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MY BHUTAN JOURNAL OF TIGER-SHOOTING, &c.,
IN THE WESTERN DOOARS OF BHUTAN.

(By T. A. D.)

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CHAPTER V.

GOOD-BYE TO THE *Barrah Saheb*, AND RETURN TO THE CAMP AT THE CHEL NADI—
RETURN MARCH TO KIRANTI—NUMEROUS FOOT-PRINTS OF TIGERS—THE
MAN-EATER AT BODAH—WONDERFUL INSTANCE OF MATERNAL INSTINCT IN
BENGALI WOMAN—RESCUE OF THE BODY OF HER CHILD—BENGAL POLICE
—DEATH OF THE MAN-EATER.

December 8, 1864.—I bade adieu to the *Barrah Saheb* this morning and left *Ambiák* for the plains. A portion of the camp was still at the Chel Nadi, as we had left the cavalry and some foot soldiers there to keep open our communications. I halted there for the night, dined with the officers, talked over the events at *Dalingkote*, and then to bed.

December 9, 1864.—Marched to *Kiranti*, a distance of sixteen or seventeen miles. Met herds of pack bullocks and buffaloes laden with commissariat stores and supplies for the troops at *Dalingkote*. The road or rather pathway was virtually choked with these animals. There were thousands of them for miles in a continuous stream, and at frequent intervals lay a dead bullock or a dead buffalo partially devoured by wild beasts. I had considerable difficulty in threading my way through the stream of cattle; and at length after a slow tedious march of seven or eight miles I congratulated myself on getting through them all. But a little further on I found the foot-prints of the cattle obliterated by those of tigers quite fresh, and I felt anything but comfortable. Both sides of the pathway were hemmed in by thick coarse grass about ten feet high: and as I rode along attended,

or rather followed, by a native groom on foot I called to him to come up close along-side of me, as I feared if he lagged behind he might be seized by a tiger and carried off. I drew my revolver from the holster, and held it in my hand ready for any emergency—but thank goodness, nothing happened, and we got through this dangerous part of the country safely.

It is assuredly a most extraordinary country—the soil rich, black, and loamy, and covered with a dense vegetation consisting in part of the coarse grass above alluded to, and in part of wild shrubs as varied as they are profuse, many of which one fancies one knows, and were it not that I have not the leisure to do so just now I would like to dismount and botanize a little—and then look at those splendid forests of young Sál trees which jut out from the foot of the hills for miles into the plains forming a sort of Vandyke fringe to them.

The country is almost totally uninhabited except by wild beasts. Wild elephants roam through the country in herds; they are I believe the hardiest, staunchest, and best breed in India. I have certainly seen some very handsome elephants caught in these Doors, and if properly trained they turn out first-rate shikari elephants. The country also abounds with rhinoceros,—and from the foot-prints I saw to-day I should say there were numberless tigers.

I wonder whether the rhinoceros of Bhutan—which is, I believe, a distinct species, different from all others, even from that of the Sunderbuns, and a very powerful beast—cannot be domesticated and made use of by man as a beast of burden. He is not generally savage in his wild state, and I have seen several tame ones very docile, and I know that the brutes can gallop and trot for miles at a stretch without stopping. Their flesh is held in much estimation by the Hindús, not on epicurian but religious principles. As for a Mech, he'll go any distance to get a piece of it. The rhinoceros' hide is susceptible of a beautiful polish; and as, when dried, it is about half an inch thick, as tough as a board, and of a beautiful amber color, semi-transparent like tortoise shell, very pretty unique work-tables for ladies might be made out of it. A side of rhinoceros' hide is from three to four feet wide. A Hindu, if rich enough, will give any price for a rhinoceros' horn the base of which is about as wide as the palm of a man's hand; it is used in the worship of idols or something like that.

The Meches are the only people who inhabit this part of the country near the foot of the hills. They seem to be of a mixed race, part Bhutia and part Bengali. Their language is a rough, coarse sort of Bengali, or rather it is Bengali spoken in a *patois* with a very broad foreign accent peculiar to themselves. They are apparently a harmless peaceful race, and would gladly see our Government supersede that of the Bhutanese to whom they have hitherto been a sort of slaves. Christian missionaries' labors would not be thrown away upon these poor people. They are truthful and honest, and have barely any religion.

I arrived at Kiranti at about 2 P. M. to-day, very tired. I found my camp pitched and every thing ready for me—even a tiger! My servants indeed told me that a tiger had been roaring round the camp all last night, and they believed he was in the jungle, just across the nullah, on the west bank of which was my camp. I was too tired to hunt him up immediately, but determined to beat up his quarters on the morrow, and see if I might not have the good fortune to bring him home with me. A crowd of the villagers had assembled at my camp, and were in waiting to greet me on my arrival. I told them all the news respecting the fall of Dalingkote, and I finished up with making them give three loud cheers for the Queen, thus "*Maharani ki jae*" !!!—Victory to the Queen. I next had a bath, and while enjoying it my breakfast was brought on the table, and being hungry I did full justice to the meal.

To-morrow will be the anniversary (as I see by my journal) of the death of a man-eater whom I made "eat" a few leaden bullets on that date last year. I have the details of the circumstances attending it yet fresh in my mind, and may as well jot them down here.

I was encamped at a village near Bodah in the Julpigori Sub-division of which I was the Magistrate, when information was brought to me officially of a "*khún*," which in native parlance means "murder," of a little boy in a village a few miles from my camp. A dry police report was the medium through which the information was conveyed to me.

It was to the effect that a boy aged about six or seven years, the only son of his mother, a widow of such a place whose husband had been dead about a year, caste Rajbongsi, Hindú, had gone to the village tank at about 7 o'clock in the morning; the tank was situated outside of and about a quarter of a mile or a little less from the village—that a tiger lay concealed in a small patch of jungle which was near the bank of the tank and close up to the spot where the boy had gone for water—and that about fifty yards away from this jungle, there were two men ploughing in a field—that doubtless the tiger had been watching for an opportunity to seize and devour one of the plough bullocks, but on seeing the boy approach so close to his lair he changed his mind, sprang out, seized the boy and at once carried him off into the jungle. "The depositions of the two ploughmen aforesaid having been taken are sent for the *húzúr's* perusal along with this report. They prove the truth of the above facts, and show clearly that no one but a tiger has committed this murder. *Dharmavátar málík!* (incarnation of the Deity! you are master) may it please you to issue the necessary orders, &c."

On receiving this Police report, which was read to me in the usual sing-song tones of the Cutcherry Amlah, and little dreaming what a precious piece of rascality on the part of our Indian Police I was to find out on visiting the spot in person, I ordered the elephants to be got ready and proceeded to the village where the "murder" had been committed, hoping to be able to do justice on the "murderer."

On arriving there I at once summoned the village Chowkidar (village watchman) and with him some of the head-men of the village. I waited for them just at the entrance thereof under a nice shady tree and discussed a sandwich or so whilst waiting. In a few minutes they came followed by a host of the unwashed men and boys, and some little girls in the back ground with children (their brothers or sisters) nearly as big as themselves whom they carried on their hips!—But in the name of wonder what's that! Look at that wild figure yonder running this way from the village! It's a woman screaming and crying aloud for justice! A woman wild with excitement; her head uncovered, and her dark, dusky tresses flying loose in the breeze; she elbows her way through the crowd and rushes in a frantic state up to my elephant and throws herself down almost under his very trunk. My mahout (elephant-driver) in alarm backs the elephant, and I too cry out for God's sake to take care! and call to the Chowkidar and others to lift up the poor frantic woman and prevent her throwing herself in the elephant's way as he may tread on and crush her to death! There's tremendous excitement in the crowd, jabbering, howling, and screaming at the very utmost power of their lungs as if Bedlam were let loose! and much to my annoyance and vexation I see the poor woman seized by some men in a brutally rough manner and dragged off to some distance.

I could stand this no longer, so I made my mahout (elephant-driver) make the elephant squat, and getting out of the howdah I sprang lightly to the ground. I elbowed my way through the crowd and went up to the wild woman who was still struggling with the Chowkidar and others who held her, and I ordered them peremptorily to release her. They did so, and she immediately rushed towards me and falling at my feet, literally bathed them with her tears!

"For God's sake," said I, "tell me what is the matter?—what ails this poor creature?"

Fifty throats yelled out some answer, but I could make nothing of it.

"*Chúp!* (silence)" said I to the crowd, "hold your noise!" I then stooped down and spoke mildly and soothingly to the poor woman still at my feet. I stroked her hair and removing it from her face, lifted her head gently and looking kindly into her face I asked her what was the matter? The only answer she gave me was "My child! my child!" I turned to the Chowkidar for an explanation, and as he hesitated a moment, the crowd yelled out something—each man eager to tender the required explanation, said something at the top of his voice, and in the multitude of voices the sounds of articulate words were drowned.

"For God's sake, *chúp,*" said I to the crowd; "*chúp!* and let me hear what the Chowkidar says. I again addressed the Chowkidar and asked him what was the matter. But before he had time to answer the woman herself spoke—

"My child! my child! the enemy has taken my child! Give me back my child or let him take me too!"

"Khodawand," said the Chowkidar, "the tiger has killed her child!"

"Poor creature!" said I, "I'm very sorry, but show me where the tiger is and I shall kill *him*."

"Look here," I heard a man in the crowd say, as it were aside, to his neighbour; "he too asks us to show him the tiger—he'll presently order us perhaps to go and seize him as the Policeman ordered us yesterday!"

"What is that senseless fool saying?" I asked; "I only want you to show me the jungle where the tiger is that I may go and slay him. I have come to do so."

"*Dharmoavotar!* I'll show you the place," said one of the head men.

"Very well," I answered, "get up on one of the elephants and lead the way."

I then gently raised the poor woman to her feet and explained to her that I was going to execute vengeance on her 'enemy,' and that for her sake I would make more sure of my aim than usual. I then bade her go home quietly, and I desired the villagers to treat her kindly—to show some sympathy for her distress and not to behave like such unfeeling brutes as they seemed. I then got into my howdah, loaded my battery, and started off under the guidance of the volunteer guide followed by a crowd of the villagers. He guided me first to the tank and showed me a small patch of jungle near it.

"That is the jungle," said the guide, "in which the tiger lay crouching and watching the plough-bullocks as they toiled through this partially ploughed field; and see! this is the spot where the tiger bounding out of the jungle seized the boy; there's blood on this leaf and the turf here is torn up by the claws of the tiger, and he carried the child into the jungle through that gap. He was an enormous tiger, and the child, a boy of six or seven years of age, seemed in his jaws not bigger than a mouse in the mouth of a cat. That is the spot, yonder there, under that little tree at the furthest corner of the field, where we all stood wondering whose child it could have been. We came there from the village when the ploughmen who had seen the affair ran thither in affright to tell us that a tiger had carried off some one's child! I hastily assembled my own family and found them all right. Some of the neighbours did the same, and we gradually got together under that tree and were talking the matter over when that poor woman came running from the village calling for *her* child—screaming out his name, but he did not answer, and she became possessed with the idea that it was *her* child the tiger had seized! 'Yes,' she said 'it is my child!—my only child! I have never done harm to the tiger or to any one else, and the Debta (deity) is unjustly angry with me. The tiger killed my husband last year, and now he has killed my child also! Oh! woe is me! What am I to do? My child—my only child!' And then she screamed out—'Oh! Ram

Krishno ! (her child's name) where are you !' and she then paused for an answer, but receiving none she said, 'he has taken all I had let him take me also !' and before we could stop her, she rushed madly for the jungle ; she was however chased by some of the neighbours, caught and brought back struggling violently like a maniac. We were all now at our wit's end, not knowing what to do. It was heart-rending to hear the poor woman bewailing her hard lot—and hard it assuredly was to be deprived of a husband and an only child within the space of a year by a brute of a tiger ! Her grief took such a violent form that we really thought she had gone raving mad, and no one liked to assume the responsibility of taking charge of her, and yet we could not leave her alone as she seemed determined on something madly desperate. At last one of the old men said, 'a policeman has come to such a village which is not more than half an hour's walk from this. We had better send for him and tell him what has happened and make over this mad woman to him.' We sent the Chowkidar immediately for the policeman, and in the meanwhile we carefully guarded the mad woman. We were obliged to keep a sharp look-out after her, as she tried to evade our vigilance once or twice.

"At last to our great relief we saw the policeman coming. As he approached closer we observed that his countenance was clouded, and the moment he arrived amongst us the storm of his anger burst forth ! 'Soh !' said he, 'a murder has been committed here I understand, and as if that were not bad enough you make it worse by sending for me to take charge of a mad woman ! What am I to take charge of her for ? She is not the murderer and the Police have nothing to do with mad people. My business is to take charge of the criminal, the *ássámi* (an accused person—a defendant). Now what I have to say to you is *házir karro* (produce, bring forward) the murderer, or it will not be well for you ! Do you hear me ? Come, be quick ! I cannot waste my time for nothing."

"We were so completely taken aback on hearing this, so utterly confounded, that we knew not what to say. We looked at each other like fools and perfectly bewildered, as we had never viewed the matter in this light.

"'Well !' said the policeman in a most decided uncompromising sort of tone, '*Házir karro* the *assámi* (produce the criminal) will you, or will you *not* obey my *hákim* ? (order). Am I to wait here all day ?'

"At last thinking the policeman had not heard the real story, one of us addressing him humbly said—

"'The *assámi* is a tiger !'

"'I know that perfectly well,' said he, 'and what is more I care nothing at all about it. The thing resolves itself into the simple fact that a murder has been committed in your village. You don't deny it, I suppose ?'

"We all humbly assented to this as a fact undeniable.

“ ‘You admit it then?’ he went on. ‘Very well, then you must also admit that it is your duty to deliver up the criminal, the murderer, in order that I, a policeman, whom you have summoned, may take charge of him. Now, as you have summoned me here I cannot leave this place without the *assâmi* (criminal); so once more and for the last time I order you to *hâzir karro* him (produce him). Bear witness to this, you Chowkidar, and you villagers, hear me tell you that if you fail or even hesitate to obey me in this, I’ll bind you every one, neck and crop, and march you up before our new Police Hakim, the Captain Saheb. You know, I suppose, that we are now a new Police? We are now *Sipâhis* (soldiers) not Barkandazes as we were formerly. We have a Captain Saheb as our *hâkim* and may do as we please, and all I’ll have to tell him will be that a murder has been committed in your village, and that you fellows, knowing who the murderer was, would not give him up at my demand.’

(To be continued.)

NOTES ON HUNTING DURING A THREE YEARS' FURLOUGH.—BY HOGSPEAR.

IN November 1858 I arrived in England, intent on three years of the best fox-hunting I could get, and in India I decided that the best way of getting good horses would be to buy them from Collins the dealer in Lambeth, who, I understood from enquiry and the *Sporting Magazine*, had the largest trade in these animals, sold numbers to Anderson and Maori and the other crack London dealers, and had always in hand horses in condition. I accordingly went to his stables, where a Mr. Bradshaw showed me the civilities, &c., and I think “stuck” me considerably for a couple of nags; the first, which was afterwards christened “Wild Indian,” was a particularly nice-looking brown gelding, all but thoroughbred, a little leggy perhaps for carrying weight, but with perfect action, and as nice as possible as far as I could see on the road; but his character, I was assured, was that of a *perfect hunter steady to hounds*. The other, a chesnut horse from Leicestershire with a long pedigree, not quite so nice-looking, but stronger: his forte was said to be fencing and steeple-chasing, “no fence could be too high or too broad.” I had no opportunity of testing the hunting qualifications. The look of the horses pleased me, and I could find nothing better to my taste, so I bought the pair for 280 guineas, and I also obtained the address of a groom who turned out an invaluable servant, and perhaps made up for the money I afterwards lost on these two horses. The three were at once started for Leamington, the place I intended to hunt from. The groom’s wages were £6 per mensem.

December saw me at the Regent Hotel, where the coffee-room flushed with red coats at breakfast, and where I was much eyed as a new man.