

are remarkable for their coldness, purity, and wholesomeness.

After being joined by the Karrah stream, the Rapti flows due west through the district of Chitaun (Chitaunmari), and falls into the Gandak river about fifteen miles to the north of the Someshwar ridge of the Cheryaghati range of hills.

The *dhun* of Chitaun (Chitaunmari) is of considerable extent, and derives its name from the town of Chitaun, which is situated on the right bank of the Rapti, about twenty-five to thirty miles below Hetowara, at or near the point where it is joined by the Mantaure river, a tributary stream of considerable size, which flows through the lower hills to the north-east of Chitaun.

The district about Chitaun is open, and covered with long grass jungle rather than forest, and is very much infested with rhinoceros. It is the best shooting ground for the rhinoceros in the whole of the Nipalese *dhuns*.

Previous to the first Nipal war, the *dhuns* of Chitaun and Makwanpur were extensively cultivated; but since the peace of 1816 the Gorkha Government, from motives of policy, have caused the inhabitants to abandon the greater part of them, and they have been allowed to revert to their natural state of forest and grass jungle.

A continuous high road, along which troops can march and light guns be carried, traverses the whole extent of the central and western provinces of Nipal,

CHAPTER XVIII.

RHINOCEROS-HUNTING.

THE great beat for rhinoceroses is along the valley of the Rapti river, in the neighbourhood of Chitaun, a largish village or small town situated at or near the confluence of the Rapti and the Manhuri rivers. There are large tracts of level country here, covered with dense high grass jungle; in this the rhinoceros lives, constructing runs or burrows in the grass, along which he moves, the grass meeting over his head, so that he is not seen by one out of the run, although he may be very near.

Jang was very successful this year; they killed several, and wounded a large number of rhinoceroses. Generally the elephants are afraid of them, and were it not that the long grass screens the rhinoceros from the elephant's eye, there are very few would stand the charge. The elephants are stationed in different "runs" along which the rhinoceros is ex-

pected; when he gets very near, if he sees his way blocked up, he makes a peculiar grunt like a boar and charges straight ahead. The elephant almost invariably bolts when he hears this grunt; the great thing is to get a good shot at the brute's head as he comes slowly along his run, before he utters the grunt and before he commences his charge.

Bam Bahadur shot one, at Chitaun, just at this moment, the ball entering through one eye and smashing his brain; so that the brute rolled over dead with only one ball in him. The skull and skin were sent up to Nipal, and are now at Thappatalli. Out of the skin, after being cleaned and cured, they make capital water-buckets; these are immensely strong, never break, and are impervious to water. Out of the horns they manufacture various articles: from the spreading base they make richly carved cups or urgas, which are susceptible of high finish and polish; from the thinner upright part they make handles for kookeries.

Midway between the eye and the ear is a good and almost certainly fatal spot to hit if you get a side shot at his head; but as he is usually coming down towards the elephant at the time of firing, you generally fire straight at his front, and then you ought to aim at the spot just between the eyes. Random shots about his head and body may ultimately prove fatal from internal injury or hæmorrhage, but make no obvious impression at the time.

Of the rhinoceroses shot on this excursion very few

were killed outright; they escaped into the jungle severely wounded and died, some of them almost immediately, others not for two or three weeks. Their bodies were found by men sent to look after them, and their skulls and skins sent up to Nipal.

Though the rhinoceroses abound in greater numbers in the western Terai, especially about Chitaun, the horns of those found in the eastern Terai and those which are imported from Chittagong are much the longer, finer in texture, and better coloured, having little or no white in them, and, from being harder, take a finer polish. The Chittagong rhinoceros has two horns, a long one (two feet or more in length) in front, a short one (a few inches only) immediately behind it. The horn of the male rhinoceros is larger and rougher at the base, but is not generally so long as that of the female. The male uses his horn much more than the female in fighting, rubbing against trees, &c., and generally manages to break or wear the end off so as to shorten it.
