

DIARY

IN

CEYLON & INDIA,

1878-9.

BY

VISCOUNT HINCHINGBROOK.

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time remaining at my disposal. I ought to have at least three weeks to make it worth while to join the expedition.

*April 11th.*—Good Friday. Church at 7 a.m. ; punkahs going, and very hot notwithstanding. At 5.30 p.m. the Guicowar, with a suite of three gentlemen, returned my visit. I received him at the entrance to the bungalow, and conducted him hand-in-hand to the sofa, where he sat on my right. He leaves Baroda tomorrow morning for his summer residence near Surat. He studies with his tutor daily, from 11 till 5, and several other boys are educated with him. They say he is very studious ; he speaks English, Mahrattée and Guzerattee fluently, and works at gymnastics and wrestling with one of the trained wrestlers ; except during his studies, he is entirely under the influence of the Maharanee, and sleeps in the same room with her and the little daughter. Arrangements are going on to bring about his marriage with a Tanjore princess. His visit lasted about half-an-hour, and we went through the usual garland, attar, and pan ceremonies at his departure. We drove in the evening and paid a visit to Major Westmacott, 20th N. I., and saw his collection of skins, heads, and the Cutch-work cups he has won at races.

*April 12th.*—Started at 4 a.m., and drove with Favre, Major and Mrs. Nutt to the Guicowar's Makarpure Palace, about eight miles from Baroda, a sort of Chinese-looking building. There is a huge room on the first floor, with countless chandeliers, and very broad verandahs all round. A large party of the *élite* of Baroda was assembled, and we started, some riding, some in bullock carts, to the Preserves, three miles away, where black buck abound. Here I got into a bullock cart with the cheetah. It was rather droll, lying in the cart alongside the brute—he was hooded, but might have made himself very unpleasant if he had felt so inclined. The sport then commenced. We saw several big herds, but they were very wild, and there was no getting near them. The fact was, our party was much too large ; and the ground being quite level, with very little covert,

the antelopes were very shy. At last we got a run, and the cheetah, springing from the cart, gave me an awful whack over the face with his tail. In the first run he only brought down a small doe, and the next time a buck; but after the proceeding has been once seen it is poor sport; the ground was very rough, the heat very great, and I soon had enough of it.

At 8.30 a.m. I suggested that the time had arrived when I might have a stalk; the party returned to the palace, and the cheetahs were sent home. I remained alone with a native shikaree, and began my stalk alongside him on a little pony, but as we could not communicate at the critical moment, that plan did not answer. I started off alone on foot, and having spotted a good buck, managed to move a herd forward, so as to be able to run and cut him off; he was one of the last of a lot; I shot him high in the back, as he galloped by, ran up and stuck him with my knife. While the gralloching was going on I saw three good buck feeding, not more than 400 yards off, and stalking nearer, hit one of them high in the fore leg. He made away as hard as he could, but I saw him lie down in a thicket, a quarter of a mile off. I got near him and found I had only one round, so I signalled to a native to get me some ammunition. His coming up put the beast away and I had about an hour's run after him. He lay down several times and bounded off as often as I came up within shot; however, at last I knocked him over and had the satisfaction of joining the party at breakfast with two fine bucks; the first was being carried in on a charpoy by a woman and a boy! We had a remarkably hot drive home, by 1 p.m.

One is not used in India to walking and running about in the sun, and I had a good sleep till it was time to start for the Arena, which is famous throughout India for the barbaric splendour of the Oriental sports. The spectacle is unique of its kind, and of all the wonderful sights I have witnessed during my travels, nothing has impressed me more than this pageant, which the Guicowar had arranged for me. We arrived about 5 p.m.,

drove into the great amphitheatre, and took our places in a pavilion erected near one end of it. The crowds of people were enormous, many thousands in every variety of costume and colour. On a bank, immediately opposite, was a long line of elephants, gorgeously caparisoned; numbers of attendants in and around our pavilion, and the wrestlers and others connected with the sports paraded below. The Prime Minister sat next me, and seeing some vacant chairs in the front row, I asked him to beg some of the native swells to sit down. He did not take any notice, and when I asked him again, he amused me considerably, by saying, "I do not think their rank is high enough to sit near your Lordship." The sports commenced by the performances of two parrots, which went through acrobatic feats on a pole, turned head over heels, loaded and fired toy cannons, strung bows and shot arrows, etc. Then followed wrestling; the competitors very fine fellows; some of the contests lasted so long that the men had to be separated; after which, rhinoceros fights, during which the beasts had water spurted over them by their attendants; then elephant fights; two "must" elephants, who charged each other in grand style; one of them had his tusk shattered, and a great bit of it was brought up to me. The most curious spectacle was the manner in which they were separated; rockets were fired between them, and their hind legs were caught with iron bands, with spikes inside; these were then strapped together, and they were led away by a chain attached to the foreleg. Bullock fights followed; one of the bullocks, getting the worst of it, galloped off, treading down the bars at the entrance, and started off down the streets of the city. Then ram fights; and lastly, a man, with a lance, on horseback was pursued by an elephant. It looked a dangerous proceeding, but he managed his horse splendidly. There was a big tree and a tower in the arena, round which he dodged when pressed, and he cantered about, sometimes letting the elephant get as near him as possible consistent with safety.

By this time it was getting dark, so we intimated "bâs"