

Destruction of a Rhinoceros.

Some short time ago intelligence was received on board one of the Company's pilot schooners, cruising off Saugor Island, at the mouth of the river Hooghly, that a rhinoceros has latterly infested the neighbouring villages, and that the animal had destroyed several of the native ryots. A beast of this kind is seldom seen in this quarter, though it is impossible to ascertain how numerous they may be in the interior of the island, or in the Sunderbunds contiguous to it. In consequence of this information, Lieutenant Souter, and a Mr. Lewis, an officer in the pilot service, agreed to put, if possible, a stop to any further mischief there might arise from so formidable an enemy being suffered to remain at large; and as they were aware that neither muskets nor rifles would have any immediate effect on the horny mail of the animal, they provided themselves with two six-pounder carriages, which they contrived to convey into an adjacent portion of the jungle close to a large tank, which the beast was in the habit of nightly frequenting, in order to slake his thirst. There was one track which he favoured, leading down to one of the sides of the tank. Having directed the guns to a particular spot in this path, loaded with grape, they, by means of a rope ladder, ascended a soondroo tree, situated on the opposite side, from which position they could conveniently command an opportunity of discovering, by the aid of the moon's light, any animal there might pass that way. Having waited patiently for more than two hours, they beheld a huge beast coming down the defile, when Lieutenant Souter descended by the ladder, and waiting a favourable opportunity of bringing one of the guns to bear upon the beast, applied the fuse to it, and discharged the contents in a volley at the object. After some minutes they cautiously reconnoitered the spot, but could discover no signs of there having done execution, and consequently returned that night to the vessel. In the morning, however, attended by a company of Lascars, and some natives of the neighbourhood, they repaired to the scene of the last night's excursion, and on advancing some little way into the jungle they detected the beast apparently reclining at the base of a soondroo tree. Not quite satisfied that he was dead, they ascended an adjacent tree, and discharged their rifles at him, but finding that he remained motionless, the Lascars ventured to approach nearer to him, when they pronounced him lifeless. On examination it was found that three of the shots had penetrated deeply into his body. Being too cumbersome to remove, they cut a few strips or thongs from the hide, which they brought away, and took to Calcutta as trophies of their success in ridding the villages of so formidable an enemy.

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