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"BIG GAME SHOOTING IN COOCH BEHAR."

THE MAHARAJAH OF COOCH BEHAR has been known to the English public for many years not only as a staunch and intelligent supporter of the British "Raj" in India, but as one of the most distinguished big game sportsmen in the world. His Highness is the fortunate possessor, in his territory of Cooch Behar, the Duars and Assam, of one of the finest tracts of sporting country to be found in any part of the world. Here, in the vast jungles of the great Assam plain, are to be found numbers of the huge one-horned rhinoceros, now very scarce in India, and plenty of tigers, leopard, bison, buffalo, and bear, as well as the fine Asiatic deer known as Sambhur and Barasingh. This grand game country is naturally carefully preserved by the Maharajah, who each year offers a big shoot to distinguished guests. Among those who have had the privilege and pleasure of shooting in Cooch Behar are to be numbered, not only notabilities from Britain, but from all parts of Europe.

In the present volume the Maharajah gives an account of the shooting in these wonderful natural game preserves for no less than thirty-seven years—from 1871 to 1907. The grand total of the bag is enormous, and gives a capital idea of the kind of hunting still to be enjoyed in perfection in this part of India. Tigers killed number 365, leopard 311, rhino 207, bison 49, buffalo 438, bear 133, sambhur 259, and barasingh 318. The sum total is 2,069 head of game! The main body of this book, which is handsomely got up and extremely well illustrated, is devoted to an account of the various hunting expeditions year by year. Many exciting incidents are recounted, especially with tigers, which, time after time, appear to have charged the long line of elephants used in the chase, and to



A 10ft. 2in. tiger, shot on the first day of 1891 shoot.

(From "Thirty-seven Years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar, the Duars, and Assam," a rough diary by the Maharajah of Cooch Behar. London: Rowland Ward, Ltd.)

have inflicted more or less severe injuries. At the end of the volume are some exceedingly interesting tables giving measurements of the finest of the beasts shot. The record rhinoceros, shot by the Maharajah himself, stood no less than 19½ hands at the shoulder, and carried a horn of 13in. His girth was 119in. The biggest tiger given measured 10ft. 5in. There is a very pertinent appendix, giving the Maharajah's views on rifles, and as his Highness has had immense experience with all kinds of game, it is well worth study. Altogether this book will be found of very great interest, not only to all big game shikaris, but also to the average sportsman.

"TEN YEARS OF GAMEKEEPING."

MR. OWEN JONES has produced an excellently written book in his "Ten Years of Gamekeeping." The photographs and publisher's work generally are all high-class. At the same time, ten years' personal experience is not likely to give any man all that is to be known of the business of game-keeping, and considering how the old, and successful, keepers have been tapped for information by people whose experience of game preservation and of shooting, has been out of all proportion longer and more varied than that of Mr. Owen Jones, little very new could be expected. Our experience of the matter is that each man of twenty or thirty years' experience may excel in some one of the many branches of a gamekeeper's business, and is not infallible as to the rest. We doubt whether there are 200 gamekeepers in England who can shoot even up to the average of cockney gunners; there certainly cannot be 200 who can break a dog to approach the professional breakers. There are not 200 keepers in England who have worked successfully the new methods with partridges, about which Mr. Jones is not informative. Only Yorkshiremen and Scots really understand grouse, and only a few of them do more than keep off poachers, human, avian, and brute, and they burn the heather badly. The fact is, an English keeper is tied to one place; and, in the most important time of year for a naturalist, to one field, doing henwife's business in rearing pheasants, and even in that business the average gamekeeper is a baby compared to the game farmers. It may be mentioned that the author, who had been well educated, took to gamekeeping for a living. He has now abandoned the profession, and the guests he has had to meet, in his



Photo. Mosconi.

Bridge.

(From "Old Etruria and Modern Tuscany," by Mary Lovett Cameron. London: Methuen and Co.)

capacity of keeper, he now has a laugh at. Some of his funny things have appeared in different guise before. There is, for instance, that of the man who goes shooting in a gorgeous blue coat which a dog defiled, but change the blue coat to blue trousers, and the story has been in print for twenty years. There is another in which the keeper, who has buried them, tells a huntsman the foxes are all gone to ground. This, too, is as old as the hills, in a double sense; first it was one of the Hills who replied to it, and as long ago as Jim Hills, of the Heythrop, whose retort is omitted. It was: "Yes, but who put 'em there?"

"OLD ETRURIA AND MODERN TUSCANY."

It is, we fancy, the portion of this carefully written book that deals with old Tuscany which will prove the more valuable if not the lighter reading. Leaving still, from no fault of her own, but from the absence of practical records, a great deal to conjecture, the authoress has reconstructed such an ancient Etruria as recent investigations seem to suggest if not absolutely to prove. Let us hope with her that the increasing energy of local exploration will supply the missing link, the lost language that will elucidate fully the story in stone, which in its absence is left uncertain. In the meanwhile the reader will read with interest and perhaps with conviction the views of the origin, the civilisation, the government, of ancient Etruria, which the writer has based upon the results of up-to-date research.



Our first rhino, 1887 shoot.

(From "Thirty-seven Years of Big Game Shooting in Cooch Behar, the Duars, and Assam," a rough diary by the Maharajah of Cooch Behar. London: Rowland Ward, Ltd.)



What a fox left of a pheasant sitting on fourteen eggs.



Placing decoys on wheat stalks.



Mistress of the situation.

(From "Ten Years of Gamekeeping," by Owen Jones, "Gamekeeper." London: Edward Arnold.)