

Y. AFTER BIG GAME IN INDIA.

ANGLO-AMERICAN EXPEDITION.

STALKING RHINOCEROS ON FOOT.

The following is the first of two articles by Lieut.-Col. J. C. Faunthorpe about the experiences of the Vernay-Faunthorpe expedition, the members of which recently returned from India. The object of the Expedition was the collection of Indian specimens for the New York Museum of Natural History.

(By Lieut.-Col. J. C. Faunthorpe, C.B.E.,
M.C., A.D.C.)

The New York Museum of Natural History is building, at a cost of nine million dollars, an annexe, the Roosevelt Hall, one wing of which is for Asiatic animals. For this Professor Fairfield Osborn, the president, was anxious to obtain a good Indian collection, since the museum had few Indian specimens and those of poor quality.

Mr. Arthur S. Vernay, an Englishman who has been in business in New York for the last twenty years, and is well known from Alaska to Siam as an explorer, big-game hunter, and trapper, offered to finance an expedition. My services were asked for to organize and assist it. The museum promised a skilled American taxidermist. The Foreign Office and India Office, duly approached by the American Government, approved of the proposal. The India Office persuaded the Government of India to place me on special duty for three months; although the Government of India subsequently declined to be responsible for my pay during this period. In the meantime, all arrangements had been made, and the expedition had started.

The chief difficulty which confronted me was how to get the groups of the maximum number of species in the short time available. Owing to extreme heat and the rainy season, shooting must practically cease in India at the end of May, and in Burma at the end of June. We had only about five and a half months for the task. Good staff work, therefore, was called for. The services of Mr. G. H. Dyott, F.R.G.S., had been obtained. He is a skilled cinematographer and never hesitated about taking chances on foot with elephants, rhinos, tigers, &c. He took considerable chances. The expedition started in Oudh, in the Raj of Khairigarh's jungles, where a fine group of that beautiful and rare animal, the swamp deer, were obtained, including one stag with twelve-point antlers measuring 39½ in., the best head I have ever seen, and a "record" for the province.

A FRIENDLY RHINOCEROS.

After a fruitless trip into the Lower Himalayas after a big tusker elephant, Vernay visited Bhopal, where he was fortunate enough to secure a Sambhar stag, with a massive and symmetrical head of 41 in., and also specimens of the Indian antelope and gazelle. A 41 in. Sambhar is a fine trophy in these days. Colonel O'Connor, the British envoy to Nepal, had offered to help, and very kindly asked Vernay and Dyott to join his tiger shoot in Eastern Nepal, where Vernay bagged a couple of tigers and Dyott got some good films. The permission of the Government of Madras had been obtained to shoot one tusker and one female elephant, and the bison required for the group, in Madras Government Forest, and the Maharajah of Mysore allowed us one tusker elephant in his territory. Our object was to get a group of each species—for instance, for bison, one bull, one cow, and one calf; and, in addition to this, one skeleton of an adult bull. The skeleton series is of great interest when studying the evolution of types, which is one of Professor Fairfield Osborn's hobbies. In the case of elephant and rhino, we omitted the calf. In the case of deer and antelope, we secured an additional male or female or both.

The animal of which we were most anxious to secure good specimens was the great Indian one-horned rhinoceros, now extremely rare in British territory and decreasing very rapidly in Nepal. H.H. Maharajah Sir Chandra Shumshere Jung of Nepal fully appreciated the importance of the expedition and sent us to the Gandak Valley. This interesting tract of country is cut off from the plains by ranges of hills, through which the Gandak River cuts a tortuous way to the plains through a series of precipitous gorges. The valley is inhabited almost entirely by Tharus, of a very fine type.

We first started beating for rhino with elephants, and beat out a female rhino, with a small calf, which was living in some patches of thorn and bush cover near the camp. We refused to shoot her, as the calf was very small and the cow had a small horn, and we wished to make certain of getting good specimens. The trackers expressed surprise and regret. We became quite friendly with this lady rhino, whom we met frequently and whom we called Lizzie, but I think she was glad when we left. Vernay on one occasion crawled up to her private mud bath and watched her at about four yards range. Dyott, with his movie camera, sat over her mud bath for the next two afternoons, but Lizzie did not appear. She had a distinctly peevish expression when I last saw her.

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“BIRD SHOOTING.”

The local trackers did not seem keen on showing us big rhino, but a little heart-to-heart talk and the promise of good rewards to the trackers and also to the villagers induced the former to take us up to a large, solitary male rhino, who was located in a valley in the Sal Forest, containing heavy bush cover and several pools of water. This enormous, slate-coloured beast, who was apparently quite unconcerned by the presence of several men in trees who were watching him, allowed us to approach on elephants to within about seventy yards, from which range we both fired, with the result that he pitched over dead, after galloping about a hundred yards.

He was a big and very old male rhino, whose horn had been splintered and worn down, by digging or fighting, to about 8in. This was several miles from camp, and the taxidermist and his satellites had to spend the night by the carcass. The trackers were then bitterly reproached because we wanted horns of at least 12in., and it was decided that it would be more sporting and more effective to stalk the remaining specimens on foot rather than shoot at them from somewhat unsteady elephants.

The next day, after a fruitless expedition under the guidance of the trackers, we were informed by the villagers, on return to camp, that a rhino had been seen drinking in a pool on the other side of the river. The energetic Vernay immediately crossed in a boat. I sat down and ordered tea.

Shortly afterwards, the Nepalese Munshi (the District Officer's assistant), who had gone out with the local Nepalese lieutenant to shoot birds with my gun, arrived with the news that there was a big rhino wallowing in a pool not far from the river, about a mile down stream. He was breathing heavily from excitement and exertion. His account of how they came to see it was amusing. He said that he saw what he took to be a black water bird in the pool, and said to the lieutenant, "Give me the gun and I will shoot that bird." To which the lieutenant replied, "Brother, if there is any bird-shooting to be done, I will do it myself." They then approached the supposed bird, under cover of the heavy jungle on the bank above the pool, and found that it was the horn and ears of a rhino, which was lying in the water.

I got into a boat and hustled down stream. It was rapidly growing dark, but after a hurried scramble for half a mile over most uncomfortable pebbles, I saw the rhino still in the water

and managed to get up near him just as he was leaving the pool. He was a fine male, with a horn measuring 12½ in. On returning to camp I found that Vernay had accounted for the other one, a very fine male with a horn over 12 in., which, after being wounded, had charged him, but had been dropped in the grass on the river bank by another bullet from his .465 Holland. My rhino had evidently been fighting, and had some nasty incised wounds in his flanks and stomach. I was using a .400 Jeffery rifle.

Later on Vernay stalked a fine female rhino on foot, and killed her with one shot in the neck at about twenty yards. We got some wonderful films of tigers in the Gandak Valley, both "close-ups" and galloping in the open, but only actually shot one tigress—a very fine 9 ft. specimen, which will go into the tiger group in the museum.

ELEPHANTS AND BANANAS.

Our next trek was a long and weary one to the Billigiri Rangan Hills, which lie partly in Mysore territory and partly in the Coimbatore district of the Madras Presidency. This is the country described by Sanderson in the well-known book in which he writes of his life among wild animals while he was in charge of the Government Kheddah operations.

Our ground was over seventy miles from the railway. It is a charming tract of country, averaging about 4,500 ft. above sea level, with the higher hills running up to 6,000 ft. We were dependent here on the help of the coffee planters, especially Captain H. J. L. Fremlin and Mr. Ralph Morris, who have skilled Sholaga trackers. Two elephants had been, for some time, haunting Fremlin's coffee estate and the neighbourhood. One was a muckna, or tuskless elephant, and the other a large tusker, with one tusk only. It was decided to shoot the latter for the skeleton series in the New York Museum, and he fell to Vernay's rifle on the day of our arrival.

The Sholagas were pleased. These elephants used to come and ravage their banana plantations. The lament, "We have no bananas to-day," in Canarese (a most unmelodious language), was often heard in the land. We regretted afterwards that we had not shot the muckna instead for the skeleton, as he was a magnificent elephant—I think the finest I have ever seen, either wild or in captivity. The elephant has as many points as a horse, and this enormous muckna was not only perfectly shaped, but had a smooth and effortless action, reminding one of a good race-horse.

It is extraordinary how noiselessly a huge beast like this can move through heavy forest, and how invisible he is when standing motionless. When in movement he resembles a shadow, and when at rest might well be mistaken for one of the big grey rocks which are abundant on the hillsides.

(To be concluded.)

EARTHQUAKES.

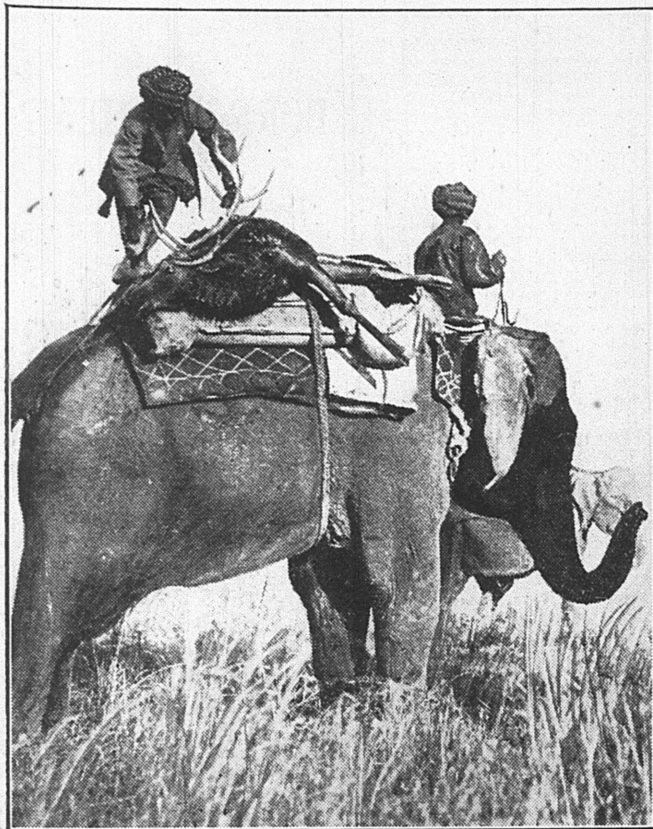
AN INQUIRY INTO CAUSES.

What causes earthquakes? There is a popular idea that they are connected with volcanic activity; but that is the case to only a very limited extent. The shaking of the earth produced by even the most violent volcanic eruption is felt over a comparatively restricted area.

Rather, earthquakes represent abnormal accelerations of normal secular movements of the earth's crust. Instead of a gradual yielding or settlement, there is a sudden slip. Earthquakes have been associated with what are known to geologists as faults, or with the continuation of a fault, but it does not follow that the fault was actually the cause of the earthquake, or the earthquake of the fault, and the fault is rather to be regarded as a weak place, at which the yielding under strain was focused.

Earthquakes, it is stated in the "Encyclopedia Britannica" by the late Dr. Milne, who was for many years in Japan, are, broadly speaking, most frequent along the steeper flanges of the earth's surface, and in regions

FILMING THE RHINOCEROS. WITH THE SPANISH-M.



AFTER BIG GAME IN INDIA.—On another page is the first of two articles describing the work of the Vernay-Faunthorpe expedition for collecting specimens in India on behalf of the New York Museum of Natural History. Our photograph shows the method employed in taking the specimens to camp. On the elephant is the body of a swamp deer.



THE RHINOCEROS AT HOME.—One of the remarkable photographs obtained by Mr. G. H. Dyott, F.R.G.S., with the Vernay-Faunthorpe expedition. It is of Lizzie, the Indian one-horned rhinoceros, the subject of part of Lieut.-Col. J. G. Faunthorpe's article, and her baby in the thornbush of the Gandak Valley.