

There is another point of great importance to which I would draw special attention with reference to a rule in the Bangalore Prospectus that the ages of horses that have already run there will stand. It is that in order to *ensure* no injustice under the new system all horses must be re-aged as an essential part of it. Indeed in most cases the adoption of the new system *ipso facto* re-ages all horses, though it does not necessarily make them in some months of the year of a different age to what they would have been considered to be under the former system.

Two different views were taken of Satellite's age in July last by the Bangalore Stewards and the Stewards of the Calcutta Turf Club, and though it is now difficult to suggest exactly what complications will arise under the aging that may have been given to particular horses during the last two years, it is easy to imagine that there may be a case in which two horses who are really of the same age, one of whom has been aged before and the other not, may be made to run at a difference of a year in weight between them owing to that circumstance. I feel sure that the right course will be to re-age all horses, and it must be remembered that this will not necessitate much labour for the Stewards, or real alterations of age or rather of the proper weights carried by horses of each age but will only have the effect of giving each the proper weight of his real age. The mixing, so to speak, of the two systems is dangerous, and may have the very effect that all are anxious to avoid. Of course all admittedly aged horses may be put aside, and of the rest, many of whom have run, and the date of whose foaling and whose real age is known, the Stewards will have no real question to decide unless an error has been committed in previous years. The re-aging can only have the one effect of giving every horse the proper weight of his real age, and if it should have happened that he did not carry that last year, it will be a good thing that he should do so henceforward.

RECORDS OF SPORT IN ASSAM.

(Continued from page 470, vol. IV.)

JACKSON of the 43rd and myself had long contemplated a shooting bout together in the Dooars, but various circumstances had prevented our going before the middle of April 1870. On that day, however, we started by boat for Basah Ghat *en route* to Burpettah. Our elephants had been sent on some days previously and we took our provisions and servants with us. We went in a large boat o mine, started at 3 P.M. on the 15th April and reached the gha

at 2 A.M. We had a fair wind and made the journey in the shortest time on record. We found our elephants all ready for us, and after a bathe in the river and *chota hazaree*, we started for Burpettah at 7 A.M. on the morning of the 16th April, and got there at 11, where we were most hospitably entertained by Mr. Campbell, the Assistant Commissioner, and his wife. The whole of this day was devoted by us to sorting and repacking our stores in portable boxes, arranging the loads for the different elephants, filling howdahs with ammunition, guns, &c., so as to be able to start at an early hour next morning. My time was limited, thus we had to hurry on throughout our trip, and lost half the game we wounded, because we could not afford the time to halt and hunt it up. My companion had had a good deal of sport on foot in Central India, but not much experience in shooting off elephants in Assam; but he was a capital shot, an ardent sportsman, and a right good companion. We had everything any one could want in the way of provisions, &c., and set out on the 17th in good spirits and anticipating good sport. We generally took breakfast with us and one or two beating elephants, the rest we sent on with the servants along the native pathways to our proposed camps. Mr. Campbell, one of the best sportsmen in Assam, was unable to accompany us, but aided us in every way in his power, and to him we were indebted for our supplies in localities remote from villages, when, without his orders, the native officials would have given us nothing. He had also been kind enough to get us huts built at the different places where we proposed to halt. Sookur and his uncle Seetaram also accompanied us. They knew the country we proposed to travel over, and the former is the best tracker I have ever come across, and has hunted with me since June 1867.

Sunday 17th.—Sunday is always a lucky day with me for shooting, and this proved no exception. We started at 5½ A.M., making our way straight across country for Baikee, our first halting place. We had scarcely crossed the stream at Burpettah and entered the short grass jungle on the opposite side, when Jackson got a shot at a hog deer with shot, but failed to bag, I also missed one with ball. We saw many Buffs but they were on the *qui vive* and we would not be at the trouble of following them up. We then started a lot of marsh deer and in following them up got separated. I made a lucky shot with the Express and bowled over the big stag of the herd and wounded another but lost it. Whilst I was quartering this deer (we had no spare elephants with us and had thus to carry what we shot ourselves) Jackson joined me, having shot a hog deer. The deer I killed had very fine horns, eight tips to each, but they were in velvet, but the horn had formed, so we were able

to preserve the head entire. This being our first march we did not wish to stay out long, so made direct for camp. *En route* Jackson killed a nice sized boar and a buck sambur; as the latter was killed close to camp, we sent the villagers back for it and they soon brought it in. We arrived at Bishuat at 11½ and found our traps had just arrived. We put up in a small hut, taking the precaution before going into it of knocking all the sides down; in this hot weather all one wants is a roof over head, but any enclosures are a mistake. As there was a nice breeze blowing, though a blazing sun overhead, we were soon *en deshabille* and comfortable enough. After breakfast we had a snooze and when we woke up there was news of a tiger having killed a cow close by. We did not stir till 5 P.M.; we then got all our elephants in a line between us, Jackson on the left flank and I on the right; with the exception of the two elephants which we were riding, all the rest were barebacked. We had not advanced 300 yards from our camp, when in front of us, nearer Jackson than to me, out sprang a tiger; I ran along through the short grass; the shot was a difficult and a long one; but Jackson fired, the tiger gave a roar and immediately pulled up, I called out, "Well done, Jackson, a good shot." With the exception of the patch of grass jungle in which the tiger was, the country was open all round. We made the beating elephants form a line, touching one another, whilst we took up our positions in the open, one on the left the other on the right. When the beaters got to within 50 or 60 yards of the tiger, he immediately roared and charged at them, but as not one of them moved (in fact being jammed together they could not) he swerved and came right at me; my elephant stood like a rock; I allowed him to come within ten yards and then a shell in the chest rolled him over dead. I fired one other shot into his neck to make sure, but there was no need for the second shot as the first had killed him. We got down and examined it carefully but there was not a sign of a graze even beyond the two shots fired by me into him, and it has always puzzled me why he roared and pulled up when Jackson fired at him, as he was undoubtedly untouched. I can only attribute his doing so to having been on some previous occasion wounded, in fact there was an old scar on his shoulder, the remains of an old gunshot wound. He measured as he lay dead 9 feet 4 inches; height 2 feet 11 inches. We thus began luckily.

April 18th.—Marched for Mina Multee direct; fired two shots at a deer and a pig but got neither. We arrived at 11 and our traps at 12. Had great difficulty in getting rations here though the people ought to know me well by this time. I always pay for everything they bring and give the money into their own hands, but the Assamese

are a curious lot and will sell nothing unless ordered to do so by some official who has immediate control over them. There is a nice stream here in which we did "buffalo" for a considerable time.

April 19th.—We started very early intending to go to the Manass River, where it enters the plains from the mountains—a most lovely spot. I rode to-day a very large old Mucknah elephant belonging to the regiment; he is a most steady brute, but so slow that it is heart-breaking being on him in chase of a wounded animal. I don't suppose he could go beyond the rate of two miles an hour, however hard he might be pushed. After starting we changed our minds about going to the Manass and beat about the jungles in the vicinity of the village. We got on to the track of a rhino, but he was wide awake and gave Jackson a long shot only, and though hard hit got away. We saw many herds of marsh deer but very few bucks. I shot two does and Jackson one; going home we each shot a pig. We lost the only two bucks we saw and wounded; the game about here has been frightened away; there are several native shikaris about, who fire at everything with inadequate charges, slightly wound them, lose the game and render it so wild that there is no getting within shot of it afterwards.

April 20th.—We started in earnest to-day for the Manass at Bagh Dooah. I was on the Mucknah again. We went a long way without seeing anything, but nearing a fine tope of trees, a sort of oasis in the surrounding grass jungle, Jackson fired at a buck marsh deer but missed; I then came upon two others, beckoned to Jackson, and following up, we bagged them both. Beyond the tope we came upon rhino tracks and followed up carefully; we had to go a long way but came upon it fast asleep in the bed of an exposed nullah. The brute looked like a huge pig, fast asleep, it had its head towards us, and in the position it was lying, no vital part was exposed. I was closest to the brute but hesitated to fire; at last the mahout Sookur had the sense to whistle, the rhino woke up, lifted its head and gave us good shots at its chest. On receiving our shots, it jumped up and ran at us, but it had no chance and in a few seconds we polished it off between us. It proved a cow, with an insignificant horn. Shortly afterwards we came upon a herd of Buffs, killed two between us and wounded several others. We then breakfasted, and rested for half an hour; when we resumed our journey, Jackson made a good shot and killed a young deer, which we padded for the pot.

Near our camp I saw a very large rhino standing in the shade of a large tree, his head was covered by the trunk, but I could see

behind the shoulder nicely. I got to within 40 yards and my first shot knocked it down, I fired two more shots as it lay struggling on the ground but the more I fired the more lively it got. Eventually it sprang up and ran some distance; I fired at it as fast as I could load; it kept about 50 to 60 yards ahead of me, and I could not get the Mucknah an inch nearer. The dense jungle was near at hand and once in that, I was pretty certain to lose rhino, but at this critical moment up came Jackson on a fast elephant and between us we soon killed it. This was one of the largest rhinos I have ever seen, and I have seen and helped to kill more than fifty of them. His measurements carefully taken were as follows: extreme length from snout to tip of tail 13 feet 4 inches, height at shoulder 6 feet 2 inches, length of horn 13 inches; but I notice in your Magazine for February 1873 the author of "My Bhootan Journal" mentions a rhino 7 feet or 8 feet in height, which I consider preposterous. Being close to camp I went direct for it, but Jackson deviated off to the right, came upon another rhino and fired seven shots into it and lost it in heavy tree forest. It was so badly wounded it could not go out of a walk, but we never got it after all. Jackson got home about 4 P.M. We then went together in a boat on the Manass and trolled for mahsur. Jackson caught the first about 6lbs. in weight, I then caught three weighing 19, 8, and 25lbs. Our mahouts who went to bring in the head of the big rhino saw a tiger eating a deer, both going and coming, and wanted us to go after it, but as it was all but dark we declined, intending to beat it up on the morrow. To-night it blew a perfect tornado through the gorge of the Manass and both Jackson and I had an inch of fine sand and burnt ashes in our beds in the morning. So moved camp further inland out of the way of the nightly breeze, which sets in about five in the afternoon, and blows all night. The water of the Manass here is so cold, that it cools beer and wine sufficiently to frost the wine-glasses in a manner similar to what iced water would do. It is a lovely spot altogether.

April 21st.—We very foolishly instead of going after the tiger, went after the rhino Jackson had wounded. His mahout got confused and never took us I believe anywhere near where Jackson lost the rhino the evening before. After wasting an hour or two in this unprofitable search, we followed up fresh tracks, but up to 9 o'clock saw nothing. Suddenly as we were passing a narrow strip of grass jungle, Jackson caught sight of a rhino and fired into it, and I never heard such a pandemonium in my life before or since. There must have been at least a dozen rhinos in that small patch, we could hear their grunting and yelling for full five minutes, the grass was so high and of so dense a nature

that I hesitated to take the elephants into it, as the risk of getting them cut was so great, and the rhinos judging by the noise they made and the way they were rushing about in the grass, were perfectly frenzied and would injure us to a certainty if we went in rashly. As the grass seemed very dry, we took up our positions ahead and set the mahouts to burn towards us, but that failed as the jungle would not burn. We then sat down to breakfast, and before we had half finished some of the mahouts ran up saying there was a rhino as big as an elephant feeding a short way off. Of course we jumped up, mounted our beasts and went towards the point indicated. We soon saw an immense rhino, he seemed so intent on feeding, that instead of trying to stalk him, which we could have done easily, having a deep nullah to our right, along the bed of which we might have gone undiscovered to within ten yards of him, we went at him straight. We got to within 60 yards, when the brute looked up and immediately turned to bolt; he got two barrels from each of us, rolled down the nullah side, picked himself up at the bottom and ran away as lively as a two year old. We followed some way, but seeing that it was a hopeless task, we hied back to the strip where Jackson had wounded one before breakfast. Into this we entered very cautiously, keeping the elephants well together; almost immediately, one, followed by a butcha, charged Jackson, whose elephant swerved, but not before his rider had fired two shots and turned the rhino towards me; I gave him two shots too and he ran about 50 yards and then dropped dead. In the meanwhile I had got right into the midst of the herd; there were five or six rhinos round me all making their diabolical noises, at which elephants generally go mad with funk, but the Mucknah I was on never moved. I had a brute charging on the left and one on the flank, and several others making feints all round and fired as quickly as I could snatch up the guns. Luckily I had a good battery and killed two and wounded two others; of the former one fell to my last shot, and of the latter one ran round and round for some time perfectly dazed, but escaped in the scrimmage after all. I had great difficulty in restraining Sookur, who wanted to drive the elephant after the retreating rhinos before I was loaded again; he got so excited that I had to threaten to punch his head to keep him within bounds. I have never seen such a scene in Assam again, and but for the steadiness of the elephant he must have come to grief. Jackson blazed away at them too but killed none. We then joined and beat steadily through the strip of jungle; we hit three very hard, but only got one of them, the other two got into the jungle so interlaced with creepers that elephants could not follow them

there. We then turned back to get the horns of those we had killed, when suddenly a three-parts-grown rhino charged me, I turned him with two shots, he then bore down upon Jackson whose elephant turned tail and bolted, followed in full chase by the rhino. Jackson, who could scarcely shoot, owing to the pace at which his elephant was going, at last killed it, but not before it had closed with his elephant and struck it on the rump, but fortunately without cutting it. Jackson got cut and bruised about in the howdah badly, and he must have had a bad time of it whilst the chase lasted. *En route* home I killed a hog deer and a pig, Jackson also wounded a pig but lost it. In the evening we went out fishing. Jackson caught two mahsur 20 and 12lbs., and I caught also two, 19½ and 6lbs. On the whole I think we had a good day's work; at least three or four of the rhinos hit to-day must have died, but we could not afford the time to hunt them up.

April 22nd.—Jackson was very seedy all last night, we got off late this morning. Just as we were starting got the English mail. We saw nothing till after crossing the Gatu nullah, we then saw a large rhino, but he was too wide awake and escaped unscathed. Shortly afterwards we saw another and stalked him beautifully; as he entered a clump of trees, we went round and met him face to face and polished him off at once. We went on to the Pohamarah river and crossed it, it had little or no water so we gave up the idea of halting on its banks. In a clump of trees I saw a Mithun, or *Bos Jaurus*, and hit it hard, but it got into such fearfully tangled tree-jungle that I could not follow it and lost it. Going home we saw several sambur deer but would not fire at them. Jackson got a hog deer near camp. In the evening we went out fishing. Jackson caught two, one weighing 26lbs. and one 7lbs. I caught two, one 17lbs. and one 9lbs. We each lost two fish. The rhino shot to-day had a diseased horn full of maggots, it would have fallen off in a few days.

April 23rd.—We moved camp to-day—slight rain during the night and in the morning. We went a long way without seeing anything, but at last fired at a large marsh deer and immediately afterwards came upon the tracks of a rhino, followed it up and we both hit it hard but lost it in a small patch of tree-jungle. As rhino tracks were plentiful, we would not fire at deer, tho' we saw many fine bucks. In following up a fresh track I saw a rhino in the bed of a stream and hit it hard; it ran up the bank in front of Jackson and self and we soon killed it between us. I then came upon a bear and killed it. Jackson then wounded a rhino but it got away. I soon afterwards floored another rhino, and as it was struggling to get up, Jackson and I emptied our

battery into it, but for all that, it got away. It passed Jackson's orderly and got two shots from him—thus out of five rhinos badly hit to-day we only got one. We came upon a wild elephant, a fine Mucknah, but of course did not molest it. Jackson also wounded a large bull Buff but lost it. Our people came across two rhinos and the big elephant and had to fire at it as it would not get out of the way. In the evening we again went out. I shot a doe marsh deer and Jackson a fine cow buffalo and calf; the cow had horns 10·6 inches. The village where we halted to-day is called Basharu. There is a small stream here of beautifully clear, cold water, and we lay for an hour at a time in it and enjoyed it immensely.

April 24th.—We went out after the rain ceased and sent Seetaram and the orderly to look up the wounded rhinos. Instead of doing so, they followed up fresh tracks and spoilt our day's sport by disturbing the country ahead of us. We saw to-day some of the finest buffis I have ever seen; some had immense horns, but we could not get near them. Whilst endeavouring to follow them up, I came upon a bear, rolled it over, but lost it. After trudging a long way—the sun and heat were awful—we came upon fresh marks of rhino; Sookur followed them up. The brute had been feeding in circles, so the task of following up his marks was a tedious one. Jackson got tired of it and remained under a tree, whilst I went on and came upon it in a very small patch of grass and killed it outright. We then came to a very heavy belt of jungle and out of it ran a rhino and butcha. We unfortunately killed both, the butcha by an accident. *En route* home, in the bed of a small but deep and narrow nullah, I saw a rhino as I thought dead—it was lying on its back with its legs up in the air. I tried to show it to the mahout, but he would not or could not see it. I called out to Jackson, "Here is one of the rhinos we hit yesterday lying dead." No sooner had I spoken than the beast jumped up and charged me. For the first time the old Mucknah turned round and so escaped being cut I believe, and in another moment Jackson and I killed the rhino between us.

(To be continued.)

DONKEY HUNTING ON THE RUNN* OF KUTCH.

By H.L.N.

HAVING heard a good deal about the wild donkeys to be found on the Runn of Kutch, I took the opportunity when lately paying

* The Runn is simply a vast sand plain, quite firm at this time of year and in fact excellent galloping ground; here and there uncertain patches, rather moist and slippery, are found, but as a rule it is level as a table and totally devoid of cultivation of any kind.