

TRIPS TO THE SOONDERBUNDS.

BY YOUNG NIMROD.

"Where beasts with man divided empire claim,
And the brown Indian marks with murderous aim.—
Goldsmith's "Traveller."

Perchance the following brief account of the mode employed by natives of the Soonderbunds in slaying those gigantic quadrupeds who annually sally out of their retreat from dense forests, along with other herbivorous denizens, and commit great depredation on the ripe ears of paddy, may not prove void of interest to the readers of the "Field" in the dearth of sporting news.

The manner employed in doing so is very similar to that pursued by the Cingalese in the destruction of that leviathan of *terra firma*—the Elephant.

The inhabitants of four or five adjacent villages, (if they may be so called,) hire a shikaree for Rs. 60 or 100, according to his skill and reputation, who generally brings with him a couple or more assistants. They are *merely* armed with bows and arrows; the latter weapon is rendered poisonous by dipping the barbed ends in a liquid, made by the decoction of the leaves of certain plants. In the centre of a plain a sort of scaffolding is then erected, to the height of forty or fifty feet, and on the summit a place is made of about twelve feet square for the shikaree and his assistants to squat,—no pleasant place for an European to pass a night, and he who has done so once, may exclaim with Clarence—

I would not pass another such a night,
Though 'twere to buy a world of happy days.

But enough! The shikaree and his aids mount towards the close of even, to keep their nocturnal watch. Should a solitary Urna, or even a whole herd, stray in the vicinity of the *machaun*, the lurking foes quietly issue forth from their retreat, and, stealthily approaching as near as possible, raise their bended bows and let drive their unerring shafts at the eye, or any other vulnerable part, with a skill worthy of him we read of in school, who,

To save his own and Albert's life,
Tells us to shoot an apple from the head of his own child.

After this, they run back and climb up to their lofty ambush with the agility of monkeys. They are obliged to be very active, as the infuriated beasts, goaded by the wounds, run about confusedly in all directions in search of their latent assailants. They are almost invariably unsuccessful, and after a time they scamper away. The poison takes effect almost instantaneously, and they die in the course of a few hours. At dawn next day the villagers muster and go in search of the carcase or carcasses, as the case may be. It is curious that they should not use fire-arms in destroying buffaloes, albeit they do so in slaying rhinoceros, tigers, & *hoc genus omne*. In concluding, I must apologise for withholding the promised account of my second visit to the Soonderbunds for so long a time; but the fact is, I have lately had more business in hand than I could properly attend to. However, I hope to send it in time for your next number, and in the meanwhile adieu.