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EARLY DAYS IN MALAYA.

BY

H. E. BURGESS.

Malaya was a comparatively new country when I first went out there in the year 1900. It was only twenty-six years earlier—1874—that the British Government in Singapore became interested in its development, and at that time very little of the country had been explored. The three ports, Singapore, Penang and Malacca had come into our possession several decades earlier, but the Malay States which comprise all that part of the peninsula south of Siam, was for the most part virgin jungle. The construction of roads and railways had commenced at various centres, and a few miles of railway had already been opened for traffic, but the chief means of transport was by small boats on the rivers, where at scattered intervals along the banks, small villages were met with. Only small areas near by the villages were under cultivation which for the most part consisted of coconuts and areca-nut palms. The centres where construction works had begun were the places of residence of the rulers of the four important states, and these had been made the headquarters of the four Governments, each under the control of a British Resident.

Hospitals, Courts and Police stations had been established, and the designs of these and other public buildings were of imposing structure, and significant as pointing to the future prosperity of the country.

It was noticeable that the small townships were being extended on a proper basis. No haphazard methods of building were permitted, while streets and water services were laid out on modern lines, and the result to-day is that, in a country which is notoriously unhealthy the towns themselves are as free from malaria and other tropical diseases as any of the larger towns in England.

At the time I speak of it was only these small towns which could boast any form of civilization and, except for the clearings near villages, all else consisted of jungle, unpopulated and infested with wild beasts. Certain areas had been opened up for tin mining, and some planters over from Ceylon had commenced to grow coffee, but in neither case were these areas extensive.

For the first ten years of my career out there I lived in the heart of the jungle, engaged at first in surveys and construction works, and later on in opening up large areas of land for rubber cultivation. Under such conditions it was only to be expected that I had ample opportunities of seeing wild life and being able to indulge in some big game shooting. My regret is that I did not take up the study of Natural History as I ought to have done, and for this reason I am afraid my notes will not be of much value from a scientific point of view. They are written at the instance

of a friend who has suggested that a comparison with conditions in India would interest readers of this journal. Unfortunately, my knowledge of India is confined to the Nilgiri hills of the Madras province, where on the plateau the pine and rhododendron woods are non-tropical, and the scrub jungle at the foot hills does not compare with the immense trees and heavy undergrowth typical of Malayan forests. I have no doubt however, that such growth is found in the moist climates of Malabar and Travancore, and that the larger beasts of the jungle, and especially the greater carnivora, have the same characteristics.

I did a fair amount of shooting but was not bitten with the lust to kill, and I did not shoot with the idea of obtaining records. I was never keen to get an elephant, and after I had bagged my first two or three tigers and a few panthers. I did not go out after them unless I was appealed to by the villagers who were losing cattle and goats.

Before relating my experiences I must mention that certain birds and beasts of India are not found in Malaya. There are no vultures and no kites, and there are neither hyenas nor jackals. I was on the point of saying there were no crows, but recollect seeing some occasionally. I have seen only the jungle crow and these birds are never seen in towns and villages. The common song birds of the Nilgiris such as the thrush, the bulbul, and the blackbird, are either not found there or are very rare; and owing no doubt to the absence of tanks there is no duck shooting to be had. I never saw a wild duck and only once came across a few teal.

TIGER (Malay: *Harimau*).

My first district in Malaya, thirty-six years ago, was good tiger country. It was also recognized as the most unhealthy district on the map. I shot more tigers than any other European out there, and my bag was only thirteen. The only person who had got more than this number was the Sultan of Johore. I am speaking of fifteen years ago when we were able to compare notes. The Sultan had shot about twenty. Very few men have got as many as three or four, and several sportsmen who have bison and elephant to their credit have never shot a tiger.

When compared with the enormous bags obtained by many shikaris in India the numbers sound absurdly small, but I do not think it means that tigers there are comparatively less common. I am positive that as the country gets more opened up, more tigers will be seen. At present only about one-tenth of the land has been cleared of jungle, and the jungle itself is too big to permit of driving being done with success, and too dense for stalking. It is only in jungle of secondary growth that one has a chance.

Rewards are paid by Government for every dead tiger brought in to a Police station, and the majority of rewards are paid to Malays who, more often than not, get their tigers by the setting of spring guns. I had observed up to about ten years ago that the greatest number brought in for one year was ninety-six, and

a comparison with India might be made by reckoning the respective areas of the two countries.

The general opinion among sportsmen in India is that the Malayan tiger is a smaller animal than his Indian cousin, but I am convinced this is not the case. I can vouch to shooting one which measured 9 ft. 8 in. between pegs, and although this was exceptional, one other measured 9 ft. 3 in. and another 9 ft. 0 in. All that I got were well conditioned and massive beasts, and of the forty or fifty trophies I have seen in India, and the half dozen or so I have seen killed on the Nilgiris, not one has compared with my big one, and all were much of an average with the full grown tiger of Malaya. There is one tiger at the Mysore Zoo which looks as heavy as my biggest, and it may possibly measure as much or more in length. I saw it from a distance in the parked enclosure and had not the best means to judge, but it certainly looked a very big one. The Commissioner of Police Perak—(Mr. Willes Douglas) who saw my big tiger interested himself afterwards in obtaining measurements, and some years later he wrote and told me that the next best taped only 9 ft. 4 in. (*N.B.* This was the Bukit Gantang man-eater referred to later on.) I may mention that all my big tigers, and the man-eater above mentioned, were shot in the one district in Perak. Of those I shot in Johore and Negri Sembilan none measured more than 8 ft. 8 in.

I have never done any shooting at night, and the majority of my tigers and panthers have been bagged between 11 a.m. and 6 p.m. I had a few thrilling experiences which I shall record in detail, and meanwhile will describe the methods I generally employed and which proved so successful. When a kill was located no one was permitted to approach nearer than twenty feet or so. A tree near by was selected, and on this tree a few planks were lashed together to form a seat. No elaborate machan was erected, and noise and other disturbances were practically nil. My five or six men were then told to go off about a quarter of a mile away. They were to keep together, moving more or less in a circle and at the same distance from the spot. They were to talk to one another all the time but were not to make a din, no shouting and beating of tins being permitted, and it was seldom I had to wait long before the tiger turned up to see that his kill had not been disturbed. The District Officer at Tampin, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, mentioned to me that he had sat up a dozen times for a certain tiger which he had never even set eyes on, so I told him what I used to do and a few days after this I had a telegram from him to say he had bagged his tiger. I must not omit to say that I invariably built the platform at not less than twenty feet from the ground. My reasons for this were not for the sake of safety but because I felt it would minimise the chance of being detected by the tiger. It is probable that many a tiger has been lost for lack of this precaution.

My rifle, an H.V. 450-500 by E. M. Reilly, was a wonderfully accurate and hard hitting weapon, and usually I did not require

to spend more than the one cartridge on a tiger or panther. I had put in a good deal of target practice and could invariably tell where my bullet had struck, and my proud boast was that I had never lost an animal which I had fired at. On one occasion I had an easy shot at twenty yards at a tiger immediately below me and I was surprised to see it bound off. I thought I had hit him right in the middle of the head. I was perfectly certain he was badly hit so I followed up immediately and came up to him walking ahead in a very dazed state when a second easy shot brought him to book. My rifle was not blamed for the slight error in the first shot as I realized I had taken a dose of quinine to ward off fever and that this had rather shaken my nerves.

My first tiger was got quite by chance. A friend and I strolled out one afternoon with our rifles hoping for a shot at a deer or wild pig, and we had not gone far when we came on to the tracks of a tiger which had crossed a bit of new road, where in the soft mud his pug marks showed him to be on the big side. I went a little way into the scrub to see where he had gone and suddenly to my horror I saw two full grown monsters facing me not twenty yards away. One was standing up, but the nearer one was crouching and looked the more dangerous of the two. There was not much time for thought, and firing quickly I dropped this one dead with a bullet through the brain. The other bounded away to the side with a tremendous roar, and when I turned round I found my friend in a terrible state of nerves. He had stopped behind to light his pipe and did not see me lift my rifle to shoot, and the sudden report and the roar of the tigress upset him very considerably. I discovered next day that the tigers had killed a big boar which at the time was behind us. We had evidently disturbed one and met them as they were both returning.

With the exception of two other exciting incidents which I shall relate, all my tigers were got by methods already mentioned.

One afternoon a Railway overseer came to tell me that he had seen a tiger prowling about near his house. He kept some goats in a shed, and the tiger had approached very near to this, but it moved away when it saw the man as he ran off to call me. I had one of his goats tied up on the edge of the jungle while I hid myself in an adjacent clump of sago palms. It was then about 5 p.m. and, as the tiger had not shewed up at dusk, I decided not to wait and called up my men. We started homewards through a rice field, a man with a lantern leading. I followed next and the man leading the goat came last. All went well for the first few yards when suddenly the tiger ran out with a roar and seized the goat. In the confusion that followed both my men fell and the lantern went out, and the best I could do in the circumstances was to fire a shot in the air. None of us saw the tiger and no one was hurt except for one man whose wrist was bruised by the rope attached to the goat and which was partly twisted round his wrist. When I went to investigate next morning I found the goat dead with its back broken, but otherwise untouched. I also came across the tracks of a tigress and two cubs.

I was living once in a small house close to the jungle and one morning there was great commotion which I guessed to be a fight between a tiger and a wild boar. There was no mistaking the sounds and my servants, very foolishly I thought, ran towards the spot and surprisingly managed to frighten the tiger away from the boar which he had just killed. I sent them back at once and took up a safe position in the leafy branches of a tree—in this case not more than about six feet from the ground. In five minutes the tiger was back, but instead of approaching the kill directly he went off at an angle. Not knowing what his intentions might be I risked a long shot and got in a smack behind the ear. He disappeared down a ravine and for the moment I thought I had lost him, but when I called out to the servants I heard him groan only a few yards away, and when we found him he was dead. He was a small beast, not quite full grown, and the boar also was on the small side.

A full grown tiger can kill the biggest of Malay buffaloes and I was curious to know what chance he would have against a bull bison. The following story provides proof to a certain point only. The bison killed the tiger, but the latter was rather an emaciated beast and had a festering wound in its shoulder. I was going down river once when I met a Japanese photographer coming up stream with a dead tiger on his boat. He said he had shot it and he produced a .32 revolver as proof. The wound in the tiger's side looked as though a small cannon might have been used, and as the circumstances called for investigation, I prevailed on the gentleman to return with me to the spot. An inspection of the ground shewed that there had been a big fight between the tiger and a bison; and the bison although he had lost a lot of blood, apparently lived to fight another day, as we did not come up with him.

It must be very seldom that any one has witnessed a fight between a tiger and a wild boar, but it was my good fortune once to see such a fight from start to finish. I was being poled up the river Muar, and just as we were rounding a bend we spied a big boar crossing a sand spit on his way to drink. My boatmen quickly allowed the boat to drift into a clump of tall rushes where we were fairly well concealed, and as I was putting my rifle together I saw the boar suddenly turn round and face the jungle, and in the next instant a tiger walked out. It is difficult to describe what happened next—so quick were the movements on the part of both animals. They both charged and it looked as though they must meet with great force; but such speed was displayed in leaps and side steps that the result, in what seemed a second of time, was that they were facing one another again twenty feet apart, and the boar still with his back to the river. The same movements were repeated three or four times but I think the tiger must have done damage each time as the boar appeared to be weakening. The end came when the boar made a rush. With one movement the tiger side stepped and leapt on its back and was dragged like this into the jungle, where shortly the dying gasps of the pig told me that all was over. The sun had gone

down and it was beginning to get dark, but thinking I might get in a chance shot I ran the boat in and stepped ashore. The tiger however was on his kill only a few yards inside the jungle, and the angry snarls he was making told us it would not be safe to approach any closer. My boatmen were shouting to me to get back into the boat and it was a great relief to all of us when we pushed off into mid-stream.

I shall conclude my notes on tigers with the story of the Bukit Gantang man-eater, but before proceeding to this I must tell of my one and only mishap in the Malayan jungles. I had arranged a drive through an area of scrub where it was known that a tiger used to lie up occasionally. No recent tracks had been seen, and it was purely speculative whether I would come across anything bigger than a pig. There were no big trees in the scrub and I had to take up a position all alone behind a small ant heap—the beaters knowing exactly where the position would be. After about half an hour, as they were coming towards me, I detected what I thought was the stealthy tread of a tiger at my back, and turning round I saw what I thought was unmistakably a tiger coming at me. I fired, and it was fortunate that for the first time my rifle did not kill. I had shot a man who had lost his way in the beat and was making his way back on all fours through heavy thorny scrub. I was congratulating myself on having got another tiger when almost immediately I heard a cry 'You have shot me, Sir'. As I have said, the man was down on all fours and facing me, and the bullet went under his chin, between his arms, and slightly grazing the stomach, entered the groin. He was rushed off to hospital and underwent a successful operation, but it was nearly a year before he was able to walk. Mr. Babo, the man in question, was a Malay of good family, and a thorough sportsman. At one time in hospital he was thought to be dying, and in the deposition he made he exonerated me from all blame, admitting that it was his own fault for coming behind me; and when after a year he was well enough to attend court on a summons to give evidence in the case the Police brought against me, he made the same statement. He was one of the last to call to bid me good-bye when I was leaving the country.

THE MAN-EATER OF BUKIT GANTANG.

I was always told that a tiger takes to killing men only after it has grown old and is too feeble to catch fleet and stronger game. This particular tiger was a fine beast and by no means past his prime. Surely a man-eating tigress must bring up her cubs on human flesh, and would not these cubs grow up to be man-eaters themselves? Certainly they would. The Bukit Gantang tiger acquired his delicate taste by accident. A Chinaman had two pigs which he kept in his bed-room. One night the tiger broke in and went off with the bigger one. The man not wanting to lose the other fenced it in under his bed, but the fence was a strong one and some nights afterwards the tiger being

unable to break it down, went off with the man. I know this for a fact, and I also know that about a dozen men were taken in the next two months. It was due to a careless Chinaman that this tiger took to man-eating and I recollect how another careless Chinaman had a narrow escape from the same tiger. Every one knew about the man-eater and all the railway coolies had gone home except this one man. I was walking along the railway embankment when I came upon the tiger's tracks. There had just been a heavy shower of rain and he had gone by after the rain, which meant that he was only just ahead of me. Following up quickly I came on to this solitary old man breaking stone where a minute or two before the tiger had passed within ten feet or so. To my surprise the old man said he had not seen the tiger, but after I had gone on some distance he called me back and asked if I had meant a large yellow animal with black stripes, and if so he was sure now that he had seen it! I remember one other escape. A man was carrying a sack of pepper when the tiger sprang and went off with the sack instead of the man. Mr. Donaldson, District Officer, Matang, followed up and found the sack torn to shreds. I understand the man received so great a shock to his nerves that he would not venture outside his house for many months afterwards.

One exciting experience I recall very vividly. Early one morning while I was dressing upstairs I heard what sounded like a scuffle in a carpenter's shed near the bungalow, and on going down to see what it was all about, I saw that something very serious had happened. A bench and a table had been overturned and there was blood all over the place. My first thought was that murder had been done, but a tell-tale pug mark in the saw dust gave the tiger away, and within a few minutes two police men and I were hot on his tracks. The man had been dragged about half a mile up a water course, and as we approached we heard the tiger move away. When we found the body, only a small part of the thigh had been eaten, and as the tiger made no attempt to attack us I knew that nothing more could be done. Having shed man's blood he was afraid and would not return. It requires little imagination to realize what a feeling of dread pervaded the village, where it might be said death lurked behind every bush. Cattle and goats were penned by four o'clock in the afternoon, and the Malays and Chinese had to shut themselves up in their houses long before it was dark. I never ventured out without my rifle, and took good care not to get too near the jungle. It was a strange thing that this tiger frequently gave vocal notice of his intended visit to the village. He would call from about a mile away and repeat this at intervals till he got quite near, when there was a silence which was really ominous and oppressive. Excitement was intense as it was not known near which house the dread monster was looking for his next meal; and I imagine there must have been many sleepless nights in houses so flimsy of structure that one blow of the paw could have smashed in the thin plank walls. Some people were no doubt late in shutting up for the night, while gangs of coolies used to turn out

to go to their work in the early hours of the morning almost before it was light, and the wonder to me is that the number taken was so few.

I was due for home leave and my passage had been booked for a date not far ahead, and it can be imagined how keen I was to get him before I left, and what trouble I went to in the matter, and yet success did not come to me. I had learnt fairly accurately the line he would take on his way down from the hills to the village, and I actually saw him twice without being able to get in a shot, and I had to leave with the feeling that if I could have possibly delayed my departure for a few days I should have brought him to book. He was killed very shortly afterwards by my own shikari who admitted to having set a spring gun on the tracks he had learnt when on his expeditions with me. The setting of a spring gun is an offence liable to severe punishment but in this case, not only was the man let off, but he was given the reward which had been raised to two hundred dollars. The tiger was a male in splendid condition, and, as I have stated, measured 9 ft. 4 in.

PANTHER (Malay: *Rimau kumbang*).

It is recognized that the spotted panther and the black panther are one and the same beast, the colouring of the latter being due to melanism. This being so it is strange that all panthers in Malaya are black. Certainly all that I have seen, whether in Perak in the north or Johore in the south, have been black ones. They are not easy to get, and I do not think any one else shot as many as the five that I did. They do not frequent the neighbourhood of towns and villages as in the case in India, and it is more commonly the tiger that does this in search of goats and dogs, which are quite a favourite food of his. I know that in India it is usually the panther which accounts for dogs, and that tigers are very rarely to blame, but in Malaya many a good dog has been taken by a tiger. I have many proofs of this; and in one planting district where in a radius of ten miles quite a number of dogs had been lost, none were taken after a tiger had been shot over a dog as bait. A husband and wife (Mr. and Mrs. Fenner) had their fox terrier snatched from almost under their feet by a big tiger. The Malay panther is a small animal, seldom measuring more than 6 ft. 6 in. Having shot so few I can recall all five incidents and in only one of these did I have exciting sport. I was using a theodolite on a hill top overlooking an extensive rice field when I happened to spot two animals crossing from big jungle to a small patch of scrub in the field, and bringing the telescope to bear on them I saw they were panthers. A large gang of men quickly surrounded the patch and we then commenced a drive. One broke very soon at full speed into the open, and I was able to bowl him over with one shot. We did not see the other and I am still at a loss to know how it escaped. The patch of scrub was quite small, and although we combed it pretty thoroughly the beast did not come out.

WILD DOG (Malay: *Angin hutan*).

I do not think that any of the Malays in the four districts I lived in were aware that wild dogs existed in their country. On the other hand it may be common in districts I do not know. I came across one only in the Larut district in Perak, and this one I shot and presented to the museum. There was already one specimen in the museum which I know to be the wild dog of India, but the one I shot was smaller, not so red, and without the black points. The difference in colour, size, and marking was perhaps due to the fact that it was not fully grown. A Malay found one of his goats one morning killed and partly eaten by what he described as some mysterious animal. There were several bites on the side and the entrails of the goat had been torn out, and further, no attempt had been made to drag it into the jungle. It was left just where it had been killed, in a patch of grass land. The Malay suggested either a tiger or a panther cub, but to me it looked more like the action of a wolf or a wild dog, and thinking that neither of these animals existed in the country I was completely nonplussed and all the more determined to know what it was. The kill had been made some time between nine and ten o'clock in the morning, and as I had no pressing work on hand I prepared to wait till nightfall if necessary. At two o'clock in the afternoon the dog came out, and when I saw there were no more to follow I shot him just as he commenced to feed.

ELEPHANT (Malay: *Gajah*).

Elephants roam all over the peninsula and are common as far south as Johore. Unlike the elephant of Ceylon the male has tusks of fair size, and the tusks of one monster which charged and derailed a ballast train in Perak and was himself killed in the encounter, are certainly very big. They are in the museum in Taiping and I think are not far short of the measurements of the tusks secured by Major Gillespie five or six years ago in the Billigirirangan hills of Mysore.

With this exception, I have not seen any measuring more than 40 in., but since only a small fraction of the jungle has yet been cleared, the probabilities are that large herds have not been seen and that these herds contain specimens worth looking for.

I have mentioned that I had no desire to shoot an elephant, but I was much tempted to do so once when, at ten o'clock one morning, one of my assistants and I saw a big tusker walking through a field of rubber. The mere fact that he had tramped over half a mile of an area of young plants seemed sufficient justification for his being shot, as we felt that considerable damage must have been done, and snatching up our rifles we were soon in hot pursuit. Following up his tracks we were surprised to find that not even one plant had been crushed, but notwithstanding this our excitement carried us on, and presently we cornered him at a bend of a river which was in full flood. He saw us, but did not seem a bit concerned and, as the desire to kill had passed, I decided to turn round and make for home. We had

actually gone back some distance when my friend J. B. thought it as well to have a pot at him to frighten him off, and he went back for this purpose. Presently I heard a shot and this was followed immediately by the sight of the young man with the elephant in close pursuit. They were in a patch of tall grass when J. B. suddenly disappeared and the elephant trotted over the spot where I had last sighted him. Luckily J. B. had fallen into a trench which the elephant stepped over, and he is still alive to tell the story, which is seldom believed! Small blame to the listeners, but J. B. is a truthful man and so am I. It appears that the elephant had charged before the shot was fired, and the probability is that the bullet went wide.

My Malay shikari told me that herds moved from one feeding ground to another at more or less regular monthly intervals, but not only was he not able to prove this but he shewed himself to be entirely wrong. For regularity in his habits however, I have not known any animal to beat a certain solitary bull whose return to the same spot every month was expected within a day or two. The villagers were always ready to receive him with crackers, and although he was frightened away each time, back again he came next month to meet with the same reception. He carried out this programme for many months, and perhaps for many years. It would have been an easy matter to kill him but I did not try, nor did I let on about his habits to others who might have been keen. I examined the spot on two occasions on the morning after the appointed day, and true enough I saw his tracks. I saw him two or three times at various other spots and had begun to look on him as an old friend. He did no damage on my property and never molested the coolies, but on one occasion he annoyed me very much when he walked along a new road trace and pulled up all the centre line pegs which I had put in at a good deal of personal trouble.

A Railway surveyor who had set out five miles of line woke up one morning to find all the important pegs gone. Pegs were put in at every chain, and at every tenth chain was a larger peg on which the true centre had been marked, and it was these pegs only which had been torn out and flung aside. The ordinary chain pegs were painted black, while the tenth peg was a white one.

My Chinese coolies who had evidently not previously seen an elephant did reverence to this one. When visiting their lines one morning I found the whole gang with their heads bowed to the ground and they told me that God had just gone by. The elephant had passed quite close to them and the tracks shewed that he had moved by quite slowly.

RHINOCEROS.

In all my thirty years in Malaya I knew of only two rhinoceros being killed. The one-horned rhinoceros (*R. sondaicus*) is very rare in that country and I believe that only three specimens have been obtained. One of these was shot by the late Mr. H. C. Barnard, in whose house in Taiping I saw the foot which he had

mounted as an umbrella stand, and I recollect his telling me at the time (1901 or 1902) what a rare animal it was, and what difficulty he had in getting it. The two-horned animal (*R. sumatrensis*) is more common but I did not see any. In recent years one of these was shot by the Sultan of Johore, and, I was told, about that time, that another had been killed by an assistant on a rubber estate who got into trouble about it. H. H. The Sultan is very jealous as regards the protection of animals in his own jungles, and great credit is due to him for instituting game laws in his State, even before development of the country had begun. No enactments were passed and no licenses are issued, shooting being permitted only on permit signed by the Sultan himself. His example was slow to be followed in the four Federated States, but the appointment of a Game Warden was made about twelve years ago, and during the current year (1935) two thousand square miles of jungle have been defined as a game sanctuary.

THE GAUR (Malay: *Seladang*).

In Malaya, the Gaur or Indian bison goes by the name *Seladang*. It is the same beast and quite as big.

I shot two, both solitary bulls and both good specimens, but neither approaching the record.

Among Europeans, T. R. Hubback has shot more bison and elephant than any one else, and satiety being reached, he is probably the best man for the job of Game Warden which he now fills with much ability.

I had been some years in those parts before I was stationed in bison country, and it was a year or two after this that I was able to select my first. The game was new to me and I was much surprised to learn from men who had shot a number, that bison was the easiest to obtain of all the big beasts of the jungle, and I discovered that this was quite true if one wanted to shoot by the methods recommended. They come out to feed at night in grass country and it is quite an easy matter to intercept them in the morning on their way back to the jungle. This method did not appeal to me, and I am afraid I annoyed my tracker very much when, on the two occasions he had taken me out, I allowed some fine bulls to pass within sixty yards or so. I preferred to try stalking. With the promise of a reward as compensation for his two disappointments, my man did his best and shortly put me on to the tracks of a big solitary bull which had finished feeding and had moved off into the jungle. This was really exciting, and I pride myself that I managed to get the beast. The bison had been given time to enter the jungle before we arrived at the feeding ground and, as it had rained overnight, we were able to tell that he was not more than a quarter of an hour ahead. He had moved into jungle which almost baffles description, so intertwined was it with thorny creepers, that our only means of progress was along the tunnelled passage the bison had made.

I knew that it was a belt of only a few yards width and that we should presently come into more open scrub; but I also knew

that although the going would be easier tracking might be more difficult for the reason that the bison might still be feeding and was likely to meander and so face us at any time. It took us about ten minutes to negotiate the narrow twenty yard belt, and, before we emerged, we carefully prospected the land ahead. It must not be imagined that the view was an extensive one, since although at the start we could see only three yards, we could now spot our beast up to perhaps twenty yards but certainly no further.

My Malay was down on his hands and knees. I was a yard behind moving one step at a time. While shaking like a leaf, I could not help thinking that I was a fool to take the risk. I prayed for a broadside shot, or a shot as he was moving off; but I dreaded facing him. While pondering these thoughts, I saw my man lie flat and point to something on the left. I could distinguish nothing, but presently knew that it was sound and not sight that raised the accusing finger, and that the noise was of the great beast chewing the cud. My man, I noticed, turned his head to the right, and instinct told me he was looking for a safe tree or log behind which to hide, and the probability is that the movement was noticed by the bison, as in the next instant he jumped up with a snort and stood directly facing me.

Another second and he might have turned round and bolted, or he might have charged and reached me, but within the second I fired and my bullet, which entered the throat just above the dewlap, caused him to crumple up only a yard nearer to me. My second shot was fired while he was struggling on the ground, and before he had made his last kick my Malay was cutting his throat. I must admit that all the time we were following up my nerves were on edge, but I seemed to be perfectly steady the moment I saw the bison. While tracking, I thought of my own personal danger only, but seeing the Malay had not flinched I felt he had shewn a hundred times more pluck than I had. His only weapon was a long jungle knife. In this hunt we had covered less than half a mile and it had taken us a full hour to do it. The distance paced between the dead bull and the spot where I was standing measured less than forty feet.

There is only one case on record in Malaya of a European having been killed by a bison. This was Capt. Syers, the Commissioner of Police. He had wounded a bison with his big bore, black powder rifle, and his second barrel was not sufficient to stop the beast when it charged. The bison's head is on view in the Selangor club, Kuala Lumpur.

SEROW (Malay: *Kambin grun*).

On certain limestone hills in Perak and Selangor there exists a type of wild goat, which although it may be fairly common, is very rarely seen. It happened that my first station was not far from one of these hills, and I was told that these goats were to be found there. The Malays call it the *Kambin grun* and it has been identified as the 'Serow'. I was also told that only one had been shot, and that Sir Frank Swettenham was the sports-

man who got it. The hill that I speak of (Gunong Pondok) was of peculiar formation, rising as it did almost sheer from flat padi land to a height of over a thousand feet. There was next to no foothold on its steep sides, and I admit to defeat at my one and only attempt to gain the top.

I was anxious to see one of these animals, and, as my attempt to climb had failed, I looked to see what a telescope could do, and one day I actually did see one and one only. I saw it moving about for quite a long while, but it was more than half a mile away.

SAMBHAR (Malay: *Rusa*).

The biggest of stags carries no trophy worth keeping. I had to shoot a fair number because of the damage they did to young rubber, and not one of these carried antlers measuring more than twenty-seven inches.

WILD PIG (Malay: *Babi hutan*).

I have had very few opportunities of reading the Society's *Journal* and have not read anything about the wild pig, but I quite realize that much must have been already written about it, and that any new notes are likely to be put aside as being on a subject too common to be of interest. I have reasons, however, to write at some length about this because I have not been able to identify the particular '*Sus*' which has interested me. The common wild boar of India (*Sus cristatus*) is found all through Malaya, but there is another species which I have seen only twice. Its colour, shape, and habits are all distinct. Comparisons which I may possibly make very crudely will none the less be descriptive, and I enumerate these as follows:

1. The common Indian Wild Boar is of massive build, is black in colour, and is high at the shoulder. The other pig is smaller, and lightish brown in colour. It has a longer snout and the rise at the shoulder is not so pronounced.

2. The common pig moves about in small herds. On the two occasions I saw the second species they passed through the rubber estate in a herd over one hundred strong.

3. The common pig usually feeds at night. The others came out once at eleven o'clock in the morning, and on the second occasion at two in the afternoon.

4. The common pig seldom did damage on an estate, contenting itself with feeding on rubber seed which had fallen to the ground. The two herds mentioned did considerable damage to the roots of the trees in the short time they took to pass through the estate.

5. The common pig is very seldom killed owing to its cunning and nocturnal habits, and it must be very seldom indeed that it is killed by coolies who don't possess firearms.

On the occasions I speak of, Tamil coolies belonging to the estate were able to despatch with knives and sticks, about four or five in the first instance, and no less than eight the second

time. Both herds were seen on the same rubber estate at a small place called Genuang, in Johore, and if I remember rightly, the first time was in 1911 and the second time in 1913.

Unfortunately, because of my lack of interest in Natural History at that time, I did not record details of a specimen which I felt then was out of the common. The species has since been identified as *Sus barbatus*. It was first recorded from Pahang in 1918 and reported on again, also in Pahang, in 1921. A note on the species was published in the *Bulletin of the Raffles Museum* (No. 5, August 1931), subsequent to which several specimens were obtained in Johore. I have mentioned that it is only in recent years that *Sus barbatus* has been seen in Malaya, and that its habits are very different to those of the common pig 'cristatus'.

I have just received a letter from a friend in Johore to whom I had sent copy of my notes, and what he writes is so interesting, that I feel I must pass on the information to your *Journal*.

My friend, Mr. Miller Mackay, who lives in Johore, has to make occasional visits to a rubber estate on the island of Kapala Djeri in the Rhio Archipelago, and he tells me that about once in a year large herds of pig attack and do considerable damage to his rubber trees.

The common pig lives on the island but does no damage and it is only occasionally that the other pig is responsible. The island is a small one, and, while the common pig is frequently met with, the other one is never seen except for its periodical excursions on to the estate, and the conclusion is that it does not live there but must swim across from neighbouring islands. Mr. Mackay tells me that his Javanese coolies state they have actually seen herds swim over at nights. The nearest island is fully a mile away.

CROCODILE (Malay: *Buaya*).

Crocodiles are found in all the rivers and creeks on the west coast of the peninsula, and it is surprising what little alarm it causes the people. I have seen men bathing on one side of the river in full view of a monster croc basking on the opposite bank, while one sees boys under seven and eight years of age manoeuvring tiny shallow boats across a river infested with crocs. It is unusual for a crocodile to take to man-eating in the sense that a tiger does. I know of two, only one of which was a real man-eater. It was at a place called Buloh Kasap in the State of Johore. When I was living there I frequently had reports from Chinese shopkeepers and vegetable-growers that they had lost dogs and poultry which had strayed too near the water's edge. I did my best for them, but this beast was more cunning than several others I had shot further down stream.

He was never seen on the near side, and the far side which bordered the jungle was out of range. I got him eventually, and when he was cut up we found two dog-collars and a silver bangle, very bent and broken. A crowd had gathered round to watch the operation, and when the bangle came to light an old man burst into tears and said it was his little girl's bangle, and that

she had been missing from the house since the previous morning. I had no proof that this particular crocodile had killed other people, and possibly the little girl was his first and only victim. Some years afterwards the District Officer (Mr. Wilson) told me that another crocodile, also at Buloh Kasap, had taken six or seven men, and was still at large at the time he spoke to me.

I shot my beast in 1905 and I think it was in 1918 that I met Mr. Wilson. I managed to shoot quite a number but none of them were very big. The largest measured about twelve feet, the biggest stuffed crocodile in the Raffles Museum, Singapore, measures $14\frac{1}{2}$ ft. Its skull is 22 in. long. The Director of the Museum who very kindly gave me this information says that 'the largest crocodile skull (*C. porosus*) in the museum measures 26 in.' He adds that 'there is a well authenticated record of a crocodile (*C. porosus*) collected in 1820 in Luzon which had a skull measuring $34\frac{3}{4}$ in. The animal was 29 ft. long and 11 ft. in girth round the forelimbs.' In the same museum can be seen a crocodile with not a tooth in its head. It was shot by Mr. G. P. Owen on Singapore Island.

SNAKES.

There is a great variety of snakes in Malaya but only a few of these are poisonous. The cobra, a black variety, is quite common. I have killed at least twenty myself and have seen many more killed by others. The banded krait is not common, but I have shot three or four while out snipe shooting. The hamadryad is not often seen but the Malays in North Johore told me it was quite common in the Segamat district. I shot three and saw four or five others. These notes point to it that the country is not lacking in poisonous snakes, and yet it is a fact that deaths from snake-bite are rare. Thousands of people in India die of snake-bite every year, and in the thirty years I spent in Malaya I did not hear of even one case of a person being killed. It is recognized that the density of the population is nothing like what it is in India, but if it can be ascertained that persons have been bitten and that none have died, the theory must be advanced that the poison of the snakes there is less virulent. I once saw an Airedale dog recover after being struck on the ear by a big cobra. Nothing was done to the dog beyond washing the wound with a solution of carbolic acid. The cobra is of the black variety only, and has no marking on the hood—either monocellate or binocellate.

The brown cobra, the common colour form in India, I have never seen there. The Malay cobra seldom measures more than four feet. One often comes across them on rubber estates, and a few have been killed in houses, chiefly in the bath-room if this happens to be on the ground floor. It is very seldom indeed that snakes of any description are seen in the towns. I have mentioned that I have seen as many as seven or eight hamadryads. It was not always that I had a tape handy to make measurements, but to the best of my knowledge, with one exception, none measured as much as thirteen feet. The exception is a very big one which was killed by a member of my staff, Mr. Stuart Mackay, who

presented the skin to the Batu Anam Club. This specimen was of a darker colour than the others I had seen, but it was not black. It was about seventeen feet long, a few inches more or less, and as this is perhaps a record and a matter of interest, I have written for particulars to a doctor friend of mine still in that district.

Ninety-nine per cent of the Europeans you meet in Malaya will tell you that the hamadryad will always attack a man whether it is provoked or not. My experience has taught me that this is not so. Like all other snakes, the hamadryad invariably tries to get out of Man's way; but like the cobra and certain other snakes, it will fight if cornered or to protect its young. It is a fast moving snake and if it was really out to kill, few men would escape. On two occasions I saw a hamadryad in an angry mood. Once while motoring along a straight bit of road I ran over the tail of one, and pulling up to see what might happen I saw the brute in the middle of the road with head raised and facing me. I had no gun and feeling sure he was about to make for me I moved off quickly.

On another occasion as one of my assistants was walking towards me in a new clearing I saw him turn round suddenly and run off as fast as he could and presently I spotted a big snake going after him.

Johnstone was a fair runner and he did not stop till he had done a good quarter mile. He was going in the direction of his house where I knew he kept a gun, and as I could not assist at the moment I remained where I was and soon had the satisfaction of seeing the snake return and climb into the hollow of a big tree stump. Johnstone returned shortly, fortified as he told me with a 'B and S' and with his gun. A lump of mud thrown at the tree brought out the snake which was shot. It was about ten feet long, and when we investigated the nest we found eight youngsters some just hatched and some about to hatch, and these we quickly despatched. The youngsters were all black, but the mother was the colour of the cobra of India. All the big hamadryads I have seen were of this light brown colour, but there is a plaster cast in the Singapore museum showing the snake as jet black, and I have wondered whether there are both black and brown adults among these snakes. I am afraid I was not of an enquiring turn of mind at that time.

Another poisonous snake is a little beast measuring not more than twelve to fifteen inches. I say it is poisonous because the Malays told me so, and because they seemed to dread it more than they did the cobra. It has a habit of lying across a path and of not being disturbed by approaching foot-steps and for this reason is more frequently stepped on by bare feet than other snakes. In colour it is a shiny black, and has a red blob looking like sealing wax on its flat head. I did not see more than three or four of these snakes, and I do not think it is common.

The writing of these notes has helped me to recall many incidents almost forgotten, and they bring back memories of a happy past in a new country and among people which one grew

to like, but while the work entailed has given me a great deal of interest and pleasure, I fear that this article will not be looked on in the same way by readers of the *Journal*, and I pass on all blame for faults to be found, or for inabilities to make the matter instructive from the Natural History reader's point of view, to the gentleman who induced and prevailed on my doing this.

I have written as a novice, and as such would beg indulgence.

P.S.—Since completing the article, my friend Dr. Hickey of Batu Anam has written as regards the skin of the hamadryad mentioned in these notes. He tells me that it measures 16 ft. $4\frac{1}{2}$ in. I know that the skin of a tiger measures more than the tiger itself does between pegs, but whether this occurs where a snake is concerned, I am not informed. The skin has possibly shrunk, or perhaps a piece of the tail has come away.