. It has been the only occasion when I have ever pulled off such a memorable shot as to hit a tiger centrally between the eyes ; and I take no particular credit for it, beyond the presence of mind that prompted me to let the tiger come on to the foresight, instead of attempting to wave the sights about on to the tiger. Indeed, the result shows that I was a fraction too quick on the pull, for an inch or two lower would have missed him, whereas several inches higher would still have got him between the shoulders and dropped him dying. *But a dying tiger can still make a terrible mess of you before he expires.*

The reason why the wound was not obvious, was its position. Striking bone, it punched a clean hole which the hair concealed. The bare skull of that tiger, with its shattered brain pan, is still and will always be one of the most valuable trophies I retain from shikar, but it is needless for me to recapitulate for the benefit of the tyro the several valuable lessons which he should learn from this tale.

Not even the King's Marksman from Bisley could guarantee

to place a bullet neatly between the eyes of a charging tiger, and if the gods are forgiving on one occasion they are unlikely to be so on the next. With the sole exception of one very valuable tip, this history is a beautiful example of how not to shoot, how not to follow up, a tiger.

## Chapter XIX

# STARING OUT A WOUNDED TIGER: AND MY RIDE WITH A TIGER ON AN ELEPHANT.

By Col. P. T. Etherton

(Author of numerous books and articles on sport and travel.)

I was camped in the jungles of the United Provinces bordering on the Nepalese Terai, when news was brought to me of the depredations of a tiger which the natives characterised as the incarnation of ravage, which was terrorising villages, and reducing the countryside to a state of terror. The tiger charmers had tried their skill upon him, they had wafted incense to the innermost recesses of his supposed lairs—all to no effect. Apparently no one was able to bag him; whether he was stalked on the most up-to-date lines, or sat up for with every device and cunning that precaution and foresight could suggest, he always eluded the shikari. Every sort of rumour was afloat as to his origin; a warning spirit, they said, sat upon his head and gave him timely notice of any danger; that he had supernatural powers—he might even be a man, who, by a magician's wand, had become transformed into a tiger bent on wide-spread destruction.

Would I have a try for him?

I determined to take it on, and sent out shikaris to gather information of the creature that was reputed to be possessed of supernatural cunning, far surpassing anything else of his species.

A few days later news was brought to me one morning that the tiger had killed at a spot about six miles away, and in the afternoon I set out to have a look at the place. It was a lonely spot in thick jungle and very *tigerish*. To one side the ground

sloped up gradually to a height of thirty or forty feet on to a plateau, which was covered here and there with bush and trees. I cruised around on the elephant and chose the most likely tree commanding a view of the kill. The first branches were at a height of twelve feet above the ground and on this I had a small place made so that I could squat there and shoot from the knees. There was no one with me; a king's ransom would not have induced a villager to stay there, and once I was ensconced they cleared off, only too glad to get away.

* * *

The sun went down and night came on apace; there was no moon and only the twinkling stars afforded any light. I was, of course, uncertain from which direction the tiger would approach; he might come down the slope on my left, or move on to the kill from the dense jungle in my rear. I did not like the look of the ground behind me at all; it had one or two antheaps quite close to my tree, which would give a good taking-off place if the tiger were really all he was said to be, and was a springing man-eater!

When night had completely fallen, and it was so dark that I could scarcely see a yard ahead, I heard a slight rustling in the bushes behind me. It was like a stealthy step of something that was trying to move about without being heard! I detected this faint rustle, then came a long pause, than another slight crackle of twigs and dried leaves, then dead silence. I imagined it must be the tiger, but from my position in the tree I dared not turn round, and so perforce had to just turn my head in the direction of the sounds and try and divine exactly where they were, and what they meant. Then suddenly the rustling ceased; had the tiger spotted me and was he preparing to take off in a mighty spring on to my perch? I sat motionless as the Buddha, the tremendous strain seemed like years, I seemed to be shaking in every limb, as I slowly moved my loaded rifle round to let drive if the tiger made a spring.

For what appeared to be an age there was not a sound to disturb the uncanny stillness; then again I heard an almost

inaudible rustle of leaves behind and just below me. I strained my eyes in the darkness; immediately beneath my perch, and within ten feet of it, a gigantic form outlined itself in the gloom. It was standing perfectly still and looking straight ahead, an enormous beast—it seemed to my imagination, as big as a bison and as long as a crocodile.

It moved slowly forward and was followed within a few feet by another and still more massive beast. The whole situation then crystallised itself in my mind. The leading one was the tigress, who was going ahead to scout for her mate and see that the coast was clear, in accordance with orthodox tiger custom. The tiger himself halted momentarily beneath my tree, then moved slightly to the left where the ground started to slope up, where he remained motionless. Now was the only chance I would get. Beneath me, silhouetted against the starlight, stood the demon who had terrorised the countryside and cast despair and despondency over many a jungle hamlet. I raised my rifle, got the white foresight between the notches of the V, aiming steadily just behind the shoulder blades—and let drive.

* * *

As the sound of the shot crashed through the jungle the tiger gave one roar, such a roar, and then cannoned into my tree. I was within an ace of toppling over, but clung desperately to the branches. Then he apparently lay down breathing heavily, indicating a hard hit.

I looked at my watch; it was eight thirty-five. I had been there just over four hours, but I seemed to have lived through a century. Some twenty minutes later, I heard the sound of the approaching elephant, so to prevent the tiger charging in the darkness, and the confusion and terror that would result, I called out to the mahout to stand fast. On this the tiger got up, but nothing could be seen of him, since he was obscured by a sal tree standing directly in the line of vision.

I heard him move off up the slope, breathing heavily,

grunting, and obviously in a bad temper, as well he might be. I then called up the elephant which ranged itself alongside my tree and I stepped from my perch on to its broad back. The native tracker with the mahout had a lantern, which we swung low in the darkness, but could see no sign of the quarry, so I decided to return to camp and wait until dawn before continuing the pursuit.

* * *

Daylight found us once more by the machan, and then it was I realised the calibre of the tiger we were after. The ground below my frail *machan* was torn up as though a gigantic shoveller had been at work, the bark of my tree was ripped off, and the place was spattered with blood. There was no difficulty in picking up the trail, and thereafter we were conscious of the tiger's presence.

Cautiously we worked our way up the gentle slope, on to the fairly open bush country above, following the trail by the drops of blood. Twice we came to places where the tiger had lain down; the blood marks were quite fresh, and he had obviously passed that way only a short time before. We carried on another half mile or so, until the trail petered out and I was at a loss to discover where it had gone to.

Almost directly in front of me lay a nala above twelve feet deep and sixteen feet wide. Moved by a sudden inspiration for which I cannot to this day account, I partly slid and walked down into the bottom of the nala, a crazy thing to do without previously reconnoitring so ominous a spot. Arrived at the bottom I went down on one knee to examine the ground for blood marks, and sure enough there was a leaf with a faint drop of blood on it. As I took it up and turned round to show it to the tracker just behind me, my eyes were naturally raised and I saw the tiger staring intently at me from under a bush which we afterwards found was fourteen paces away!

He seemed to be looking clean through me, and was moving ever so slowly in my direction. I remember passing in flash-light review the courses open to me. If I fired and only wounded it again nothing could save me from certain death.

Like an inspiration from an unseen power it came back to me what I had read long before—that if you stare fixedly at a wild animal it will be temporarily nonplussed and stand still, whilst it is making up its mind what you are going to do, and what it is going to do itself. This does not take very long; no time must be lost. I stared for all I was worth at the tiger, backed slowly away, and when half-way up the slope turned and got to the top. The elephant was some seventy yards distant, and in the meantime I signalled to the tracker and two other men, who were close by the elephant to take cover in the trees, which they did with amazing celerity.

I climbed on to the elephant and moved to the edge of the nala. We examined it thoroughly, but not a sign of the tiger. He had disappeared as completely as though the earth had swallowed him up. It was then a quarter to seven and we started chukkering around in an effort to locate the quarry. Not until then did I know how well a wild animal can efface itself, even when it is a tiger measuring ten feet two inches in length and weighing upwards of four hundred and fifty pounds. For two hours we continued the unavailing search, until the May sun had climbed into a hard blue sky, and was beginning to make itself felt. The mahout was half asleep, and with a terse order to make for camp, I nudged him in the back. He, in turn, gave the elephant a prod with the goad, it shot forward and within four paces kicked against the tiger!

A tawny mass rose up, a gleaming medley of fangs and paws, with an enormous mouth giving out roar after roar. It was making desperate efforts to climb on to the elephant's head, whilst I was struggling to deliver the knock-out shot. It all happened within a few seconds; the elephant was terrified, and despite the efforts of the mahout turned and bolted, but without dislodging the tiger, which somehow had got round to my side.

*Having been capsized by the sudden turning of the elephant, I was hanging on to the pad, swinging like the pendulum of a clock, with the tiger roaring in my ear, the elephant in full cry through the jungle, and the mahout calling loudly on Allah to save us.*

I could feel the tiger's hot and foul breath on my face, his near side paw was within six inches of me, yet he seemed unable to get either on top of me or the pad. I afterwards found that the reason for this was that I had hit him in the stomach, and he was consequently unable to use his hind paws to hoist himself upwards.

* * *

No words could ever describe the tension of those moments as we raced onward through the jungle, the elephant trumpeting madly, the tiger roaring and spitting, his near side paw coming ever closer to me, myself hanging on with one arm, the other supporting my rifle as it lay across the elephant's back. With a superhuman effort I got up on to the pad, crouching down to avoid the hurricane of branches as we swept through the jungle. What exactly happened after that I cannot recall; the moments were far too hectic to allow of any appreciation of the situation, but I remember we thundered past a tree, there was a violent shock and a tearing noise as though something had been torn from the elephant. The next thing was we shot through a nala and up the far bank, out on to a clearing, where the mahout brought the elephant to a standstill, a trembling mass of impotent fury, lashing its trunk, and pawing the ground.

But there was no tiger; evidently the providential tree had swept him off, nor was he found until some time later, for which another elephant had to be requisitioned. The first had had enough!

## CHAPTER XX

# MY FIRST AFRICAN ELEPHANT: GUN-BEARER CURLED IN HIS TRUNK.

BY MAJOR W. ROBERT FORAN

(Author of *Kill or be Killed, A Cuckoo in Kenya, Malayan Symphony,* etc.)

*In this particular instance the elephant made several charges, and having seized Major Foran's gun-bearer in his trunk, attempted to kill him. The gun-bearer escaped death—and later recovered—by clinging to the head between the tusks, which the elephant prodded into the ground. Later, the same man was killed in saving his master's life, since when Major Foran has forsaken elephant shooting.*

ALL those who have engaged in elephant hunting in Africa thereafter regard all other quarries as offering but insipid sport. Personally, I have long felt that the lion has never justly earned his right to be styled " King of Beasts." If, in the dim past, he was the real monarch of the wilds, to-day he has certainly not been able to retain his throne.

This I do know. I would far rather face up to an infuriated lion at the charge, wounded or otherwise, than stand in the path of an enraged elephant intent on downing me. You may to-day play with lions on the Serengeti Plains, and with impunity; but nowhere in Africa can you play with a single elephant, or a herd of them, and expect to get away with it. My greatest and most tense moments in hunting over a number of years have always been with elephants and not lions.

In hunting lions, you never experience those thrilling moments which you always feel when you come up with a herd of tuskers in thick forest or long grass. While you stand and

peer about for the big bull, which you know or hope is there, every nerve is strung to the highest tension. The great slate-grey forms are only partially revealed through the thick covert as they either stand still or move about slowly within a few yards of you. The slightest noise made by you, or a sudden change in the wind, may bring down upon you instantly an avalanche, indeed, difficult to check or stem. You must wait until you have located your prize, and then manœuvre for a position to kill it with the first shot. Anything is liable to happen, and at any second. Believe me, the chances are heavily weighted against you.

Those moments form a memory that time cannot efface. But I have never known one moment in lion-hunting which has ever begun to equal such soul-stirring experiences. As you stand to face a lion at the charge, you are not so conscious of his size or menace as you are when you stand straight in the path of an elephant bent on mischief. The lion on the plains can appear to be a most majestic beast, and does his best so to impress you ; but an African elephant in his native forests is a demon of destruction, if so minded.

I can never forget my first elephant in Africa, any more than the last one I killed.

He was a big bull ; and stood by himself, ears widely extended, trunk slightly raised and pointed in my direction, and the wicked little eyes positively scintillated with devilment. Though I could clearly see the whole of the head, the rest of his huge body was completely hidden from view by the thick bush behind which he stood.

For some minutes I remained motionless, looking fixedly at him. I was conscious of a surge of intense excitement not unmixed with fear.

He was the very first elephant I had seen in the wild state. This trophy was a valuable one, and I covetously estimated the weight of those gleaming bars of ivory. Here, at last, was the reward of four days' strenuous tracking ; but I faced him alone, for my gun-bearer, Hamisi bin Baraka, had not yet caught up with me. I wanted that pair of tusks badly ; but now hesitated

to shoot in case of only wounding instead of killing instantly. I was confronted with the inexorable law of the jungle: kill or be killed. I had camped on a spur of the Aberdare Range in Kenya. Below me was a deep valley through which ran a brawling brook of clear water. I had seen many old and a few recent elephant-paths, and had been encouraged to hope for my first elephant trophy. Here he was before my very eyes, fifty yards away, and I was consumed with doubt as to what action to take. It all sounds very absurd now; but I was a complete novice at the game. I had been trailing him for three days, without even a glimpse of him. On this fourth morning, when I had almost despaired of success, I saw a large dark object moving about in the valley below my camp. I trained my glasses upon it, and saw a huge bull elephant headed straight for my camp. I grabbed my rifle, shouted to the gun-bearer to follow with my heavier gun, and set off hurriedly after my quarry.

At first it looked as if he intended to pass straight through my encampment; but he paused abruptly, and then turned off to the right and up the valley. He must have caught a whiff of human-tainted wind, and was disinclined to look for trouble. I followed in his wake, and saw him come to a halt in a thick patch of bush. I could now see his trunk waving gently from side to side. Throwing caution to the winds, I advanced boldly until within fifty yards.

Now as I stood immobile, he showed evident signs of acute suspicion and restlessness. His trunk was searching for tainted wind. Had he seen or heard me? A cold shiver ran down my spine. If I was to be certain of killing him, a closer approach was imperative. But what if he charged before I could aim? Gradually my nerves steadied and my fears evaporated like the morning mists before the rising sun. I crept forward slowly, eyes watchful and rifle held ready for instant use. I was working up-wind. At thirty yards, I halted again and took very careful aim for the brain shot—the most vital spot in that vast target. I held my breath and gently squeezed the trigger. As my shot rang out, the bull had just plunged forward unexpectedly. The heavy bullet hit him almost at the root of the tail. It must have

been a most unpleasant surprise! He let out a shrill scream of pain and shock, and cut a ludicrous figure with his spine curved out and his tail tucked in. I was reminded of a pariah dog trying to get out of reach of a vicious kick.

He now made off straight through the bush down the valley, trampling down everything in his mad rush and making a terrific din. A fairly stout sapling got between his front legs, bent over almost double, and snapped with a report like that of a heavy rifle. I followed at a steady run, guided largely by the noise of breaking branches. Suddenly there came a deep silence, and I knew that he must have halted again; so, worked round the spot in order to get a sight of him and a fair chance of a head shot. But I must have misjudged his exact position, for all at once I found myself facing him at close range instead of being on his flank.

* * *

He saw me immediately, and charged straight at me like a runaway locomotive. It was impossible to dodge that mad rush in such thick undergrowth, even had I wished to do so; and I did, most earnestly! The nature of the terrain, however, presented no difficulties to that outraged elephant. He smashed down everything in his path like so much chaff. Much as I ardently longed to be anywhere else but in his path, I was forced to stand my ground. I knew I had to kill him, or myself be killed.

Sheer desperation gave me the necessary nerve to hold my fire until the most favourable moment. As the elephant towered over me and thrust out his trunk to grab my body, blocking out the whole of my horizon, I fired point-blank between his eyes in the hope of either turning or blinding him. I emptied my second barrel into his broad chest. Both bullets sped true to their mark, but failed to stop him. I threw myself backwards into a bush; and, as I fell, heard the report of another rifle from just behind me. Picking myself up hastily out of the thorny bush, and reloading as fast as I could, I looked over my shoulder. The elephant had fallen on his knees. I

saw him stagger to his feet several times, but the brute seemed unable to stand erect. Eventually he fell forward, his tusks were buried in the ground.

Squeezing myself between the trees and his huge body, I passed round behind the colossal stern. As I did so, he stepped backwards and only just missed treading me under foot. Getting round to the opposite flank, I was able to fire between his eye and ear as he fell forward once more on tusks and knees. At the same instant that I squeezed the trigger, he raised his head a trifle. My bullet struck too low to be instantly fatal. On receiving this fifth wound, the huge beast regained his feet. As he did so, I realised that his recent actions were not due to wounds or weakness.

* * *

To my extreme horror, I saw Hamisi rolled up in the trunk. The elephant held him round the waist. Before I had time to shoot again, he flung the unfortunate native through the air with one powerful swing of the trunk. Hamisi's flight was stopped by the trunk of a tree, fully thirty yards away. Then the wounded beast staggered off into the bush, obviously very "sick," and disappeared from view. I ran to where my poor gun-bearer had fallen, expecting to find him crushed to a pulp and quite dead. To my intense relief and amazement, he raised himself on an elbow and greeted me with a sickly grin. His clothing was torn to ribbons, and blood-soaked. As I examined him to ascertain the extent of his injuries, he explained, in a low voice, that he had just caught up with me when I fired twice into the charging bull. It was his shot that I had heard as I threw myself backwards out of the path of that galloping mountain of flesh. Before he could get out of the way, the elephant had seized him in his trunk. Hamisi was thrown heavily to the ground, and the old tusker tried to crush the life out of my gun-bearer with wicked thrusts of the massive head, used much as a battering ram; but his exceptionally long tusks made this impossible. Hamisi found himself safe as long as he kept his body in the gap between the two bars of ivory.

* * *

Once he managed to crawl away from the spot, but the old elephant promptly hauled him back with his trunk. He was making still another attempt to crush him when I had fired into the brute's head. The blood on Hamisi's clothing was that of the elephant, and not his own. Making him as comfortable as I could, I ran off to get help; and soon we had carried him back to camp. Hamisi's chief injuries were five broken ribs; but he had also been badly bruised and had suffered a severe shock. I set off again, accompanied by another native, to find that wounded elephant. He was not to be allowed to escape, and suffer. About two miles from the scene of our fight, I found the dead body of my foe.

It is unlikely that I shall ever forget that thrilling adventure with my first elephant in the wilds of Africa. I did not fail to profit by the experience then gained. Hamisi made a wonderfully quick recovery, and was soon able to accompany me again on hunting trips. Some years later, he was killed in Uganda by a "rogue" elephant we encountered unexpectedly; and died in saving my life. The loss of my stout-hearted gun-bearer so distressed me that I have never since hunted elephants to kill.

## Chapter XXI

# IN THE CLUTCHES OF A WOUNDED TIGRESS: PLANTER WHO LOST RIGHT ARM AND LEG AND THEN SET TO WORK TO LEARN PAINTING.

By A. W. Strachan

(Author of *Mauled by a Tiger.*)

*Wounded tigers are responsible for a very heavy proportion of the death roll of shikar. Few people live to tell what it feels like to be underneath the king of the jungle. Mr. A. W. Strachan now lives at Dollar, Scotland, and this article describes carefully his sensations while he was under a wounded and dying tigress. He lost his right arm and left leg, but in spite of being mauled practically all over, he survived. With remarkable courage he set to work to study art when he had to retire from active life in India. He spent most of what little money he had saved in studying in London art schools for two years, but could not remain long enough for lessons in painting. "I taught myself what little I know," he says—and he had the satisfaction of getting one of his ivory miniatures (of the late Lord Rhonddha) into the Royal Academy.*

Many who have had occasion to follow the spoor of a wounded tiger on foot through dense jungle, may have experienced moments that are rather more "tense" than desirable. Comparatively few, however, have actually come to grips with one of these beasts and lived to tell the tale, and a plain, unvarnished narrative of such an experience may prove of interest to readers of these articles. It may also serve to enlighten the novice as to the do's and don'ts in this dangerous game, and I need not assure the young *shikari* that it is infinitely better to acquire knowledge in this way than by actual experience of teeth and claws.

It was in a certain district of Sylhet that what was to prove

my last encounter with the finest of all the great game animals of India took place, more years ago than I care to remember, though I am never likely to forget the date. For some obscure reason the number thirteen has long been regarded as " unlucky " by certain individuals, and this particular thirteenth day of August was a fateful day for me. Personally I am not converted to the belief that the date had anything to do with it, but the superstitious will possibly consider that I asked for trouble—and got it. On the twelfth of that month I received a note from a friend on a neighbouring tea estate to the effect that one of his cattle had been killed by a tiger during the night, and asking me to watch with him over the carcass that evening. I was the more willing to do this as two of my coolies had been killed by one of these beasts a short time previously, a tigress with small cubs being the probable culprit, as neither of the victims had been eaten.

I arrived at A.'s bungalow at about 4 p.m., and at once proceeded with him to the scene of our prospective vigil. Here a fully-grown bullock was lying, with its head twisted under it, in a small open space between the tea bushes and the jungle. A *machan* had been constructed in a tree growing conveniently within twenty paces of the " kill," and from this vantage-point we could command every line of approach should the slayer return. Immediately behind the spot where the bullock lay was very dense jungle, while to our left was an extensive patch of grass from three to four feet high. A number of vultures had collected on the neighbouring trees, but so far none had ventured to the feast. Their querulous chattering was, for a time, the only sound that broke the stillness ; then, as the sun neared the horizon, the barking of a dog, mingling with the rhythm of the inevitable tom-tom in the distant coolie-lines, came clearly to our ears. This seemed to be the signal for the vultures to descend, and soon the body of the bullock was completely hidden by a seething, squabbling mass of the hideous birds. They were not left long in possession, however.

Suddenly a dark, sinister form sprang from the shadows

at the jungle-edge into the midst of the noisy throng. There was a roar of flapping wings, and in less time than it takes to tell, the avenger stood surrounded by the quivering bodies of the luckless vultures that had failed to escape the death-dealing paws. Appearing almost black in the last remnant of daylight, the tigress (for such it proved to be) remained motionless save for her twitching tail, within thirty yards of us, her head raised in a listening attitude.

Both our rifles came to the shoulder at the same moment. The position of the beast was ideal for the shoulder-shot, but the sights were difficult to see in the dim light, and this was not conducive to accurate shooting. Aiming as nearly as I could judge at the fatal spot I pressed the trigger. A., who had never previously seen a " wild " tiger, had forgotten to release his safety-catch as I afterwards discovered, and did not fire. That my shot had taken effect there could be no doubt, as immediately pandemonium reigned, but it was equally obvious that the bullet had missed the heart. Roaring continuously the stricken beast came rapidly towards our tree in a succession of somersaults, and passed right underneath the *machan* before I had time to pick up my 12-bore which was lying, suitably loaded, beside me. In a few seconds she had reached the grass, and the last glimpse I got of her that night was as she fell head-over-heels into it. Almost immediately after she had disappeared her roars suddenly ceased, and I felt pretty confident that she was dead, or soon would be, but it was of course impossible to attempt to verify any belief that night. On the way back to A.'s bungalow it was arranged that L., one of the best marksmen in the district, should be asked to accompany us on the following morning, as an extra rifle would be all to our advantage should the tigress be still alive.

At 9 a.m. on the thirteenth, we three Europeans set out on the adventure that was destined to impress itself indelibly upon the memories of all of us, and which wrote " finis " to the most thrilling chapter of my own career. Each of us was accompanied by his own pet shikari as gun-bearer, and ten of A.'s pluckiest coolies had volunteered to act as beaters should the necessity

arise. On reaching the spot where the beast had been wounded we had no difficulty in following the blood-trail to the place where she had entered the grass, but before following the track into such dangerous country we took the precaution of making the beaters bombard, with stones and lumps of earth, the place where we fondly hoped to find our quarry lying dead. There was no response to this fusillade, and the coolies, under cover of our weapons, cautiously cut a path in the direction indicated by the spoor. Not many yards in, the grass was flattened and blood-stained, obviously by the tigress having either fallen or lain down, but our hopes of finding her dead body had been rather too optimistic. Though it was evident that she had lain here for a considerable time and lost a great quantity of blood, she had eventually recovered sufficiently to rise and go on in the direction of the bamboo jungle. This discovery impressed upon us all the seriousness of the risk we ran in following her through such country, as it now seemed more than likely that she was still alive and possibly quite capable of being aggressive. There was no alternative, however, as she had to be put out of her misery at all costs, and it was impossible country to beat.

Stopping every few minutes to listen for some indication of her whereabouts, we cautiously made our way right through the grass-land without a sign of the wounded beast beyond the blood-tracks we had so patiently followed. It was a decided relief to get amongst the bamboos where we could at least see a short distance ahead. Here the "going" was very much easier, though the spoor was more difficult to make out. Eventually it led to a small stream where, for the first time, we found the deep imprints of her "pugs" in the sandy margin. That she had crossed this some time before was evident, as her tracks on the opposite side were quite dry. It was significant that she had not found it necessary to rest in the distance she had travelled, and our sanguine hopes of the early morning had by this time completely disappeared. We *knew* she was alive, and apparently not even very severely crippled. For a hundred yards or so she had followed the stream, then entered a dense patch of undergrowth of considerable extent. What we *should*

have done was to have skirted this to see if the tracks emerged on the other side, but the day was now far advanced and to do this would have meant delay, so we decided to stick to the spoor. The folly of this decision was soon apparent. The coolies had to cut a path, and as it was necessary to go in single file I took the lead as I had wounded the animal. I was carrying my 12-bore, loaded with ball and slugs, which I invariably used for such close-up work, while "Ticka" (my tracker) was immediately behind with my rifle; then came L. and his gun-bearer; A., being the least experienced, bringing up the rear.

* * *

I had just emerged from the path which had been cut into a small open space perhaps ten or fifteen feet wide, when, from the dense scrub on my right, there came a succession of short, coughing roars—the unmistakable (and unforgettable !) challenge of a tiger that means mischief. I could see nothing of the beast owing to the thickness of the undergrowth. Foolishly, perhaps, I stood my ground in the belief that I would be able to put her out of action before she could charge "home." The intimidating sound drew rapidly nearer. Still I could see nothing but the shaking of the bushes as the tigress rushed towards me. There was now absolutely no doubt about her intentions, but I had no opportunity to frustrate them. The first I saw of her was when she bounded through the scrub straight at me. My gun was already at my shoulder, and I snapped both barrels at her while she was in the air.

Next instant a veritable fiend incarnate loomed through the smoky haze from my shots and I was hurled backwards, my gun being sent spinning from my grasp. The fact that I fell away from her probably saved my life, as the upper part of my body was out of her reach when she collapsed with her back broken at the hips by my hasty shots. Unfortunately she still had the use of her fore-paws and teeth and she dragged me towards her and bit through my left foot.

I have heard it said that all the sins and omissions of one's

past life flash through the brain in such moments as these! Though I never lost consciousness I have no recollection of this being the case. Perhaps my subconscious mind realised the futility of attempting such a colossal task in the time at its disposal and gave it up as a bad job. I felt neither fear nor great pain while the tigress worried at my foot, and if my sensations were similar to those of a mouse when in the clutches of a cat the tender-hearted may be relieved to know that the victim does not suffer unduly. Strangely enough, this absence of pain applied only to the wounds inflicted by the beast. A rifle-shot rang out, and immediately a red-hot iron seemed to pass through the foot on which the tigress was wreaking her vengeance. At the same moment she sank inert and lifeless, the bullet from L.'s rifle having pierced her brain and drilled a hole in my foot on its way. Though the bones of the foot were already crushed by the teeth of my aggressor, I was only conscious of a peculiar numbness till the minor injury was inflicted, and there was no doubt about the pain from this comparatively trivial cause.

* * *

I was held prisoner till the dead brute's jaws had been prised open and her claws removed from the flesh of my right leg, when I was able to get up and review the damage that had been done. It did not take me long to realise that my future prospects were not particularly rosy. A deep gash extended from the elbow to the wrist of my right arm, and the hand had obviously been "squeezed" for the last time, though I was unaware that it had ever been in the beast's mouth. My chest was scored by the claws of one of the fore-paws, while the other paw had completely spoilt the shape of my pith helmet, just missing my head. Both legs were deeply clawed when she dragged me towards her, and there was a "semi-detached" sort of feeling about my left foot.

My companions, who had so pluckily rescued me from certain death, wanted to carry me, but I managed to walk the greater part of the distance back to A.'s bungalow. I *had* to

be carried the last lap, however, as my surroundings assumed the appearance of a gigantic " Catherine wheel " of which I was the centre, which was not surprising considering the amount of blood I had lost on the way. Neither of the injured limbs could possibly be of any further use to me and had to be amputated, but thanks to the skill of the local doctors who attended me, and to the unforgettable kindness of every European in the district who did so much for my creature comfort, I made a good recovery, helped, perhaps, by a tough constitution.

The only grudge I have against the tigress is that she compelled me to say good-bye to India, and thus put an end to all opportunities for further encounters with her species, though I would naturally prefer them a little less thrilling.

## Chapter XXII

# DRAGGED FROM TREE BY TIGER: FOREST GUARD'S EXPERIENCE

(In an Interview with the Editor.)

*Among the more humble members of the Indian Forest Service who have many exciting adventures in the wild, are the forest guards, whose duties take them almost daily into the jungle. In this interview Forest Guard Rowjee tells how a wounded tiger dragged him from a tree and mauled his leg. A branch which then fell on the tiger's back suddenly, saved the man's life. This was many years ago at Somewhere-in-the-Satpuras.*

"How did I lose my leg, Sahib? A tiger mauled it after dragging me from a tree. I will tell you about it."

And Rowjee, one of those slightly built but wiry-looking Bhils, shifted his wooden leg and looked down at it as though the story were written on the wood, and it refreshed his memory.

"It was over that hill and we had a kill in that big nala." He indicated the name, but we call it Ne Bolenge Nala, for we do not like giving away shikar localities.

"We had a beat for a tiger, but it unfortunately escaped wounded. It was no fault of the Sahib's, for he was a good shot and a keen sportsman, very reliable. The next day we found out where it was lying, and decided to beat it out.

"I was one of the stops near the machan and was up a tree."

"How high?" I asked, for it is a somewhat disputed point exactly how far a tiger can leap—some say fifteen feet, others more.

Rowjee raised his hand to indicate a neighbouring tree

and pointed to the top. He mentioned a figure, but I thought perhaps his memory after the tense moment had played him false, for the height he gave did not agree with the accepted standards of tigers' leaps.

"The tiger came out and was evidently trying to break through the stops. After wandering about he came and stood below my tree, and then was passing. I growled at him like this . . . " Rowjee gave a most realistic growl, very angry and tigerish. It was certainly the kind of noise guaranteed to arouse the wrath of the monarch of the jungle.

"I thought it would turn him back, but the noise had a very different effect. The tiger pounced on a branch, and though I shot upwards towards the top, he got my foot in his mouth and crunched it. I clung, but his great weight quickly pulled me to the ground, and I became half *behosh* (unconscious), like this." And Rowjee lifted his wooden stump and assumed a horizontal position.

"The tiger was still facing my foot and began to worry it again. Then suddenly the branch which I broke, when hanging on, fell to the ground, on the back of the tiger, which bolted forward with a 'Wough, wough.' Then I lost consciousness, but I realised the branch had saved me."

And when I commiserated with Rowjee he smiled grimly, looked at his stump, and remarked that it was wrong to talk of his *unlucky* day, for it was undoubtedly his lucky one.

I agreed. Not many people live to tell what it feels like to be below a wounded tiger.

## Chapter XXIII

# INDIAN LIONS—RIGHT AND LEFT

By T. R. Livesey

The last haunts of the great " Bab'br " or " Oont nahr," i.e., camel-tiger, as every sportsman in India knows, are in the Gir forest of Kathiawar. Here in primeval bush they roam in their freedom—guarded by decree of the great and wise Nawab of India to whom this area belongs.

The salute I gave them may be regarded as quite an exceptional impudence—administered in the nature of correction for wandering out of their reserves and killing cattle. During the rains these lions of the Gir are so plagued by mosquitoes and other insect pests in the heavier forest, that they are tempted to wander further afield in the open and cultivated country where they take to killing village cattle owing to the scarcity of wild game. Moreover, at the time I write of, matters had come to a head as a man had been killed.

A big maned lion had recently, so we were told, killed a cow right out in the open fields by the village in broad daylight. The indignant owner had gone up to it and after a few angry words, he had cut the lion across the nose with his " kolari " ! The lion resenting the interference had turned and killed him. After that the villagers began to get a little frightened and, suffering from loss of cattle, began to petition that the lions might be reduced and driven back to the Gir.

At that time I was fortunate in having a good friend at court and I was asked to come and assist him in this task. So by such happy combination of circumstances I found myself one August morning bumping down into Kathiawar on one of the small State railways—across a wide, open and undulating part

of the country I had never previously seen. The fresh breeze from the sea blew a cool welcome over the plains and set the long, green grass everywhere waving. Herds of graceful blackbuck here and there livened the landscapes. As we neared our destination it became more and more hilly but still a continuation of the fresh green grass waving thigh-deep—from which the florican and black partridges were calling.

Making our headquarters at one of the villages recently raided by the lions, we went out next day on our ponies over the hills to search the nalas and wooded hollows where the lions were reported to be. On the way we noticed fresh tracks of four lions padding out along the village road for a distance of about two miles. The tracks then led off across cultivated land to a river bed. Here the lions had apparently crossed the stream by stepping each other in turn, on the stepping stones set there by the villagers.

As it was considered that they would return the same way that night we set our most distinguished guest in a comfortable machan for the night by the ford with a young buffalo as a bait. Returning to the village we enjoyed our dinner and went to bed. Soon after midnight, however, we were aroused by sounds of rioting. Hurrying to the scene in our pyjamas we found the lions attacking our ponies and being held at bay by the police and the villagers. Sticks, stones and abuse finally drove them off.

Next morning, as we rode out, there were the tracks of the lions padding along the same road for about two miles, then across the cultivation to the ford, when we were amused to see that they had as before tripped daintily across on the stepping-stones. Our friend was in a pretty bad humour after his fruitless night in the machan. The lions had passed almost under his machan, ignoring the bait, going and returning over the stepping-stones within a few yards of him to attack his pony two miles away in the village!

After the fun the lions had had with us we thought we should like some fun out of them, and so sent off trackers in all directions to try and get on terms with them. As it was open and hilly country, with only small patches of forest along the ravines,

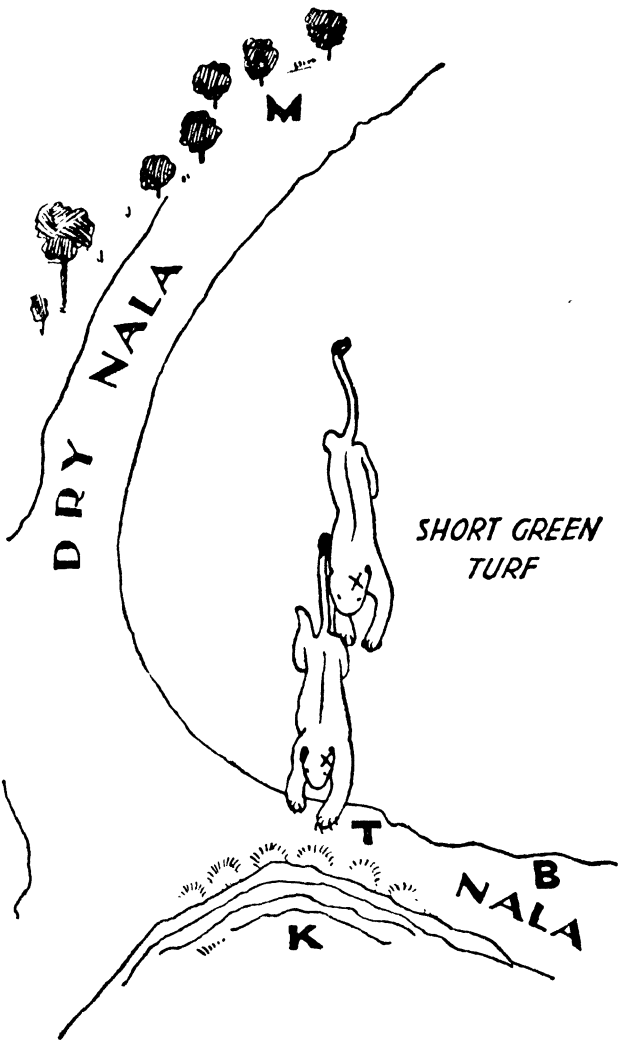
there seemed every chance of being able to organise a successful beat if the lions could only be located. Luckily our trackers were extremely good—possibly the best in India. They showed no fear of these lions and were ready to track them up single-handed anywhere.

Next day a few baits were put out but produced nothing more than some defiant roaring during the night. The following day we received the welcome news that the trackers had found the lying place for a party of lions in a wooded ravine some few miles away. At once arrangements for a beat were put in hand and soon after midday we were riding off in the highest spirits.

After the guns had been given their places I selected for myself a position right out on the extreme flank where a ravine led out from the main river bed which was to be beaten towards us. An Indian friend climbed up into a large ficus tree about a hundred yards immediately ahead of me and on the same ravine, so that my chances of a shot seemed somewhat secondary.

I took up my position at the top of a bank where the ravine forked, where I could command the ground up to the gun ahead. To see more clearly I stood on a small horizontal bough of a tree some three feet off the ground, by which means I was able to see over the tops of the bushes in front of me, and down into the nala. The tracker with me climbed up above me in the same tree. Bushes and a six-foot drop of the bank hid the ground below and before me up to a distance of six or seven yards, after which spread a lovely, open, lawnlike stretch of short, green grass extending some 40 yards towards the tree where my Indian friend was in waiting.

Hardly had I taken up my position when I heard the beat begin with that crescendo of glad sound that so thrills the expectant shikari. The distant clanging of tins, shouting and blasts from an old trumpet made music. My position standing on the bough was somewhat awkward and ill-chosen, as my rifle was a heavy double .470 hammerless cordite weapon, but I did not want to sacrifice my field of fire by standing lower on the ground. By putting my right leg the other side of the tree, however, and by pressing my knee against it, I got a firmer hold.




The roar of the beaters was now nearer and I was all excitement to catch my first sight of an Indian lion. The sun lit up the stretch of short green turf by the nala side and the soothing sound of many doves began to lull me from my stern purpose.

Suddenly the alarm note of some bulbuls higher up the ravine broke upon our peace and at once there was a hush of expectancy. A few more moments and " bang " the explosion of my friend's artillery in the trees ahead shattered silence—and then with a roar, came the lions of Kathiawar in full gallop straight at me across the green turf! I shall never forget the grand sight they made led by a huge lioness, her broad chest and great forelimbs spread wide in action, open-mouthed and roaring. As fast, and at her tail tip, came a nearly full grown young male, her son—and then another!

The lions came at me at full pace and roaring after the double blast of cordite from the tree in front, breaking into view about 30 yards ahead of me. There was but an instant to take a shot—the leading lioness was plunging below me when I fired at her head which was justified by my position over her and she was instantly cut out of my sight by her plunge into the nala below where the bushes, a few yards before me, screened her from sight.

My second barrel rang out almost simultaneously with the first at the head of the lion behind her, and he too was cut down out of my sight!

I reloaded quietly and waited motionless. I did not move in case either of the lions might be crouching wounded before me in the bushes within springing distance of me. I could see nothing, and there was an uncanny silence for some considerable time. Then came a stir in the bush at my feet and very slowly the lion pushed his way out to the very foot of my small tree. He appeared dazed and " groggy " and placing the muzzle of my rifle within a foot or two of his neck I gave him his quietus.

The beat came on and I stopped the men in good time until they were able to make out from the hill above me the forms of the two lions lying below me in the nala. Both lay dead and only a few yards apart.

Both had been shot through the head and in almost exactly the same place—between the left ear and eye, but whereas the lioness had been cut down and killed instantaneously, the bullet going through the brain, in the case of the lion the difference in angle resulted in the bullet just missing the brain. It had

stunned him and shattered the lower jaw in its exit. Never had I taken such a quick " right and left "—not even with a shotgun. Before me lay dead the proudest Game of Hindustan—the great " Bab'br " of the old Indian paintings !

Next day we shot the old, maned lion—the man-killer. A deep gash across his nose confirmed the villagers' statement.

Then we stayed our hand. Orders were passed to the villagers to combine and try and drive the lions north towards the Gir forest.

We had not been too severe with the lions. They killed six more cows in the village the very night we left.

## Chapter XXIV

# DUSK AND A MASSIVE TIGER

By Lt.-Colonel C. H. Stockley

(Author of *A Shikari's Pocket Book*, *Big Game Shooting in the Indian Empire*, etc.)

It is an almost invariable fact that, whenever one has a very thrilling experience while hunting big game, which involves personal danger, it is the result of mismanagement or carelessness on one's own part. For the sport of big game shooting lies in defeating the animal on his own ground by the use of one's own mental and physical powers, and the shot should offer little or no difficulty, being merely the final touch which gives one a fine trophy as a memory of the completed whole.

Consequently in relating my most thrilling experience in thirty years' shikar, I am laying myself open to the criticism that the thrills were due to my own ineptitude, but I hope to demonstrate that this was not entirely the case; while the lesson involved was too valuable not to be broadcast as much as possible.

I have used a small bore rifle for most of my big game shooting, a .318 for the last twelve years, and have found it very efficient *when used with the right bullet*. I should like to emphasise again *the right bullet*, for there are several bullets on the market which fly to pieces on striking an animal with very high velocity at short range, and are dangerous in the extreme through merely causing surface wounds to dangerous game. The only safe bullet to use, in my opinion, is an ordinary soft-nosed; a solid bullet, not tubed or hollow-pointed.

I have had an end-on shot at a big Kashmir stag at eighty yards and raked him from chest to rump, taking the perfectly mushroomed bullet from under the skin of the right hip. With the same shot at another stag the " hollow-pointed " bullet blew up on the top of the chest bone, and did not penetrate more than a foot.

At closer ranges with high velocity rifles the danger of the hollow-nosed bullet breaking up on the first bone it strikes, or failing to penetrate through solid muscle, is still greater. Consequently when, in early January 1930, I received a consignment of a hundred .318 cartridges from the biggest gunmaker in India, and found that " hollow-pointed " bullets had been sent instead of the soft-nosed ordered by me, I was extremely annoyed. I was just beginning a shoot in North Kheri, and there was no possibility of changing them, while I had let my stock of soft-nosed run down to about half a dozen, which I expended in the first three or four days of the shoot.

* * *

I was in a forest bungalow in company with H., who had most kindly invited me to shoot over his fine preserve, of which the boundary lay only two hundred yards away. This preserve is mainly swamp, containing swamp deer (*gond* in the vernacular), para and small game, but every year one or two tigers came down from Nepal and live on the *gond* and on the tame buffaloes which graze in the preserve.

On the evening of January 8th we heard two tigers roaring in the swamp, and next morning I went out to camp on some slightly rising ground by the main stream, H. being too busy to come out. I was really after groups of deer for the Bombay museum, but I found the tracks of a big male tiger crossing a muddy patch on my way out, and that evening heard the tigers roaring again as I sat down to dinner, twice again during the night, and again at dawn, receding towards the adjoining Nepal border to the north-west.

They seemed to have covered the same beat on both nights

and I confirmed this later in the morning by finding tracks, so decided to have a try for one of them that evening, on the chance that they would start out before it got too dark to shoot.

Their beat evidently skirted the big swampy patches of long grass, only crossing through the shallower strips, and was designed to work the burnt ground where the deer came out to feed on the new grass. About five hundred yards north of my camp a series of swampy channels stretched like fingers towards the main swamp, but with a dry strip between. It seemed most probable that the tigers would move along this strip, which lay right in line with their beat, though the hardness of the ground had failed to show any tracks.

At four o'clock on the afternoon of January 10th, most memorable date, I perched myself on the top of an anthill, from which grew a fringe of stiff grass and which overlooked the dry strip from about two hundred yards away. I dared not sit nearer as the wind was doubtful, and if I were to frighten deer which came out to feed, their flight would warn the tigers.

Animals soon began to appear. First a sounder of pig, about twenty strong, then a dozen or more para, dotted about the expanse of new green grass and appearing from the strips of shallow swamp on either side of me. Then a score of *gond* emerged from the main swamp beyond, all hinds and young ones, and fed warily, ever lifting their heads to gaze around or try the wind for a suspicious taint. Between them and me fed a fine little para stag, right on the patch which I hoped the tiger would cross.

* * *

The sun set and the light began to wane, so that I began to give up hope, and had decided to give it five minutes more when I heard a tiger grunt to the north-west. The pig, which had fed to within thirty yards of me, paid no attention, but the *gond* began to slip back into the high grass, the para following them slowly. Only the para stag remained, and it was getting almost too dark to see my sights properly, when suddenly up went his white flag of a tail and he bounded off into cover.

Five seconds later a great tiger walked right over the spot where he had been feeding.

He was passing to my right front and too far away for a shot in the bad light, so I ran forward as soon as he was hidden by the strip of high grass, passing through the sounder of pig which bolted in every direction, except one old boar who eyed me most unpleasantly, and scrambled on top of another anthill. The tiger was standing looking at me about eighty yards away. In the bad light my bullet went high and, instead of raking him forward, struck him in the back, so that he dropped roaring with, as I thought (having forgotten all about the wrong kind of bullet) a broken spine. On examination later I found that the bullet had travelled through the muscles up to the bone, but had not broken it. Eager to finish matters before the light went completely, I plunged into the strip of long grass, spent some precious minutes struggling through the mud and water, and emerged on the far side to find the tiger coming for me at a lurching run. I fired again, smashing his shoulder low down, but the bullet did not go on into the body, though he fell, and I closed in to twenty yards in the three-foot grass. He rose again roaring terribly and—I missed him ! (the bullet chipped the skin above his eye).

I then fired good and low and broke a hind shin. Down he went again and I retired thirty yards to recover my shaken nerves for a few minutes.

There was now but a slight glow of light in the west behind me, and when I went in again towards that shattering roaring, which reverberated to such an extent that I found it impossible to locate the tiger within more than ten feet. At fifteen yards a snarling, coughing black mass rose, only the teeth showing white in the darkness. I fired into it again and down went the gallant beast with a bullet through the other hind leg, though it did not touch the bone. I retired again. I did not know how badly the tiger was hit, he was in three-foot grass, and his roaring had in no way diminished : it simply was not good enough and I decided to leave him until the morning. My orderly had heard the uproar and was standing a hundred

yards away with a lantern, and we made our way back to camp, where I sat down and wrote a chit to H., asking him to bring out our only elephant in the early morning.

H. was out at sunrise on Lakshmi, and we went straight to the scene of action. The gallant beast was within forty yards of where I had left him and actually made an effort to charge, but toppled over within three yards, and I finished him. A grand tiger, immensely heavy with a very short tail, he measured 9 ft. 6 in. straight between pegs and 10 ft. on the curves: the "area" measurements of his skin are among the biggest recorded. He had been known for five years or more as a regular winter visitor to the preserve, and was said to have killed over a hundred buffaloes and countless *gond.*

In his death he had given me more thrills than I ever want again, and taught me never again to tackle one of his kind with the wrong bullet at any time, but above all in grass, on foot, and almost in the dark.

## Chapter XXV

# PERSISTENCE OF A WOUNDED TIGRESS: CHARGED ELEPHANT AFTER SEVEN BULLETS

By S. A. Vahid, I.F.S.
Divisional Forest Officer, Khandwa, C.P.

*Mr. S. A. Vahid, a C.P. Forest Officer, was charged by a wounded tigress, which turned back towards the beaters with whom the author was. Fortunately the author's elephant stood firm, but the repeated charges make thrilling reading. The author says though he has been charged by a she-bear when he was weaponless, and been on a stampeding shikar elephant with a wounded tiger biting into the pad, yet he regards the incident detailed here as his most tense encounter.*

I was once required to make shikar arrangements for an important visitor in the famous Banjar Valley Reserve, of Mandla District, C.P. My instructions were that buffaloes were not to be tied till a day before the arrival of the party.

Opinions differ about the advisability of tying-up in advance, but my experience is that everything depends upon the country in which one is shooting. Where game is not over plentiful, there is much to be said for tying-up in advance. The tiger gets used to finding kills in the locality and does not walk long distances. Anyway, a week was spent in locating tigers for our visitors, and it was noticed that a tigress was day after day patrolling one nala about two miles from the forest house.

The local shikaris—some of the finest in the C.P—had never beaten this area before, and they at once pronounced it as quite unsuitable for beating. I surveyed the whole country and came to the conclusion that it had all the requisites of a good beat. There was water within the area to be beaten, there

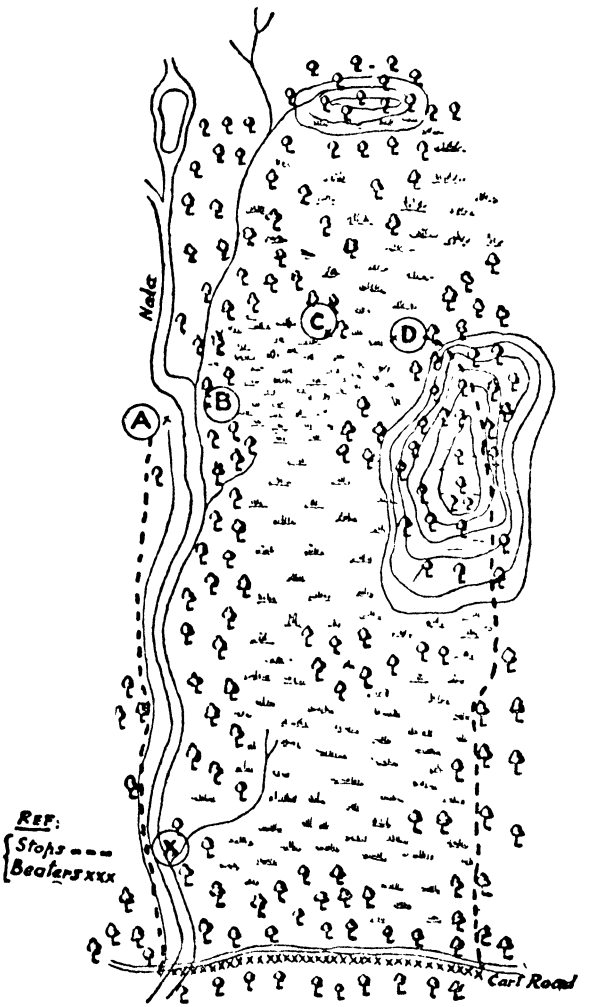
was thick cover, and a good probable line of retreat from the lying up place. Machans were tied ready and buffaloes were tied a day before our visitors were expected. Out of the ten tied, the only kill we had on the first day was in the nala mentioned above.

The party arrived at the rest house at 12.30 p.m., and at 2 p.m. we set out for the beat. About 3 p.m. everybody was in machans. The following sketch will give a good idea of the country we were going to beat.

On the eastern side of the nala, which flowed from north to south, there was a fringe of fairly dense forest about fifteen feet wide, while on the other side there were a few miserable trees dotted here and there on an open ground locally known as *maidan*. Adjoining the fringe of the forest along the eastern side of the nala, there was another *maidan* dotted with dense patches of forest and patches of tall grass often seven feet high. The kill was tied at X, machans were tied at A, B, C, and D. Along the east of the area to be beaten and north of the line of machans there was rising ground covered with dense forest. The dense patches of the forest in the area to be beaten were nowhere connected with the forests on the hillock, but the fringe along the nala extended right up to the hillock behind the machan. The tigress was evidently lying in one of the two pools about thirty to fifty yards from X in a shady, cool grove of jamuns. The likely line of retreat that the tigress was to take was through the narrow belt of forest along the nala to the hillock behind the machans; and the persons who were intended to get the tigress were put in machans at B and C. Those in A and D were there merely to serve as stops. Few stops were put along the edge of the *maidan* on the west of the nala, while along the hill on the east we had stops at regular intervals. The beat was to start from the cart-track, and was about half a mile long.

It has always been my practice to go out with the beaters whenever I am not shooting in a tiger beat. One learns about the habits of a tiger much more in a beat than sitting up in a machan; and given good and reliable stops there is much more to be done with the beaters. There is the possibility of a beat

going wrong in so many ways if there is nobody to control the beaters. So, after putting the visitors in the machans, I came back to the cart-track.




All beaters were lined up, and as soon as my whistle rang out the usual yelling and shouting and beating of the drums started.

We had three elephants with the beaters—one in the middle on which I was seated, and one on either end of the beat. The one on which I was seated—Sundermala—was staunch, the one to my right—Goharjan—was not staunch, and the one to my left was a " dark horse." Without these elephants one of us would certainly have been killed.

Five minutes after the beat had started, there were the usual agitated cries of monkeys and the alarm call of cheetal. Evidently the tigress was on the move. Hardly had we finished half the beat than a shot was heard. The beaters stopped shouting and made for the nearest trees at top speed, and they remained in the trees until reassuring words from me brought them down. I collected the three elephants together and waited for ten minutes.

The whole jungle was now quiet as a graveyard : not a leaf stirred. No signal was sounded from the machan. Slowly the beaters came down the trees. I distributed them in bunches of ten or so along the line of the beat. The three elephants were kept ahead of the beaters. On one was seated the shikari, and on the other my ranger ; I was on the third. We advanced slowly and cautiously, throwing stones ahead ; and occasionally would make a man climb a tree and have a good look round. Like this we must have covered the 500 yards of the ground in about an hour.

We were now about 100 yards from the machan. Suddenly I saw a patch of high grass shaking, followed by loud rustling. Before I had time to realise what was happening, a big, shaggy head with fierce eyes and ears cocked emerged from the grass and was fast approaching me. And before many seconds were over, the lithe and massive form of the tigress came into full view.

On seeing the three elephants she gave out a terrific roar. She looked round and decided to advance towards my elephant. Meanwhile, Goharjan, trumpeting fiercely, and lashing her trunk in the air, bolted towards my right, and little Bataya, the third elephant, followed suit on the left. It must have been a job for the beaters to escape being trampled. The *mahouts* were shouting and working hard to enforce obedience by pressing their

spiked iron weapons into the elephants' soft, fleshy parts behind the ears—but to no effect. The beaters were all scrambling back up trees as fast as they could, and shouting desperately. There was utter confusion all over, and meanwhile the tigress was fast approaching my elephant. This takes much longer to decribe than it did to happen! For the fraction of a second she stood with her back arched, hair standing on her neck, and ears cocked forward with every muscle taut and alert. I knew what all this portended, and fired—but missed her. My shot added more confusion to the pandemonium. Sundermala began beating her trunk and kicking the ground with her front legs, trumpeting all the time. Her *mahout* had by now got beyond the stage of speech and was trembling pitifully out of fright, and if anything trying to make old Sundermala bolt.

But Sundermala was now after blood, and instead of bolting she just swerved a little. Before I had time to appreciate what was happening, the tigress was in the air darting towards me. Luckily the elephant's swerving forced the tigress a bit to my right; her paw just touched the elephant's pad. Her warm breath was blowing in my face, her yellow fangs were projecting like tusks, her claws were extended fully and her steam-spitting jaws were fully opened.

More by instinct than by deliberation, I pointed by rifle towards her and let go. She emitted a deep, full-throated grunt and fell on the ground with a thud—a mass of impotent fury. I found afterwards that I had broken her back. She got up and retreated towards the covert. Hardly had she gone ten yards, and I had just time to reload, when she changed her mind and charged again.

It can well be imagined that with a wounded tigress emitting incessantly a torrent of grunts and growls, elephants stampeding and trumpeting, beaters screaming wildly and the *mahouts* cursing the seven generations of the elephants at the top of their voices, the atmosphere was not at all conducive to correct shooting. *The result was I missed.* But at this moment her courage failed her and the tigress retreated to the covert.

My *mahout* had by now recovered from his fright and

Sundermala had quietened down. I looked round and found Goharjan struggling amongst trees and the ranger lying flat on the pad to avoid the hurricane of branches, his turban lying all round; Bataya out of sight, and beaters still trying to climb higher and higher. After some time Goharjan was brought under control. The ranger picked up his turban, and after he had assured himself that every bone in his body was sound, I got him on my elephant. We held a war council for a few minutes and decided to leave the two unsteady elephants behind and to make for the grassy patch where the tigress had gone on Sundermala. All beaters were safely on the trees, but one shikari came with us on our elephant. Having filled our pockets with stones, we advanced slowly and cautiously, throwing them in front, and halting every two or three yards and looking round. The tigress was not in the grassy patch where she had gone in. We advanced a little more. A few moments of tense excitement gripped us, then a great dark object shot swiftly through the next grassy patch ready to charge the elephant. Sundermala stood firm, and next moment there was a volley, and a fierce grunt came from the tigress. She retreated into her covert. We threw stones and fired a shot. Nothing would draw her out again.

Meanwhile, I discovered that I had finished all my cartridges, so there was nothing to be done except to bring some guns from the machans. I went up to the machans and brought two shikaris on the elephant. A man was left on a tree. My enquiries showed that nobody from machans A, B and C had fired a shot, so the shot had evidently come from the most unlikely place, D. Anyway, fully equipped with guns and ammunition, we approached the covert in which the tigress was lying. We circled round her to make sure that she was there. From one angle we could just see her twitching her head, and not until we had put two more bullets in her was she finished. Sundermala approached her. There she was sitting at ease like an enormous hound with her big red tongue lolling out and with an expression of indifference to her fate, as much as to say " Do your worst." She had fought most gallantly for her life.

We had all collected by now, and trying to piece the various events together, we found that the tigress was not keeping to cover and had been trying to make for the hill on the right. A tiger in a beat will climb if it can. She appeared before D about 70 or 80 yards away. He fired but succeeded only in hitting her paw and that was why the tigress could not get a hold on the elephant's pad. In all, the tigress had seven bullets in her. Yet she was fighting till the last. I had gained some valuable experience about the gallantry and vitality of a tiger, at no cost except a scratched elephant pad and a ranger's torn puggri—and had learnt a lesson that when dealing with dangerous game, a good system of signals is essential.

## Chapter XXVI

# THREE BUFFALOES IN THE OPEN

By Stanley Jepson

Tense moments! What a wealth of memories the words may arouse in the minds of a keen shikari! However much one may argue that tense moments are a confession of error, in this imperfect world few people go big game hunting for any length of time without experiencing error and the resultant tenseness. The error may be somebody else's or it may be one's own—due to fatigue, carelessness, ignorance, etc.

Looking back over fifteen years in India and Africa, I can recall many occasions when possible danger to life or limb was the result of gross ignorance. There was that first Himalayan bear on a hillside, which was stalked from below to the accompaniment of so much noise over the stones that even now I do not know why the bear did not hear me—unless he was asleep or drunk! On this occasion the rifle was an old converted Martini Henry Carbine .303, taking one cartridge at a time. Quite a good weapon for deer, but for bear——! In spite of the fact that the rifle had seen many years of service, had been looted by the Boers at Spion Kop and recaptured by our forces (thus becoming a war trophy and a private weapon!), it was remarkably accurate. And it was certainly fortunate that the one shot through the shoulder got the heart of the bear, bringing down a flying ball of furry fury within two or three feet of the astonished young sportsman.

Then there was a bison—bison are fairly innocuous until you catch a Tartar that has been wounded! This particular Tartar waited for me behind a clump of bamboos with a wounded shoulder; and with his head up he reminded me at the time of the picture I used to see in boyhood on bottles of Bovril. I still

think of Bovril when I recall that bison. As he put his head down, he got another bullet between the eyes. But according to all the laws of shikar, I should not have " bumped him " at ten yards if I had gone more carefully and slowly.

But my most thrilling moments were concerned with an encounter at close quarters with three buffaloes—big fellows who may still be living, I hope—in the wonderful and almost primeval sal jungle somewhere between Bastar State and the coast of Madras. With youthful enthusiasm I was very keen to get a buffalo, though I was not at all experienced enough, or even a good enough shot probably, to merit this. I knew nothing about the " matador shot " and my knowledge of " vital spots " was certainly limited to heart and brain! I didn't even know a buff may circle on his tracks.

But youthful ardour had been stimulated by hearing two or three buffaloes swim over the river by which my tent was pitched, in the very early hours of the morning. At dawn we were up on their tracks—comparatively easy work, as there had been rain, the ground was all spongy and no one except a blind man could miss buffalo hoof spoor. There was no village shikari to give me wise counsel, and the party consisted of an orderly, an ancient villager who carried my water and tiffin basket, myself with a hard-hitting but really unsuitable magazine rifle, and an ancient guide who knew about six words of Hindustani; the rest of the conversation was carried on by his wild gestures and voluble Telugu of which I was completely ignorant.

We followed tracks for about four miles along the other side of the river through most beautiful country, full of magnificent herds of cheetal—one herd, I noticed, must have contained many hundreds. While we were travelling along an open park-like glade where the grass looked delightfully fresh and the stretch was devoid of trees except for bushes unworthy of the name, we " bumped the enemy." All three animals were lying down and jumped up on hearing or scenting us about forty yards away.

* * *

I can still see those three buffaloes, heads up, snorting angrily, and wondering who we were. Fortunately they stood stock-still; had they charged together they might have made a pretty mess of us, for there were no convenient trees and we were so encumbered with rifles, food, and water, etc., that we were not prepared for much sprinting. Also we were tired.

The next few seconds were exceptionally tense. The old guide on my right murmured "maro" (shoot), but the first thought that flashed through my mind was that even if I dropped one, the other two would probably come. This was what I wanted to avoid, as I felt quite certain that I should not be able to drop three. As a matter of fact, I felt fairly petrified at the angry attitude of these three animals. Looking back on this feeling, I am convinced that our steadiness saved our party from an unpleasant mess, for any attempt to turn round and run might easily have provoked a charge by the three of them.

After what seemed to be at least five minutes, but could not have been more than twenty or thirty seconds, the biggest fellow in the middle took two or three paces steadily forward. His massive head and sweeping horns were still up in the air, and as he came forward he lowered his head very slightly.

I had prayed for one buffalo. But the Fates had been too kind in their response. I did not know what to do with three buffs.

* * *

My rifle was raised, but I still did not want to fire while all three were so threatening—say that I had not the courage, if you wish. Glancing round over my right shoulder, I noticed an enormous rock about the size of a tank and much the same shape, about two or three hundred yards away. I calculated that, if the worst came to the worst, the party might all clamber on the rock—that is, if *we* got there first!

Some instinct warned me to move slowly. I did so backwards with rifle still raised; the others accompanied me. The man with the tiffin basket turned round, but I warned him in a

whisper not to do so. The three buffaloes had now moved forward a few yards and we had gone the same distance back very slowly.

It became evident that the tension could not be kept up till we reached the rock, and I wondered whether I ought to fire. I should like to know even now exactly what the perfect shikari (if he exists) would have done. "Kill the three buffaloes," you might say—easy to *say so!* And I had only five shots in the magazine before I should have to spend valuable seconds reloading.

The problem was soon solved for me. The middle fellow pulled up and then started off towards us again at a slow trot while the others stood still.

I fired between his eyes. He did not drop, but whirled round and lumbered off, much to my astonishment. The other two did the same, disappearing behind some bushes within a very few seconds and further down the glade re-entering the thick forest.

I heard the bullet strike and found two drops of blood on the grass. I can only conclude that having been somewhat shaken I fired hurriedly and too high, striking the tremendous boss of hard horn covering the forehead. This impact must have shaken the old fellow and turned him, though I should imagine it would not inflict any incapacitating wound.

The village guide grinned. My orderly took a long pull at his water-bottle and pretended to be unconcerned. The ancient man with the tiffin basket scratched one leg with the other and wanted to know whether we were going to follow them up.

We did so for some time, but they seemed to have moved completely away. Although we spent the rest of the morning searching, we lost their tracks over hard ground. They did not wait for us, as one is told buffaloes often do.

"That was bad luck," I said to the old shikari as we were returning to the camp.

"Wrong, Sahib," he replied. "This is your lucky day!"

"And why?"

"Very few men look three big buffaloes in the eyes for so long and come away safely," he replied with a wag of the head.

This was many years ago. Later, years of richer shikar experiences make me think he was right. Beginner's luck—of a kind.

# SECTION II

(By the Editor)

## Chapter XXVII

# THE MIND OF THE WILD

The adventures given in this book are so much the outcome of excitement that they will not shed much light on animal psychology. However, to understand even these incidents accurately a little study of the animal mind is essential and this will well repay the time so spent. The first general impression which is gained by people who come into close contact with wild animals is that their actions are, more often than not, the outcome of instinct rather than of reason or even of personal experience. The seven-eighths of the brain in which rests the subconscious mind would seem to be dominant in the case of wild animals. Inherited instinct is their sure and safe guide.

A little example may be given in the case of a baby panther, Miss Bimbo, which was kept for some months by my wife —a photograph is included in this book. Bimbo was found deserted with another cub when they could not have been more than two or three days old. The big cats will sometimes desert one or two out of a litter of three or four, because they realise they cannot suckle so many young. There are incidents in zoos, etc., of pantheresses and tigresses which will kill and eat one or two of their cubs. The Forest Officer, whose guard found the cubs, did his best to return Bimbo and her brother to their mother, and a guard was put on duty up a tree with the two cubs in a box to which was attached a string. When the mother appeared the string would be pulled and the cubs released. But in spite of long vigil the mother did not appear—so Miss Bimbo forsook the wild for the civilised (?) world. Her brother died, and an attempt was made to fly Bimbo to Whipsnade, but though Tata Sons' Aviation Department was willing to do this from Bombay to Karachi, Imperial Airways found they

could not break their own regulations. It was feared ladies in the plane might be nervous with a panther aboard—though Miss Bimbo was hardly as big as a cat!

This preamble is by way of emphasising that the panther cub's mother could have taught her nothing. Yet Bimbo had all sorts of jungle habits which were firmly fixed in her mind through inherited instincts. For instance, one favourite amusement was to drag her mistress's silk stockings (she had a liking for the best ones!) under a divan; she could easily have carried the stocking in her mouth, but *she dragged it and everything else backwards* after the manner of an adult tiger or panther dragging a kill. In spite of the fact that she had a dog to play with when very young, she developed the habit of moving about in exactly the same way as a tiger or panther in the jungle. For instance, she would never walk along the middle of a room but would take cover behind chairs, crouch down and slink along the side of the wall, make short and fast rushes from one piece of cover to another. On seeing a dog or any other animals when out for a walk, she would even as a small cub flatten herself immediately into the grass and watch. Afterwards she would stalk slowly forward in short, quick rushes, body low down on the ground. Her favourite toy was a small dog purse, and she would stalk this and pounce on it, gripping the neck in the approved panther style when killing a goat. She knew quite easily which were dangerous places when walking about the house, i.e., which places would have been dangerous if the house had been part of the jungle so to speak. She would peer round doors *always* before going through them, and would rush over open spaces and crawl quietly where there was "cover," i.e., furniture, etc. It was most amusing and enlightening to watch these jungle tactics applied to domestic environment.

Bimbo was an affectionate pet and most intelligent. She would come when called, would play with her claws held in, would stop biting on the command "no bite," and was taught to be clean much more easily and quickly than in the case of a puppy. When taken for a visit to the zoo, she stood, almost with hair on end, and replied to a big tiger's roars and bounces

with snarls and equally fierce gestures. After three months she could not exactly be described as a safe pet because her claws were so long. Although she was in no way vicious, she might have done damage unwittingly. She was accordingly presented to the Victoria Gardens' Zoo in Bombay, where she still recognises her former mistress and lies on her back asking to be tickled.

Thousands of other instances could be given of instinctive actions. There is, of course, the dog which circles round before sitting down in the drawing-room—because his forbears had to trample the long grass in order to make a comfortable bed. One of the most remarkable instances was experienced by the writer early in 1935, when in a C.P. block. Through the kind offices of Mr. S. A. Vahid, the D.F.O. at Khandwa, I was privileged to use a Conservator's elephant for a few days. It is, of course, next to impossible to hide a thing like an elephant in the jungle, but the nearness with which one could approach that most timid animal the sambhur (merely for photographic purposes, by the way), was a revelation. The sambhur is the most difficult animal to approach, and even Mr. F. W. Champion admits that he has spent years unsuccessfully trying to get really good photographs of a sambhur. On foot a near approach for photographic purposes is extremely difficult, generally impossible, and owing to the nature of the forest in which they live, the use of a telephoto lens is very uncertain of results.[1] There were no wild elephants in or anywhere near the jungle where I was, and the lack of fear in the sambhur's mind can only be ascribed to the fact that many many generations ago there were wild elephants and the sambhur ran wild with them. Their instinct, therefore, told these animals not to fear; personal experience might have told them otherwise unless their curiosity (always strong in the female !) overcame timidity to this extent. The writer was not equipped with a suitable camera for wild life

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd writes :—"I do not agree entirely with the idea that sambhur are (comparatively) so very difficult to photograph—by a single man, walking slowly, and in a manner appropriate to the jungle. The sambhur's sense of smell—at any rate in the dry season—never, to me, seemed at all acute."

photography, the lens focus being too short and the camera too small to get a satisfactory picture; but if he had had a better camera, he could have got some good photographs of sambhur.

* * *

Many sportsmen when discussing animal psychology have raised the question whether animals have a sixth sense. That is to say, have they something in their subconscious minds which warns them of the approach of danger which we human beings do not understand? Apparently the idea has gained ground through sportsmen noticing that directly they carefully raise a rifle and draw a bead on the object of their long and weary trail, then it darts away. The theory as put by Col. Glasfurd in his book, *Musings of an Old Shikari*, is that the evil intention of the hunter sends out some telepathic message which is not understood by human beings, but which registers on the highly sensitive (to danger) subconscious mind of the animal. Col. Glasfurd observes that one so frequently hears exclamations like, "You'd have thought he *knew* I had a rifle." On the other hand, when the sportsman has no rifle and no evil thought waves emanate, Col. Glasfurd suggests that he can approach much more closely. Mr. Champion has another explanation to offer. He thinks the missed chances of life seem to us to be greater and better than the others. The fish which gets away is bigger than the one which is landed. Now it should be noted that Mr. Champion never shoots—except with his clever cameras—yet he says that very often he stalks to within a certain distance of a wild animal, thinking as hard as he can, "All right; don't get nervous. I don't want to hurt you. Just let me approach a little nearer and take a photograph, and I will go away." Thus Mr. Champion has no "evil thought waves"; but he says he can get no nearer with a camera than he could with a rifle when he used to shoot.

* * *

My own theory is that what wild animals really fear is not the evil or the good thought waves, but the *attention of humanity* in any form, in the same way that a baby will be suspicious of the attentions of a stranger when he first comes into the room. And even the cleverest sportsman is probably

not capable of disguising his *interest* in the quarry he has marked down. This can be illustrated in the case of a herd of wild animals grazing—say, black buck or cheetal. A man appears, and the animals, if accustomed to seeing villagers, will watch carefully. If the man is obviously walking by the herd, they will permit him to do so unless he attempts to come too near. He may, in fact, walk within 300 or 400 yards, advancing at an angle. But let him alter his course to impinge on the herd, or let him stop to watch them through his glasses, and it is at once evident that he is directly interested in these animals. The animals will be suspicious and bolt. Mr. Douglas Gordon deals with this subject in his recent volume, *Wisdom in the Wild*, and gives instances in the case of birds. He says if you focus field glasses upon one gull on a seashore that bird exhibits signs of uneasiness and if the scrutiny is maintained soon takes to flight.

Whether animals possess a sixth sense or no, it is quite certain that jungle life sharpens their other senses to a degree which astonishes the human being. Granted that the sambhur has large bell-like ears, his sense of hearing is nevertheless always a source of admiration to those people who try and stalk him. I came across a very good example of this some years ago when sitting up with my wife for a panther over a goat. There was not much chance of the panther appearing, and as we had a long journey that night we decided to return at dusk. Shortly before that time, a slight movement was discerned in a little nala about a hundred yards from the tree. Inch by inch, with that extraordinary caution which marks all the deer, a sambhur stag walked out—after a long listening in order to ensure that he was alone. He strutted up and down, blowing very pleasantly, and came towards the goat—only about forty yards from our tree. When he was not looking, I raised a whistle to my lips in order to call my men half a mile away so that we could depart. My wife and I watched to see him gallop away. *He did not hear the whistle, which was blown loudly*; or at any rate he did not turn his head and give any evidence of hearing, but just after the whistle I *crinkled my shoes* and the noise of this leather brought his head sharply

round—and he galloped off at full speed. One can only assume that the louder noise was outside the range of his hearing, which must have been attuned to a lower scale than that of the human ear. I have been told that a motor-boat coming at full speed can approach very near to a crocodile basking on the shore, whereas a human footstep, a hundred yards away, will send him into the water. Spiders are said to be constantly making sounds and listening to sounds inaudible to the human ear. Mr. Baird, the sound specialist, has discovered that everything makes a noise which is registered by the sensitive television apparatus. He says that the human ear can catch only seven octaves of noise constituting from 30 to 30,000 vibrations a minute.

Mr. W. G. Adam, a Ceylon Honorary Game Warden, once sent me some photographs taken immediately after the firing of rifle shots above the heads of animals as an experiment. He says that steep hillside slopes seem to kill much of the sound of a rifle shot, particularly in the hot weather, while what is not dulled is so diversified that animals cannot place it. It is probable that in the case of animals which have not been shot at they do not associate noise of rifles with danger. The jungle is full of natural noise, such as falling of trees, thunder, etc., and I once heard of a man who sat up for a panther, and believe it or not, fired at it seven times and missed ! The eighth time that it came back, he got it—though the panther certainly deserved to get him. Tigers are supposed to clear out of a certain patch of jungle on hearing any rifle shots—a supposition based on the theory that a majority of tigers in places frequented by sportsmen may have been shot at some time or other. A photograph is given in this book of a tiger shot by the author one evening forty-five minutes after a bear had been shot by him in the same place (see Plate vii). There were three reports from a high velocity rifle, not to mention the noise made by the bear. The tiger's lying-up place was *probably* within a few hundred yards, but there was no shouting or other human noise—though a whistle was blown. Yet the tiger came to his kill.

While on the question of animals' senses, it is curious

how sportsmen and others differ on the question of whether tigers and panthers have keen scent. Col. Wood in his *Shikar Memories* says regarding the tiger that "the sense of smell is very acute. The ethmoidal sinuses in the tiger's nose are very large." But Mr. Champion comes to the conclusion that tigers and panthers have no more scent than is possessed by the human being. I carried out experiments with the panther cub which we kept, and having shown her a bone or piece of meat would dab it on the floor and so leave a distinct and wet trail, to the meat hidden under a carpet. If the panther did not see where it was placed, she was absolutely baffled and could not find it. She would search about and look very angry, whereas a dog would have found it straightway. Yet she would smell about in the same way as a hound does, as though she were following a trail. Altogether a baffling symptom. Mr. S. A. Vahid, a C.P. Forest Officer, tells me he has known of a tiger dragging his kill a long distance being unable to find it. He spent hours searching. An old Bhil shikari once said to me: "Sahib, God gave the tiger the finest sight and the finest hearing; if he had given him a fine nose also, no animals would be safe. That would be too much!" The wisdom of the wild!

* * *

Before leaving this subject of the animal mind, one curious symptom which is worth discussing is the question of hypnotism by one animal of another. Many sportsmen sitting in the jungle at night have heard tigers' roars followed by the bark of a sambhur. This duet keeps on so long that one is baffled to know why the sambhur does not clear out, seeing that God gave him an exceptionally fine set of legs. Is he paralysed by fear? Why does the tiger sometimes roar or whoof when he is hunting? Generally he is supposed to be perfectly silent, but I have heard him giving tongue when a sambhur was about, as many other people must have done. It is well known that acute fear acts as a real form of paralysis over the muscles. Does the tiger and the panther know all about this? Here is one incident extracted from a letter written to me by a Range

Forest Officer. "The other day the big tiger you saw killed two of my bullocks at an interval of only ten minutes and at four o'clock in the afternoon (this was in the monsoon) behind the —— bungalow. It's strange, isn't it, that the other bullock, only ten yards away, should not have run away when his companion was being killed before his eyes? I believe that the tiger by his roars, smell and presence exercises a hypnotic influence on all the animals he stalks, as otherwise many of them could run away, being more fleet than he is. Some years ago I saw a herd of chinkaras quite paralysed and immobile because a tiger had just been disturbed near them by my presence. I approached within five yards of the deer, but they were quite indifferent to my presence." This hypnotism can have a very real effect on the human mind also, even apart from the question of fear. Major Foran writes to me with regard to some animal fights which he had watched in Africa: "There are times, too—as no doubt you may appreciate—when I have become so absorbed in watching what was taking place before my eyes that all thoughts of photography or shooting were non-existent. One becomes spell-bound or immobile, brain and body. I have never been able to overcome this deep absorption in such circumstances, except on a few occasions; and that is a great pity."

I came across a somewhat similar instance in the C.P. quite recently, when a hungry tiger dashed out and seized a bullock out of a bullock-cart. The other bullock remained paralysed, while his companion was dragged off, though the driver fled. This was in the evening before dusk on a forest road.

It is also worthy of note that this sense of hypnotism apparently cuts both ways, and at least two of the contributors to this volume (Col. Etherton and Mr. Champion) stared tigers in the eyes at close quarters and were able to retreat while engaged in this "staring out" process.

* * *

No consideration of the animal mind would be complete without some mention of curiosity in animals—always much more marked in the female than in the male. In many animals

the more acute sense of caution overcomes this curiosity, but in many of the deer (especially the cheetal, four-horned deer, etc.) it is this sense of curiosity to see what the sportsman is doing that leads many of them to be shot, and provides a sound argument for giving animals like the cheetal a much greater measure of protection.

With regard to the general level of intelligence of wild animals in the jungle, it is extremely difficult to arrive at any conclusions so far as comparisons are concerned, because most observations are based on zoo or circus experiences which are obviously not normal. Dunbar Brander, who kept a tiger for some time, came to the conclusion that it was a somewhat stupid animal though clever in a very limited sphere, and certainly cats generally do not give any sign of being high on the list of intelligence. The Director of the New York Zoo, Dr. Reid Blair, is a great authority on animal psychology, and has classified the ten most intelligent animals as follows: Chimpanzee, Orang-outang, Elephant, Gorilla, Dog, Beaver, Horse, Sea Lion, Bear, Cat.

The elephant, he says, is never too old to learn, and one in his zoo made a habit of storing away buns on Sundays when visitors were numerous, to be eaten on Mondays or Tuesdays when they were not too numerous! The manner in which the elephant can be trained to stack and drag timber, to work on shikar trips, etc., is high proof of its intelligence. Dr. Blair thinks that bears are very conceited, willing to perform for no other reward beyond the applause of the audience! Bears certainly seem to reason like many other animals, for a Kashmiri shikari told me that he had found a bear, which a sportsman had shot the previous day, with the bullet wound covered with a pad of leaves.[1] Every animal knows that to leave a blood trail may mean a leopard or something else on its track. Mr. S. A. Vahid, I.F.S., once shot a tiger which, when found later, had plugged its own wound.

One of the most impressive things in animal mentality

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd says:—"Why shouldn't the blood clots have caused the leaves to stick to the wounds?"

is the metamorphosis which follows when wild animals cease to be hunted. Remove the fear complex (which is dealt with in detail in another chapter) and the change is remarkable. In the Kruger National Park and other non-hunting areas of Africa, lions behave in a way which shatters many of the illusions about their ferocity. Mr. E. V. Wells in his *Lions Wild and Friendly* gives some astonishing examples of this. He photographs lions by strolling up to them very cautiously and carefully, and sitting beside them. He says that on one occasion he wanted to move a lion's head so that it should appear between two branches. So he took a long branch from the ground and tickled the lion under the chin until it moved. He took his wife and children along on these photographic expeditions, and they were not alarmed. Movements have to be cautious and slow. Selous said: "If you meet a lion in the daytime it will stop, turn round, look over its shoulder, quicken its pace, again look to see where you are, get into a trot and away it goes. They are naturally timid." And Selous's experience of lions was unrivalled, and will probably be not again approached. Major Robert Foran says in a letter to me: "I took a film in 1929 (and sold well to Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer) of a herd of elephants in Rhodesia, often from a distance of thirty yards to twenty-five feet. I was right out in the open, with only one native boy to hump the machine, and not a gun anywhere near us. We might just as well not have been there. We walked about freely and took photos as we wanted them. We were completely ignored. This herd had never been shot at and did not fear man. It was all most interesting; but there was not a single tense moment."

And even the ferocious shark loses much of its reputation at the hands of Capt. William E. ("Sharky Bill") Young who has been hunting sharks all the world over for thirty years, and says in his book, *Shark! Shark!* that while the shark is the ocean's scavenger, it is the greatest of cowards. "Out of several hundred varieties only seven are man-eaters. Even these are not likely to attack unless maddened by the smell of blood. Most of them are easily frightened by a little hand-waving or splashing!"

## Chapter XXVIII

## HOW WILD ANIMALS ATTACK

The man who is charged by any dangerous animal, be it elephant, tiger, rhino, bear, etc., is not in the best position to describe the details of the attack. His one concern is in killing his enemy so that he may survive. Afterwards he may or may not remember exactly how the animal came, the noise it made, etc., but the chances are that the accounts of two or three people who were charged together might vary in detail. Nevertheless, it is a remarkable tribute to the *sangfroid* of most of the contributors to this book that they are able to set down the attack in careful detail. The reader should remember that the stories take much longer to tell than to happen. They are mostly over in a very few seconds.

Some principles in the experiences of victims of animal charges are at variance. Take the question of the amount of pain felt during a mauling. It is well known that pain, which is intended to act as a warning, has its limits ; and when those limits are passed, a blissful sense of anæsthesia comes over the nerve parts affected. Take the case of Mr. A. W. Strachan who lost his right arm and a leg while in the clutches of a wounded tigress. " I felt neither fear nor great pain while the tigress worried at my foot, and if my sensations were similar to those of a mouse caught in the clutches of a cat, the tender-hearted may be relieved to know that the victim does not suffer unduly," he writes. But strangely enough, the absence of pain applied only to the mauling by the beast. When a bullet from a friend's rifle seared through the same foot which the tigress was biting, he immediately felt " a red hot iron pass through." Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd, whose experience while going over a precipice in the grip of a sloth bear constitutes what the reporter would call

" a miraculous escape," says practically the same. His description contains the words " no pain and feel perfectly O.K.—extraordinary." In fact, not until he part clambered and was part pulled (by puggri) back to the cliff shelf, did he realise that he had been mauled. Even then he thought it might be bear blood until he found the holes in his leg and knew that he had been bitten through by those great teeth and slashed by the long and dangerous claws of the bear. Though he had to lie up for a long time, yet he was able to make his way down a nala, clean the wound, go forty miles on a charpoy to Betul and then " parted with a nice little cut of steak to the doctor."

Col. P. T. Etherton who had the probably unique experience of taking a ride on a stampeding elephant, with a wounded tiger roaring in his ear and also clinging to the elephant, says that the moments were far too hectic to allow of any appreciation of the situation. He remembers thundering by a tree and hearing the tearing noise—that was the tiger being brushed off—but the details of that wonderful escape are not clearly imprinted on his memory. Mr. H. J. C. Millett, I.F.S., a Forest Officer of much experience, must owe his life to the fact that he is exceptionally cool-headed. He realised that he could not follow the tiger which was charging him with his foresight; he held the rifle steady until the tiger's nose came on to the sight when he pressed the trigger—his was a single barrel non-magazine .600 rifle! Lieut.-Commander A. B. Combe had the nerve to seize the tongue of a lion which was attempting to kill him—his thirteenth lion, by the way.

On the other hand, a number of cases similar to those in this volume have been collected by Mr. Rawdon Malet, in his book, *Unforgiving Minutes*. Mr. Malet does not believe that maulings do not hurt. He holds the very plausible theory that the pain is forgotten, or overshadowed shall we say, by the other dominant impressions in the vivid excitement of the battle, so to speak.

If one talks to people who have experienced maulings, one is told that one main impression which remains is of the horrible stink from the breath of tiger or panther. I have heard this

on more than one occasion, and I am told that Mr. Maitland, the Forest Officer of the Melghat in the C.P. who was under a wounded tiger in a 1933 Christmas camp, for long afterwards had a very acute memory of the animal's breath.

Exactly how dangerous animals do become when they mean business may be learnt from a study of these articles. Each animal naturally adapts himself to the type of jungle in which he lives. The charging lion is said to be about the fastest on earth, coming at a terrific pace from about a hundred yards, though it may be more. Mr. Rawdon Malet deals with this matter in great detail, and holds that when riding lions it is unsafe to go within 200 yards—a rule which was apparently calmly broken by Mr. Blayney Percival who went after a lioness with a colt revolver, and describes what happened in this volume. Mr. Malet advises people who are charged to kneel or sit down as the animal will come so low that there is a better opportunity of raking him if one is also low.

Mr. W. G. Adam, the Hon. Warden of the Horton Plains Hunting Reserve in Ceylon, originally contributed a short article to my magazine series, explaining exactly how animals come. He put down his own impressions and opinions from twenty-six years' experience. This contribution was not exactly an "Encounter," but the following extract from Mr. Adam's article may be given here, with due acknowledgment :—

> "Sambhur use their horns against their own kind, also, as a rule, in their occasional moments of temper against men, but only, in either case, when the object of their wrath is face to face with them. Should it turn tail, their fore feet come into operation in an attempt to knock down and trample. Usually, the menace of a cornered sambhur means little to men. The beast comes up determinedly enough with his nose stretched before him, but the seeming charge is merely a wish to barge through, and it is his shoulder that will hit his enemy.
>
> "Pigs charge on sight only when their anger has been previously aroused. If they intend gratuitous damage in

the open, they usually circle doggedly half round their enemy before turning in with great suddenness to attack. The most wicked charge is carried out at a trot—that is when the beast intends to kill. As he nears his foe, his head is raised higher and higher and more outward, generally to the right, while the glare of his eyes leaves no doubt of his purpose.

"He comes up as though to pass his objective by a couple of feet, then, when almost at right angles, he jumps and swings his head inwards with great force, tending, not only to gore, but to knock his adversary off its legs. When a pig gallops to the charge, there is small desire to damage as a rule—it is merely a show of force calculated to instil fear.

"If, however, a man so charged cannot or does not move from the animal's path, the pig may jump at him with surprising agility from a range of some six feet. His fore feet strike the man on the shoulders, there is a crashing fall, and piggy trots on as if nothing particular had happened.

"Buffaloes are not unlike pigs in their attack. The one that comes up with the greatest show of force is never so murderously inclined as the more deliberate beast. The most vicious charge is the type that killed that great sportsman, the late Mr. Thomas Hylton. A wounded bull laid in wait for him in thick scrub beyond an open space. As Hylton approached, the bull charged slowly from a distance of about ten yards, holding his great head forward at an oblique angle, thereby covering the vital points with his ironlike skull.

"Hylton stood in deep mud and could not dodge, while his right and left barrels only took the beast in the mouth without instant result. The bull came on as though to pass his man by some two feet, then, at the correct moment, the huge horns swung inwards sending Hylton down with a horrible wound under the arm-pit. The bull pulled up with a slide at the same second, and finished off his victim by trampling, before falling dead himself.

" The worst type of buffalo is the one that walks towards his enemy first, then trots, and breaks into a blobbing canter at a few yards range. This beast may be known at almost any distance by the fact that, pig-like, he begins raising his head sideways and outwards, also generally to his right, when he first takes action, while the bloodshot wickedness of his eyes leaves no doubt of his intent.

" His lowness and deliberation gives him away easily to a rifle, but, judging from the damage done to a villager so assailed and who narrowly escaped with his life, if the charge is completed, the head is swung inwards just in the same manner as a pig's would be.

" The leopard, as generally acknowledged by jungle folk, usually attacks from his right-hand side. He approaches at a crouching glide, to make his spring from about three times the length of his own body, always intending to knock his victim down by weight. That a leopard is easy to shoot during his spring is correct, for the least wound makes him fall short, but dodging is questionable.

" An elephant, intending to do serious damage, thrusts his trunk out before him and so cocks his ears that they almost seem inclined to meet on his forehead, at the same time raising his head about a foot higher than its usual position.

" One point to remember with regard to charging elephants is that they appear unable to turn sharply to their right, so that, if a man dodges to his own left, he has at all events time to think. A knowledge of his inability to so turn is apparently the reason why an elephant almost invariably charges from somewhat wide on his right-hand side.

" It is a peculiar fact, as will have been noted, that nearly all the animals enumerated have a preference for attacking from the right, or clock-wise. Villagers, in their picturesque way, attribute this to jungle manners, in that a man's sword-arm must be given fair play by the strict commands of the deity who rules the forestman being the weakest creature in point of brute force. The ordinary unbeliever may be

allowed to doubt this, I think, and decide that, as nature made the majority of men right-handed, there is little reason why she should not have given wild beasts a like peculiarity."

In the case of tiger, panther and lion, it is well known that the majority of victims die from septicaemia. The claws of these carnivora are hollow and it is only to be expected that they should be a fine breeding ground for bacteria from putrescent meat, etc. It is the introduction of these germs into the wounds made by the claws that does the damage. A good instance of this was given me recently by a very helpful Forest Officer, Mr. S. A. Vahid, of Khandwa. One of his servants at one time was helping to unload a dead tiger from an elephant. The tiger's body came down somewhat unexpectedly and the dead tiger's claws slightly scratched the man's arm. He was told to go and clean the scratch, but apparently did not do so, and some days later it was evident that inflammation and septicaemia had set in. Eventually the arm was amputated, the guard exclaiming with somewhat dry humour "*Are are.* If the dead tiger does this what would the live one do!" There was another instance of a Divisional Forest Officer in the C.P., who kept two tiger cubs. They were friendly little things, but at the age of three months one accidentally scratched him. The ultimate result of this was the sahib was in hospital for several months.

The Rev. Bull, who tells in this series of a man-killing elephant, at one time offered to collect for me a series on the "death roll of shikar." It was thought, however, that the subject would be rather too grim for magazine reading. That experienced hunters do take extraordinary risks through getting too accustomed to dangerous animals, is well known. In his well-worth reading book *Sport and Travel in East Africa* (compiled from the private diaries of The Duke of Windsor when H.R.H. the Prince of Wales), Mr. Partick R. Chalmers quotes the case of the two brothers of Lord Grey of Fallodon. Charles Grey, who recovered from his severe wounds, was killed by a wounded buffalo, and it was a coincidence that George, his brother, had been killed by a lion near Nairobi in

1908. Commenting on this, Mr. Chalmers says: "Both the brothers had shot big game all their lives and were experienced in the risks attaching to shikar. . . . Possibly, if a man treats big game shooting as a ruling passion, lion or tiger, buffalo or leopard will laugh last."

Space does not permit of an analysis of how animals attack each other, nor has the author sufficient knowledge on this point. Such a subject might have been included though it is considered it would probably give the public a wrong idea of the generally happy relationships of wild animals with one another. This chapter might well be closed, however, with a collection of a few opinions on what are to man, the hunter, the six most dangerous animals. It should be remembered that each shikari is bound to be influenced unduly by his own experiences; and probably very few men indeed, if any, can have the necessary number of experiences in order to form any adequate opinion on the matter.

Conclusions which may be reached from statistics of fatal maulings are not really a true guide. In certain parts of India the death roll by tigers may be higher than the death roll from, say, rhino or buffalo. This merely means that tiger hunting is a more popular form of sport; while rhino are more scarce. Major Robert Foran, in an article contributed to my paper challenging the right of the lion to be called the king of beasts, placed animals in the following order of danger when hunted: 1, Elephant; 2, Tiger; 3, Buffalo; 4, Leopard; 5, Rhino; 6, Lion. "All my evidence, supported by that of a great many modern hunters and some of the real old-timers, points to the definite conclusion that the lion is an arrant fraud," he says. He believes that the dangers of lion hunting have been greatly exaggerated over a period of years so that the tradition of the animal's ferocity has grown up. In support of this view, he sent some rather striking photographs of a bow and arrow expedition from America which successfully hunted lion with nothing more deadly than these primitive weapons.

Recently a notice was issued to tourists in the Kruger National Park of South Africa by Colonel J. Stevenson-Hamilton,

the Chief Game Warden, which read: "Lions, especially on the first occasion on which they have seen a car, are inclined to be a little suspicious of it and sometimes agitate their tails—a sign of excitement—or even show their teeth. Once they are satisfied all is well, it is possible to take almost inconceivable liberties, *provided one does not leave the car* and it is the warmer part of the day.[1] In the early mornings and late evenings the animals are less ready to allow themselves to be approached. Nevertheless, it must never be lost sight of that the potentialities of this animal to do damage on occasions are very great. While some visitors display unnecessary alarm on meeting him at close quarters, others again show the most curious rashness."

It should be borne in mind, of course, that this notice refers to unhunted lions, and hunted lions seeking revenge are a very different pair of shoes. However, Major Foran was a *hunter* and had shot lions as well as many elephants and other animals.

It is curious how hunters' opinions vary on this matter. Stigand places the lion first, but this was with reservations; then the elephant, rhino, leopard and buffalo. He was careful to state that danger was largely a matter of circumstances, environment and persecution. It was a distinctly qualified statement of his order of priority in danger. When considering the lion, it must be remembered that many other hunters have also placed him first on the list and it must be borne in mind that more people are killed by lions than other beasts, though as previously mentioned no safe deduction can be made on this score. Mostly mortality is due to the victim's own stupidity and to other circumstances. Again lions are carnivora and elephants, rhino, and buffalo are vegetarians. When disturbed a lion is more likely to bolt than attack; whereas elephant, rhino and buffalo more often do the reverse. A tiger will

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd writes:—"My experience is over thirteen years 'bygone,' but it *was* very definitely that *until the human occupants were noticed*, a motor car seemed to be regarded by even shy wild animals as something not to worry about. Aeroplanes, on the other hand, nearly always seem to put African animals to flight. Is this *noise*, and *un*usual aerial apparition, or subconscious memories of pterodactyls!"

readily attack an elephant when at bay; a lion will not—surely a fair comparison in courage. Tigers are generally alone or with mates; lions are more often than not in prides.

Mr. Rawdon Malet in his *Unforgiving Minutes* gives the following order of danger: Lion, Tiger, Elephant, Buffalo, Leopard, Rhino, Bear and Bison. He says he places the lion above the tiger because he charges more often when not hunted. He does not mention the fact, but so does the sloth bear: any Indian villager would rather meet a tiger than a bear. But the bear's charge is due not to courage but probably to a blind sort of stupidity or hysteria. He charges generally when startled by an intruder at close quarters and not when he sees a human being approach from a distance.

Mr. Malet further says that he has placed the lion and tiger before the elephant partly because the mortality of their victims seems to be higher owing to the many deaths from blood poisoning. Mr. Malet also points out with truth that the female of the species in lions is more deadly than the male. "She charges more readily; she is more likely to force her charge home." And Capt. Conyers Lang, in his remarkable book, *Buffalo*, relates how he nearly lost his life through neglect of the rule to take the female first when he found a pair of lions.

Taking men of wide experience (though in some cases the experience may be heavily weighted to one continent), Selous also placed the lion first; while Cunningham and Tarleton bracketed the lion and the elephant. The elephant is given pride of place by Neumann and Sir Samuel Baker.

The opinion of Mr. Dunbar Brander on this matter is well worth studying. He says: "Most of the works dealing with the subject have been by men with African experience. Indian writers have taken the tiger for granted and his claims have not been pressed. Both the elephant and the buffalo are harder animals to kill or knock down than a tiger, although they present an easier target. I have been told on good authority that a bullet placed in the head of a charging elephant will almost invariably stop or divert him. Both animals are very

large and have nothing like the powers of concealment possessed by the tiger, and thus, to a large extent, the danger of a surprise attack from a few paces is eliminated. Moreover, when it does come, it is comparatively slow and admits of an active man having some chance of avoiding it. No such chance exists with a tiger. The method of following up wounded elephants and even buffalo mentioned by Selous and others, if adopted with tiger, would entail certain death. . . . The most dangerous performance in the world which a sportsman is called upon to do, is to follow up the trail of a wounded tiger."

In the series of Encounters published in this volume, a careful analysis will not take one much nearer the solution of this problem. It must be remembered, of course, that the majority of the incidents are from India. Therefore, any conclusion is bound to be biassed. But a comparison of the elephant and the tiger incidents tends to show that experience has taught the wild elephant to dread and hate mankind just as much as the domesticated elephant loves its mahout. Apparently by taking the initiative and charging in the manner experienced by some of our contributors, the elephant hopes to drive away his enemy. The tiger seems to act more from revenge.

The pig is absent from the above lists owing to the small number of men who are killed by pig. No one disputes the courage of the mighty boar. He will come out and charge when he knows exactly what is coming to him. And even the tiger will give him a wide berth.

Regarding the leopard, there is good reason for placing him near the tiger, though many young sportsmen who try their prentice hands, or rather their light rifles, on leopards may not realise the fact. " The tiger is a gentleman but the panther never," an old *Bhil* shikari told me once, and he was right. The panther has amazing vitality, and though its teeth may be smaller than the tiger's and its weight may be less, yet its claws are just as septic (probably more so owing to its habit of eating intestines and other foul matter). And the panther is a much smaller mark and therefore more difficult to hit. Being smaller,

it can take cover probably more readily than the tiger and its camouflage is certainly more effective. On the other hand, its weight is such that a man may be able to stand up to a small panther, though this is quite unimaginable in the case of a tiger with its four to six hundred pounds of bone and muscle.[1]

However fascinating this topic may be from an academic point of view, no fair-minded shikari could ever be dogmatic. The order of danger will remain one of those debatable subjects on which a group of sportsmen could always get up a good club discussion—without reaching any conclusion.

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd writes :—" There is a reference to *weight* of the tiger. At the moment I cannot recollect having *really* weighed a tiger, so am going on other people's figures. Rowland Ward's *Records* show some ' outside ' weights, even in one case of 700 lb. ! But I am inclined to think that if accurately weighed, even a ten-foot tiger would (even if very massive), seldom exceed 500 lb. I would put the average ' big ' tiger of the C.P.—say 9 ft. 6 in.—at an average weight of 425/450 lb."

## Chapter XXIX

# THE FEAR COMPLEX OF THE WILD: WHY ANIMALS ATTACK

The publication of the series of picturesque and exciting incidents among sportsmen and others, such as are included in this volume, may very easily lead to wrong conclusions being formed in the minds of people who have never moved about the jungle. Already such false impressions must be deeply imprinted on the popular imagination through the production of a number of jungle films. Such films are generally filled with entirely fictitious incidents, carefully and cleverly engineered or faked in order to meet the purposes of the film story, and they present entirely false values to the public regarding the life of the wild. Even the selected incidents in this volume, though they are true, may unwittingly create the same wrong impression unless the underlying principles are examined.

The animals' actions in these incidents were governed throughout by the dominant fact that they were being hunted. Even if they did not know that they were being hunted, or as in the case of Mr. Champion's encounters they were not being hunted at all, animals have learned through generations of experience to associate man with hunting. "From my own experience of many trips of Asia and Africa," writes Major M. C. Maydon, "I know of only one authentic case of unprovoked attack of big game on man." That may be an exaggeration (especially in cases concerning sloth bear, etc.), but it contains a general principle. Major Maydon had a narrow escape from a fierce Malaya s'ladang which made an unprovoked attack. But who knows? The unprovoked attacker may have had experience of man the hunter and narrowly escaped with its

life on some previous occasion—though Major Maydon points out that the head was all lacerated and gory and it must have been having a fierce fight with another bull and lost its temper.

Every sportsman knows that the one desire of all wild animals is to give man as wide a berth as possible. The average reader might spend weeks walking through well-stocked jungles in Africa or India without seeing very much. True, there was the extraordinary case related by Mr. A. Wimbush, I.F.S., of a tigress which was found under an office table in a forest bungalow one evening at 7.30 p.m. So abnormal was this case that Mr. Wimbush and his companions went to look for the pidog or jackal which they expected to find. This tigress was a very emaciated animal, measuring 8 ft. 2 in., and had a bullet wound full of maggots in her stomach and a badly lacerated body.

Before considering the relationships of animals with mankind as at present, it might be helpful to examine the relationships of animals with early man. The picturesque fancies of poets and painters have done a good deal to spread the illusion that nature is always red in tooth and claw. At times she may be—but only out of sheer necessity. Some useful evidence has been recently gathered by Dr. Walter Hough, curator of anthropology of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, in connection with a study he has been making of the origin of domesticated animals. In certain isolated parts of the world, he says, explorers are still finding " peace zones " which are remnants of this original " Eden." " The fear that is engendered in animals by happenings out of the ordinary," says Dr. Hough, " is a protective device. Where, for a period of undetermined length, animals are not subjected to fear, the protective device is obliterated, becoming a useless function. Many instances of this have been observed, and their occurrence is noted as extra-normal by believers in the ' tooth-and-claw ' order of nature. Observers in new countries have recorded with surprise the lack of fear by animals."

Good examples of the protective fear complex being removed are to be found in places like the Kruger National Park and

other sanctuaries where hunting is forbidden. In a very few years, these animals cease to regard man as their enemy, and may be observed at close quarters without fear of an attack. " Try shouting before shooting " says one notice in the Kruger National Park. Another remarkable example came to the notice of the writer recently in a photograph of a wild sambhur being fed by hand by a party of motorists. These sambhur live in the jungle of an Indian State in the north of the Bombay Presidency, and the Maharajah has constantly fed them at a certain hour of the day. From coming up for grain, etc., by the roadside, they are now being trained to feed out of hand, returning to the jungle later. And the sambhur is probably one of the most timid of all animals, seeking the dense protective shade of thick forests.

It was this spirit of tolerance and amity rather than mastery which actuated our forebears in the distant past in Asia, where domestic animals originated. Dr. Hough says : " The adjustment of tribes of men and animals is also noted. The announcement of ' plenty of game ' is not inconsistent with the presence of population—that is, of natives whose predilections and needs are not those of races called enlightened, who are only satisfied with extermination of fauna. The above leads to the generalisation that domestication is not the province of cruel and fear-engendering men. Domestication came about in zones of peace and was accomplished by peaceful men through kindly methods. The coming together of such fortuitous circumstances as animals suited for domestication and men of the peaceful, patient type undoubtedly was found in Asia, where our domestic animals originated."

* * *

Now take the relationship of animals with one another. Many species run happily together, and if and when the males fight they do so for a more sensible reason than those which actuate *homo sapiens* in his wars. Old males fight for the mastery of a herd and over the attractions of some of the females. Carnivora hunt and kill because they have to, by

sheer necessity. They kill swiftly, cleanly and probably almost painlessly, before the victim has much time to realise what is happening. Cultivated cruelty is out of their line. There are exceptions, of course. One Bombay sportsman some years ago had an experience of a tigress in Khandesh which ate buffalo calves without killing them. He found one of his buffaloes with its hind legs eaten but still alive, and no marks on the neck—a very abnormal thing. The only similar instance of which the writer has heard is of a tiger which, driven by hunger, took a meal out of a live elephant's hind-quarters—presumably because the tiger could not kill the elephant. Sportsmen with experience of Africa will vouch for the statement that when a lion is not hunting, the other animals seem to know, and they allow him to pass quite near or even through the herd without fear. There are occasions, of course, when animals or cattle will be killed and not eaten, and probably this is due to a young tiger or a lion which is either exulting in his prowess or is demonstrating, so to speak, for the benefit of its young.

Jungle tribes in India who live within the sound of tigers' occasional roars, who see occasional incidents of cattle-lifting or even man-killing, who know the full strength of the striped monarch of the jungle and what he could do, fear him much less than the average townsman who has never made the acquaintance of a wild tiger. One must also allow for the fact that the tiger is invested with occasional miraculous powers by village superstition: a man-eater may be haunted by the spirit of any human being he has killed. So that all things being considered one would expect these people to be well scared of tigers, but the reverse is the case, and among the Bhils and Gonds, etc., small boys and doddering old men can only be restrained with difficulty from "falling in" for a beloved tiger beat. Says a Range Forest Officer in Khandesh, writing to the author:—

> "The nobility of the tiger is well realised by the jungle tribes here, who while wandering about the place are never afraid of a wanton attack by a tiger; though for a lone man

there is always some amount of fear for a bear or panther. I have several times experienced this nobility, and on three occasions in my solitary rambles have come across him face to face when he has bounded aside to allow me to pass. The element of fear was actually absent on the third occasion, for from the former two occasions I knew that an attack would not occur. You may attribute this attitude of the tiger to anything, but I certainly attribute it to his nobility, for man is but a puny creature compared to the enormous strength he exerts.[1] I have several times come upon his fresh tracks on the paths, and I realised that hearing our footsteps he had silently given way. The toll of the jungle is only told when the tiger is hunted, and every true sportsman must agree that he must be given a fighting chance to 'kill or be killed.' "

In the same letter is a reference to the fact that the tiger is beneficial to mankind in the forests by killing off old and useless male buffaloes, etc., and even by helping in forestry! He writes: "In the current year's plantations of teak, I had one made near the nala which tiger usually haunt. The seedlings in the plantation are vigorous, due to the absence of cattle, while the plantation near the plains where there is no danger from the tiger were badly trampled by stray cattle."

Broadly speaking, the attacks on sportsmen given in this volume may be divided as arising from three motives, all rooted in a protective fear complex. It is found that these hunted animals will attack:

1. To defend their lives or out of revenge when dying;
2. To defend their young or their mates;
3. To defend their food.

The majority of the incidents in this volume come under the first heading and are due to the fact that tigers, etc., were not

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd says:—"I don't think the tiger is noble or magnanimous. I myself have called him a 'gent,' but it is only because he is naturally a more timid animal than most other felines. Unless more or less forced out, he prefers the line of least resistance."

dropped by the first shot. Mr. Champion's encounter with a tiger on a kill at a distance of five yards is illuminating. Neither Mr. Champion nor the tiger could retreat rapidly, and the tiger was defending his food. Instinct taught Mr. Champion and his Garhwali orderly to "freeze," staring the tiger in the eyes. They then moved backwards slowly. It is probable that any sudden movement or turning tail to run might have resulted in Mr. Champion's death, as the pair were unarmed. There are numerous cases where tigresses especially have demonstrated that they charge not only in the defence of their young but of their mates.

Tigers will also demonstrate on occasion, but the consensus of opinion seems to be that this is more in the nature of showing off in front of the female, rather than any deadly idea of the revenge which seems to obsess the feminine animal mind. Colonel Wood in his *Shikar Memories* records a tigress advancing on the bungalow he had occupied the night before, thirsting for revenge for the death of its mate. I had a little experience with a pair of panthers which demonstrates this difference. During a little beat for a panther in the Western Ghats in 1934, a pantheress came out of a nala and was shot. My wife, a friend, and I, with two or three villagers were seated by a small bush, and turning round one minute afterwards found a very big panther (which must have been over 7 ft. long, and had previously killed a full-grown cow) standing on the other side of the bush a few paces away, calmly watching his mate being murdered! With one *Wough* he turned tail and got away before a shot could be fired, disappearing in the jungle. The party was on the ground, and if he had sprung there would have been painful results. He *might* have sprung on a solitary sportsman, but even this is somewhat doubtful.

Captain C. R. S. Pitman's experience with elephants is very great, as might be expected in the case of a Uganda Game Warden. In his contribution to this volume he shows that a herd of elephants is certainly capable of team work in their desire for revenge—or, shall we say, for safety through taking the initiative and killing the enemy. He took a passing shot at a

big bull elephant and pandemonium ensued. He noticed the whole herd following up their tracks, for all the world like a pack of hounds after a fox. They nosed their way along individual tracks *led by a large cow*—the revenge of the feminine mind! They really meant business, and only because they had not got Pitman's wind were they merely following on his tracks and had to go slowly. When they caught sight of Pitman—which must have been close, for the average elephant cannot see much more than a hundred yards—they gave an ear-splitting trumpet and hurled themselves *en masse* at him. Pitman was able to give the leader of the charge a .450 bullet point blank, which dropped it instantaneously, and he thinks a small rifle would not have given this result. The difference between life and death may lie in this instantaneous result.

Col. Glasfurd's experience with a bear is an instance of a determined charge made to protect the cub.[1] What has been said above about the carnivora giving man a wide berth does certainly not apply to a sudden surprise encounter with a tigress or pantheress with young. Villagers fear bears more than tigers, and for good reason. There is nothing very *slothful* about the bear when he gets going, but he has a habit of sleeping in the daytime in long grass and may easily be stumbled on unawares. He seems to possess a short temper and poor eyesight, so that a certain hysteria causes him to charge. In fact there is a fairly good chance of his doing so out of funk. I have heard that if one stands upright, shouts loudly, and waves one's arms about, a charging bear will turn off—though I have never tried it. The Bhils say that if you whack a bear over his nose (which is certainly the most sensitive part) with a lathi or bamboo, he will always turn. I once heard two bears charging in Khandesh. They had done a lot of damage and scalped two men, and the villagers offered to " stop " them, i.e. scout for them in the early morning and surround them with beaters. This fine old couple were

[1] Col. A. I. R. Glasfurd says :—" No. I don't think it was a determined charge to protect her cub, but a fear + hysteria × cub-protection complex—and fear of getting ' boxed up ' in her cave. I was bang in her way, so she had no option. She was bent on getting away."

being driven up a hillside, and when about 500 yards away, they turned round and charged through the line of beaters. Even at that distance the noise was terrific and unforgettable—a sort of grinding of teeth, howling and snarling, all at the same time. I should think, without any exaggeration, the din could have been heard for a distance of a mile and a half on that quiet hillside, and the first impression I got was that some piece of farm threshing machinery had got out of gear and was "racing." None of these beaters was hurt, as the bear passed over them, but one or two got bruises by climbing up trees too hurriedly and falling down again!

In the same locality, by the way, the forest ranger quite recently came on a three-fourths eaten body of a sloth bear with marks of a big tiger all around. Apparently the bear had stumbled on the tiger while he was feeding, and the tiger had killed chalu and eaten part of it. I have never heard of this happening before, except that Col. H. S. Wood in his excellent book *Shikar Memories*, says once in the Cachar Hill he came on the droppings of a tiger which contained the hairs of a bear.

This chapter cannot be closed without a review of that abnormality the man-eater. Seeing that one cannot question the motives of a man-eater, we shall probably ever remain in the dark about this perverted taste which in forest areas leads to such terrible fear. Such regions are not linked up with the news-gathering organisation which exists in other parts of the world, with the result that mankind very seldom learns the full toll that is taken. Apparently every tiger is allowed one or two "free" men before he is classified as a man-eater, as he may not have deliberately hunted these people. I have come upon deserted villages on the edge of Bastar State in the Madras Agency, where apparently man-eaters have been responsible for the migration. Certain areas of Central India are well known as prone to producing man-eaters, and at one time the Bombay Government appointed one sportsman "tiger slayer" to order, in order to reduce the number of tigers.

This is not the place to discuss the *raison d'être* of man-eaters,

but it may be observed in passing that it is certainly not safe to assume they always arise from inability to hunt due to wounds or old age. A man-eater which was shot in 1934 by Capt. Abbott after it had accounted for nearly thirty victims, mostly women, was found to be in fine condition, fully grown and quite without wounds. Apparently when once the tiger or lion gets the taste for sweet human flesh, nothing else will satisfy it, and it turns to the easiest quarry of all, mankind—or probably womankind, not because of any preference for feminine flesh but probably because women are more frequently found alone cutting grass, etc. How the taste is first given to the healthy tigers is purely a matter for conjecture, and one theory is that a man-eating mother has conveyed the taste to cubs.

Owing to its ability to climb and its probably greater cunning, etc., a man-eating panther can be the worst scourge of all. Happily these abnormalities are rare, and rarer still is the man-eating hyena, though there was a case, I believe, in the Bombay Presidency many years ago. A man-eating tiger or a panther is a cowardly being when compared with the normal animal, and an experience of Mr. George, the Divisional Forest Officer of Hoshangabad, C.P., bears this out. I have tried to induce Mr. George to send his account for this book—but, like most Forest Officers, he is a most modest man. The description was published, however, in Mr. Rawdon Malet's book, *Unforgiving Minutes*. Mr. George was actually carried off by this tiger, but rescued by his Gond orderly, who beat it off with the butt end of the rifle. The whole of the way back to camp, the tiger followed the pair, and the Gond orderly had a lively time helping back Mr. George and occasionally returning to beat off the tiger. He received the bronze Albert medal, and land, a cart with bullocks and a monetary reward from the Government. His name was Veladi Sama, of the Mudwai village in the Sironche range.

Only one incident in this volume deals with a man-eater, and that was rather a mysterious affair. The man-eater was neither tiger nor panther, and one can judge of the surprise in the cold weather of 1928 in the Jhansi District when a lion was discovered

to be prowling around. My inquiries into the matter through the Gwalior Forest Department show that the late Maharajah had imported four pairs of lions into his State. But the experiment failed and most of them turned into man-eaters. One of these must have gone over Datia border into the Jhansi District. Obviously not being used to "local huntin'" these animals turned man-eaters; and the particular experience of the baby who was carried away and rescued was very extraordinary.

Probably the most epic description of man-eating lions is contained in that well-known book, *The Man-eaters of T'Savo*. Captain Livesey recently sent me an article containing experiences with man-eating lions in Maccua or the hinterland of Portuguese Mozambique. He was in search of adventure—and he got it. His remarkable article told of lions which travelled twenty to thirty miles in a night with the deliberate intention of killing people. At one place forty-five villagers were eaten within a month, and he had proof of lions sitting down on the doorstep while people were in the huts inside. Capt. Livesey thinks that the experiences of the man-eaters of T'Savo *pale before what still goes on in this part of the country*. If the actual numbers of human beings killed by lions in Africa were known, he says, it would astonish the world. The man-eaters romp the countryside in bands of several animals and—what is most astonishing—they are not regarded as exceptional individuals of their species but as the normal lions of those parts. The reason for this he gives as the shortage of game, so that lions have no other food. He says:—

"Along the Portuguese coast there is a big population and little game. The villagers are unarmed, and of a poor and timid race, so the menace of the man-eater goes unchecked. If anyone wants to hunt a different kind of lion to the picture-book type, let him go in and free the Maccuans of their scourge. It is as terrible to-day as it was then. But they will not make a big bag. I never got any of these man-eaters, though I have shot the normal, game-eating lions elsewhere. The presence of man-eaters is welcome enough for a time, and there is plenty of fun in hunting them up—but after a few weeks of it one begins

to appreciate their diabolical cunning, and the sudden disappearance of friends among the native porters gets one on the jump, so that one is glad to move on and out of their area. It got on my nerves, and I was glad to get out of the man-eaters' hunting grounds."

Man-eating tigers have never been known to be as numerous or as daring as the above. They take occasional people here and there, but it is rare for them deliberately to go into villages. The man-fearing complex seems to be removed completely from the hunting man-eating lion, but to remain somewhat in the tiger.

## Chapter XXX

# AN APPEAL FOR THE PRESERVATION OF WILD LIFE

There is nothing selfish or incongruous in the idea of sportsmen taking up the preservation of wild life. They are in the best position to do so and in India and Africa have always supported these movements—people who spend leisure hours in the jungle soon become very keen on the preservation of the wild.

Were the Taj Mahal at Agra to be allowed to fall into ruins, or to be destroyed by vandals, a cry of indignation would arise from north to south and east to west of the Indian Empire and of the world. But—the hand of man could re-create this structure. Yet several equally beautiful works of the Creator, rare species in the rich and varied fauna of India, are threatened with complete extinction and the hand of no man can re-create them. No howl of indignation arises. As the years go by, people seem to grow apathetic to the need for some action to preserve India's fauna for posterity.

There is little need here to recapitulate the evidence which is available on all sides. Trained observers have described the position province by province and the observations of these forest officers have been published from time to time. Some of these observers have gone so far as to say that species of animals, such as the Indian antelope (blackbuck), etc., which frequent non-forest areas, are doomed to extinction, and that practically nothing can be done to save them. Already their numbers are only a small proportion of what they were ten or twenty years ago.

Few people who have any personal knowledge of how game is wantonly slaughtered in the jungles of India will refuse to agree that protective measures are long overdue.

In these days of cheap rifles and cheaper guns, India should take to heart the lesson of South Africa, whose gameless veldts are now a sorry contrast to what they were some decades ago when many kinds of big game were abundant. Mr. F. W. Champion, the Deputy Conservator of the United Provinces, describes the position in ordinary non-forest areas—comprising eighty per cent. of the Province—as "appalling." He says the vast increase in gun licences in recent years, combined with improved transport, has caused a drain on the wild life of the United Provinces which "can only end in complete destruction." Inside United Provinces Reserved Forests he finds the position generally satisfactory, though with marked decreases in the numbers of certain animals.

Any action taken is bound to vary in accordance with local provincial conditions, which are so different in various provinces that one standardized ordinance for India would be unworkable. Take the case of tigers. Suggestions have been made for elaborate rules for the protection of tigers in particular. But this might be undesirable in some parts of India where nature's balance of game has been disturbed, and the tiger finds it too difficult to get his food out of the forest, whereupon he turns to cattle-lifting or even to the easiest quarry of all—man himself. General Burton in his recent *Book of the Tiger* tells of parts of India many years ago where it was doubtful at one time whether man could survive because of the depredations of the king of the jungle. Had it not been for the efforts of European sportsmen in killing off tigers, large areas of cultivated land would have been reclaimed by the law of the jungle. Forest officials have to consider very carefully this question of "balance of game." In her ruthless and seemingly cruel manner, Nature seems to have provided "dangerous game" like panthers and tigers to keep down herds of deer and other grazing animals, which if unthinned would become an unbearable nuisance to the cultivator and his crops. The tiger will kill every four or five days, so that the number of animals taken by even one tiger in the course of a year is considerable. Wild pig alone are estimated to cause scores of rupees worth of

damage each year in India, and for weeks before harvest the wretched cultivator has to sleep out all night to guard his crops against the attacks of these and other animals.

In her tigers, elephants, bison and buffaloes India has an economic asset, but one cannot avoid the conclusion she does not make the best of it financially. We allow the shooting of what is called dangerous game—tiger, panther, bear, etc.—without limit, whereas other countries make the sportsman pay according to his bag, the revenue to go to the game warden's guards for policing purposes. This innovation would also put an end to the cruel and senseless slaughter by wealthy people who try to set up records in tiger shooting in some areas. Generally speaking, the tiger needs further protection. An idea of the extent to which the tiger has been exterminated may be gained by reading old books like *Forty Years among the Wild Animals of India*, by Hicks, who was asked how many tigers he had shot. " I kept count up to 200, then stopped," he replied. " It may be 400, or more or less, I don't know." That was more than half a century ago, when tigers were a great menace in forest areas and even threatened to drive out man from cultivable areas. But the contrast with conditions to-day is a startling one.

Writing in *The Field* recently, Col. C. H. Stockley described how he had just visited the Kala Chitta Range of hills in the Punjab, near Campbellpur, in order to secure photographs of the oorial and wild sheep. I knew these blocks immediately after the War when they were full of game, and a day's hard work would reveal many fine heads. Sometimes as many as twenty or thirty rams could be seen in the course of a morning in the best block. Col. Stockley observed that there were very few animals at all, and he could hardly get any photographs. On the other hand, when he visited a piece of *zemindari* ground which was looked after by a keen Indian sportsman (in his own interests), he found plenty of oorial, and got some fine photographs. This story is typical of what is going on in many parts of India, where lack of interest and a policy of *laissez faire* have considerably reduced the numbers of certain animals.

It is only fair to add that one or two forest officers who have

examined the problem (notably those who have contributed articles to the series invited by the Bombay Natural History Society), have reported that *in certain forest areas*, game of most kinds is as plentiful as it was twenty years ago. It is, of course, on the borders of forest areas, especially where there are good roads, and where there are cities for the sale of game, that the most striking contrasts are observable.

Mr. H. J. C. Millett, a Khandesh (Bombay) Forest Officer of keen observation, has given me an instance of the difficulty of detecting offences. He points out that in his area there is one guard to detect offences that may be committed over 6,000 acres of reserved forest area—obviously an impossible task. Mr. Millett states that in the last ten or twelve years, the decrease of big game and especially of sambhur in East Khandesh is fully 50 per cent.—though he cannot state the reason with any certainty. The four main reasons he gave me in order of priority were: 1, epidemics; 2, poaching; 3, motor-car; 4, crop protection firearms—a pretty fair analysis probably. He thinks that animals requiring special protection are Indian antelope (blackbuck), sambhur (particularly against poaching), and tiger—the latter because the balance of nature is being disturbed and pig and nilgai increasing. He advocates one tiger per annum per licence.

Another contributor to *The Field* recently stated that a Delhi contractor informed him that by receiving thirty-six hours' notice he could guarantee a supply up to 2,000 partridges, etc. These would be probably obtained through the co-operation of certain jungle tribes, and the quantities show that regular organisations must exist. The same author ascertained that the average daily supply of game birds for Delhi was 500, so that this will give some conception of the drain on bird life. Similar markets near sources of supply exist in the case of venison, and near big cities a profitable trade has been built up, especially now that cold storage is so easy.

There are, of course, many kinds of animals, especially those of nocturnal habit, which are well able to look after themselves even in the face of all the present tendencies of

attrition. These include panthers, and in a recent letter to the writer, Mr. F. W. Prideaux said that his own experience is that panthers, in the C.P. at any rate, are still as numerous as they were 20 years ago. This is also the experience of many forest officers in other provinces, for the panther is well able to look after himself. Under the same heading one might put elephants in Southern India, which do not attract the *average* sportsman, and which at times become so numerous as to constitute a danger to life and property.

Among the indirect causes of this state of affairs, one is bound to place public indifference high on the list. The destruction of priceless works of art such as old temples or magnificent buildings would not be tolerated by public opinion, but it is curious that in India of all places, where animal life is often sacrosanct to an extraordinary degree, the extirpation of her fauna continues without any public outcry. Its conservation is a national task, and the first step must be the awakening of the public conscience in this matter.

Among the more direct factors bearing on the present situation may be placed the commercialisation of shikar, i.e. the legalised trade in things like venison, game birds, hides and horns. In this respect the experiences of other countries point a moral to India. It has been estimated that it would have taken much longer for South Africa to denude herself of game if people had shot, poached, netted, snared, etc., solely for their own requirements; but as soon as hides and dried meat secured a market value, then it paid unscrupulous people to organise a trade, and extermination rapidly followed. Many Indian forest tribes are very clever at snaring, netting, etc., and though it is extremely difficult for the Forest Department to stop them carrying this on in certain areas, it should be easy to remove the markets by illegalising or controlling such sales. Incidentally, the Forest Department can do little or nothing for the protection of the species, whose natural habit is outside the boundaries of protected forests. The problem has been the same in all countries. Once the trade in horns, skins and meat has been developed, an unremitting toll has been taken day by day,

week by week, of game of both sexes until it has been exterminated or driven away to more peaceful areas. This sort of slaughter is carried on by rifles, by old guns, by sitting over the animals' only water or salt licks, and by traps. It will continue while the trade flourishes—even if a Forest Guard could be stationed in each village. It attacks animal life at the fountain head, destroying females and even young. It is the acme of cruelty. The only way to stop it would be to prohibit such trade in horn trophies, in pelts of wild animals, and game meat,—to illegalise sales.

Closely allied to the foregoing causes is poaching, though frequently the poacher acts on his own for himself and his friends. It has always been very difficult to deal with this problem. It is easy to pass laws, but very difficult to enforce them in the remote areas where the poacher works. The hungry villager, living in forest areas, may be surrounded by game, and for generations he has learned how to beat, how to net, and how to kill, by bow and arrow and other means. He regards this perquisite almost as a right in some cases, and certain tribes even go so far as to steal the tiger's dinner and remove his kill.

That poaching has increased of recent years is ascribed by many to the increase in what are known as crop protection guns. The primary object of these weapons is that the cultivator may protect his crops against the depredations of things like pig, nilgai, cheetal, sambhur, etc. This appears quite a sound scheme—almost a necessity for the cultivator. But the strange fact is that such weapons are not used for their intended purposes. They come in very handy for supplying people with meat, hides, etc. Cartridges are not cheap for the villager, and even if the intention is that the villager should lessen the number of pig which certainly do great damage, it is as well to remember that the *average* villager is no match for the wily boar leader of the herd of pig; and his efforts at reducing the size of the herd with his blunderbuss are often useless. Several forest officials have told the writer that they have seldom heard of a crop protection gun being used to protect crops; and

one or two have said that too often such licences are given as rewards without any regard to the real needs of the cultivator. It is but natural to conclude that the majority of the game animals which are being ruthlessly slaughtered all over India with " crop protection " guns are females and young.

Villagers' firearms need special thought, and for genuine crop protection guns might be issued by Provincial Governments which could be short barrelled, and might well be withdrawn when crops are not standing ; and, equally well, licences might be cancelled unless the licensees could prove that they have killed pig during the year. Dr. W. Burns, formerly Director of Agriculture in the Bombay Presidency, sent me some pertinent points about the villagers' problem. Naturally he is concerned with the point of view of the cultivator, and he is fully aware of the very heavy damage done by pig in the course of a year—he estimates this at about half a million sterling for Bombay Presidency. He and his shikar officer have organised gun clubs in order to keep down pig in a scientific way, particularly in sugar-cane areas. Wild pig breed like rats, and mere noise will not scare them away at nights. He therefore believes that it is necessary to kill pigs, especially females at the time of gestation. If pigs are not really scared away, he says, the unfortunate villager has to sit up and watch his crops all night, and is subject to fatigue and malaria—anyone who knows Indian rural areas can vouch for this statement.

It is also open to question whether Government should not allow under suitable provision, the hunting by bow and arrow or trapping, etc., of a certain amount of game by those jungle tribes who have done so for many centuries and who look upon this as providing part of their normal food supply. Such official sanction might go far to put an end to surreptitious poaching with firearms.

While analysing the causes of game diminution, the inevitable progress of cultivation, and what may be called the advance of civilisation generally, should be remembered. Such progress necessitates the opening out of forest areas.

There are, of course, other but less permanent natural

causes of reduction in forest fauna, such as outbreaks of disease like rinderpest, foot and mouth disease, large forest fires, droughts, etc. Under this heading one might also include the disturbance through the hand of man of the "Balance of Nature." For instance, if there are too many tigers or panthers in a certain forest, game such as cheetal, sambhur, pig, etc., will be entirely depleted. Remove the carnivora altogether and pig, deer, nilgai, etc., may become so numerous as to constitute a nuisance if there is no check on them. Red dog also come under this heading. They hunt and kill many animals.

While indicting the village poacher, one cannot let sportsmen go guiltless. Nowadays, the canons of shikar have been lowered to such an extent that it is difficult to assess the weight of this factor. People go out in cars along forest roads and shoot headlight-dazzled deer, etc., in a most cruel manner. What satisfaction they can derive from such slaughter is difficult to conceive. Even in the daytime the use of the motor car to approach game is so unsporting that several writers, including Mr. F. W. Champion, have advocated that a new game ordinance should prohibit the use of cars in this connection. It is debatable whether the Government of India in any new game ordinance should not entirely prohibit shooting by artificial light except in the cases of tiger or panther proscribed as a menace. The real sportsman can be the jungle's best gamekeeper because his movements reveal to him what is going on, and news of existing conditions is brought back to the town or city. Sportsmen rarely live permanently in the haunts of game, and their movements are easily controllable, especially in the East where an inescapable publicity dogs their footsteps.

Action indicated to ensure conservation of wild life is obvious when many of the above causes are examined. For instance, statutory measures might include a revision of the Arms Act, the illegalising of traffic in venison, hides, horns, etc., the prohibition of shooting by artificial light except in certain cases, and some action to prevent the abuse of motor cars in the realm of sport. The present game licences might also be revised to afford a further measure of protection to tigers, which are at

present classed as vermin. It would be quite reasonable to ask a visiting sportsman to pay more for his second, third, fourth tiger, etc., if he wants the luxury—often unsporting—of a big total.

Then there arises the question of game sanctuaries. The formation of these on lines which have proved so successful in many countries should surely commend itself to the Government of India without delay. Mr. Dunbar Brander has mentioned in the *Bombay Natural History Society's Journal* one very suitable area in the Central Provinces, and other places might be selected within motorable distances of Bombay, Calcutta, Delhi, etc. Thus, visitors would have an opportunity of seeing wild life in its natural surroundings. Such sanctuaries would be under a separate Game Department with a warden in charge, and shooting would, of course, be permanently forbidden. Or Government might sanction a *local* increase in the F.D. staff for the especial purpose of protecting the sanctuary.

There is ample information available about game sanctuaries in other countries. In Canada, New Zealand, Australia, and the Union of South Africa large areas have been reserved which offer security and shelter to wild life. Other countries have rapidly followed these Empire examples. Switzerland has her national park amid Alpine slendour. Italy and Spain have established similar areas. Sweden surpasses all Continental countries with her fourteen national parks. Finland, Austria, Poland and Czecho-Slovakia have such districts. Belgium has in the Congo that great sanctuary the Parc National Albert, created by royal decree in 1925, and proving so successful that four years later its area was increased tenfold. An example to India has been set by Travancore State where the Maharajah is personally interesting himself in the formation of a large sanctuary on the shores of Periyar Lake to give a sure refuge to the elephant, bison and other species which are about there. There may be nervousness about the financial liabilities in setting up a game sanctuary. This aspect rightly demands careful study. But there is encouragement in the history of the Kruger National Park in South Africa. This covers over

8,000 square miles of territory, and contains the best collection of wild animals anywhere in the world, while its 500 miles of motor road bring tourists and photographers from all parts. The Park fully justifies its existence by increasing revenues to the State.

Such sanctuaries, however, should be run on scientific gamekeeping lines, with *effective supervision;* otherwise experience has shown that they may merely encourage quiet poaching in out-of-the-way forests. When nalas have been closed in Upper Kashmir and Ladakh in order to increase the number of markhor and ibex, the authorities have at times had a rude surprise on reopening them to sportsmen after some years—one or two nalas were found to be completely devoid of big game. The same experience occurred once in Sind, where an effort was made to preserve the Sind ibex through closing certain areas—with the final result that the ibex disappeared from those areas.

One of the main benefits such sanctuaries would give would be the arousing of public opinion to the value of India's rich and varied fauna. It is surely an anachronism that while most other countries have big game sanctuaries, India with her fine religious traditions which give protection to animal life, and with a selection of wild animals amazing in its numbers and variety, was until recently doing nothing to arouse public opinion on this point.