

INDIAN BIG GAME.

THE VERNAY-FAUNTHORPE FILM.

A private view of the cinematograph pictures of the Vernay-Faunthorpe Expedition after Indian big game was given at the St. James's Picture Theatre on Thursday afternoon. A description of the expedition was given in two articles by Lieutenant-Colonel Faunthorpe, published in *The Times* of September 7 and 8 last; and it will be remembered that the trip, which was financed by Mr. A. S. Vernay (an Englishman residing in New York) was made for the purpose of collecting specimens of Indian wild animals for presentation, as a contribution to the cause of Anglo-American good will, to the American Museum of Natural History. The expedition had the approval and assistance of the India Office and the Government of India, as well as of the Ruling Princes whose territories were visited; and it was extremely successful in the securing of the most important animals—tigers, leopards, rhinoceroses, gaur (or so-called "bison"), and elephants. The photographs were taken by Mr. G. M. Dyott, F.R.G.S., who acted as lecturer at Thursday's exhibition and lectured very well. Among the films was one which showed a wounded tiger trying, for the space of a couple of minutes, to make up its mind, at a distance of 21ft. from the camera, whether or not to charge the entirely defenceless operator. Luckily for Mr. Dyott, it hesitated too long and Mr. Vernay had time to come up and shoot it. But they were a tense two minutes.

Another tiger picture of extraordinary interest showed the animal cantering, broad-side-on, across open sandy ground in full view of the camera, while rifle-shots kicked up spurts of dust beside it as it went. In yet a third, a tiger charged Colonel Faunthorpe's elephant and, climbing its head, tore the poor beast's trunk badly before a bullet neatly placed between the eyes dropped it dead. Even more unusual—indeed, quite unique—were some pictures of a mother Indian rhinoceros with a young one. The Indian one-horned rhinoceros is a rare animal, seldom enough shot and surely never before filmed in its wild state. Beautiful also were pictures of wild elephants moving unsuspectingly in the jungle and of herds of axis deer drinking at a woodland pool.

Besides the pictures of game, there were a number of scenes of Indian village life, especially in the less-known districts of Burma and Nepal, with charming views of scenery in the hills and on the great Gandak river; the whole making, with Mr. Dyott's talk, an extremely interesting and consecutive picture-narrative. Public exhibitions of the film, under the title of "Jungle Life in India," will be given at the Philharmonic Hall for four weeks, beginning on November 5, before it is taken to America. The photographs are technically admirable, and it is undoubtedly the most absorbing wild-life film that has yet been presented.

Among those present at the exhibition were:—

Lord Cromer, Lord Desborough, Sir John Hewett, Sir Arthur Lawley, Colonel Clive Wigram, Colonel A. Rawlinson, Sir Malcolm Seton, Sir Percy and Lady Cox, Sir Joseph Cook (High Commissioner for Australia), Admiral Sir Percy Scott, Sir Francis Younghusband, Lord Sydenham, Lord St. Davids, Lord Chebushford, Lady Birkenhead, and Lady Scarbrough.

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