

No. IV.—BROWN RAT (*MUS NORVEGICUS*) IN KHANDEISH.

In his paper on the "Races of Indian Rats," in the Records of the Indian Museum, Captain Lloyd remarks that, although many writers have stated that the brown rat is found inland, he doubts if it is found away from sea-ports, and in support of this view points out that no examples have been received at the Indian Museum during the recent inquiry.

In the Society's collection there is a brown rat which was obtained at Chalisgaon, Khandeish, and sent in alive to the Society on Jan. 13th, 1908.

N. B. KINNEAR.

BOMBAY, October 1909.

No. V.—A RECORD GREAT INDIAN RHINOCEROS (*RHINOCEROS UNICORNIS*).

A great Indian Rhinoceros was recorded in the pages of the *Englishman* for May 4th as having been shot in Assam by Mr. T. Briscoe, carrying a horn of  $24\frac{1}{2}$  ins. and standing 6 feet 4 ins. at the shoulder. According to Lydekker the largest horn previously recorded was one of 24 ins. formerly in the possession of Dr. Jerdon, and in *Records of Big Game* one of  $21\frac{1}{2}$  ins. is mentioned as having been shot by Lord Curzon in Nepal.

In the above-mentioned book, Rowland Ward gives the height at shoulder of a rhino shot in Cooch-Bihar and in possession of the Maharaja as 6 feet 6 ins., but there is no mention of one taller than 6 feet 4 ins. in the Maharaja's magnificent book '*Shooting in Cooch Behars, Duars and Assam.*'

## No. VI.—HAUNTS OF THE INDIAN RHINOCEROS.

The following letter by a member of the Society appeared in the *Field* for July 24th, 1909.

SIR,—I have just seen an article "Oriental Big Game Notes," by Mr. R. Lydekker in the *Field* of May 29th last. His statement that the *Fauna of British India* (Part II., page 473) is incorrect in the supposition that the *Rhinoceros unicornis* is not found in India west of the Teesta river is certainly true. This rhinoceros is found in the Nepal Terai, in Morang, north of Purnea, on the Kosi, at Patharghatta, on the banks of the Bagmati north of Muzaffarpur, and as stated by Mr. Lydekker, it is even more numerous still farther to the west in the Chitwan and Naolpur valleys along the banks of the Gandak and the Rapti rivers.

In justice to His Highness the Maharaja of Nepal and the other Nepalese sportsmen, who took part in the great hunt referred to in the above article, I can, as an eye witness of what occurred, assure your readers that the account which Mr. Lydekker has heard is entirely garbled and misleading. The ground that was shot over in January and February 1907, was the tract originally preserved by the Nepal Government for the shooting which they had hoped to give His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales in February 1906. This, unfortunately, had to be abandoned owing to a severe outbreak of cholera in

the Maharaja's camp, which spread among the elephant drivers and rendered all question of a successful undertaking that year an impossibility. The total number of rhinos bagged was twenty-eight (fourteen males and fourteen females), and in addition six rhino calves were caught.

The Maharaja's object in trying to catch young rhinos was not, as might be inferred from your correspondent, either to sell them or to start a new form of sport (*i.e.*, rhinoceros racing) but to turn the young ones down for breeding purpose in the Eastern Terai, where these animals had become scarce through a disease which broke out some years ago. This, however, he was unable to do, as all six calves proved to be males.

In spite of the numbers of rhino which were killed in January 1907, the forests in Chitawan are still so full of them that no appreciable diminution in the stock has been made. The Maharaja was good enough to let me invite his Highness the Maharaja of Bikaner and another friend to shoot in February 1908, in the Naolpur valley bordering on Chitawan. My friends had no difficulty within two days in securing the four rhino for which I had asked the Nepal Durbar to limit the permit.

The following extract of a letter, dated May 25th, 1909, from Mr. F. W. Gordon-Canning, of the Pursa Factory, Champaran, who was fishing in the Rapti this year, will also corroborate what I say.

"My principal fun was going out on an elephant photographing rhinos. I hope some will come out well. I took a lot, and came as near as 15 yards. Once or twice we were in a tight place, but the rhinos did not make good their charge. They are simply in swarms; I counted twenty within a mile of my camp, and I did not go into the good ground. There were ten big ones in a small piece of grass not more than 5 acres in extent."

I do not know to what young stag from Sikkim Mr. Lydekker refers, but the designation "Sikkim stag" for the shou (*Cervus affinis*) is, as Hodgson pointed out, incorrect, for the shou does not appear south of the Brahmaputra watershed. If the young stag from Sikkim is *Cervus affinis*, the probability is that he came from Thibet *via* Sikkim, and was not reared in Sikkim.

J. MANNERS-SMITH, LIEUT.-COLONEL,  
British Resident in Nepal.

#### No. VII.—"THE MEASUREMENTS OF SOME OF THE HORNS IN THE COLLECTION OF THE BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY."

It has been suggested to me that I should have stated in the above-named paper how the various measurements were taken, since there appears to be no recognised way which is accepted by all sportsmen and naturalists.

After consulting Ward's *Horn Measurement*, Burke's *Shikar Book* and various other books dealing with Indian sport and Natural History, the following measurements and the manner of taking them were decided on—

*Length*.—In Cattle, Sheep, Goats (except Markhor), Antelope (except Black