

## DESTRUCTION OF A RHINOCEROS IN THE SOONDERBUNDS.

(From an East Indian Correspondent.)

Messrs. Broadhead, Pitkin, Symes, and Lewis—four gentlemen connected with the Indian navy—co-operated in the object of cultivating a portion of that extensive and unprofitable tract of territory, known as the Soonderbunds, in Bengal, and, with this view, they caused a small house to be erected on a part of their estate, which was surrounded by a substantial brick wall. They also laid out a tolerably large-sized garden, which they had contrived to stock with such fruit-trees and vegetables as would prove subservient to their necessary wants. They had, moreover, constructed a spacious tank on the premises, to insure themselves a permanent supply of drinking water, and being surrounded with immediate comforts, they accustomed themselves, at certain seasons, to spend a few weeks on their little farm, relinquishing for a while the dusty arena of the City of Palaces (proud Calcutta). The site of their rustic abode was completely girt with forests, and, during the early period of their arrival on the spot, when the native woodmen were engaged in grubbing up the roots of trees, previously to the land being brought into a state of cultivation, it was by no means an unusual occurrence for the labourers to be carried off by tigers; but, as the jungle diminished, the above ferocious beasts receded into the interior, and were not so daring as they at first were, when man was seldom seen by them, and his ways and works less understood.

Upon one occasion, during their visit to their new estate, which was protected from the attacks of robbers by two large ferocious mastiffs, they encountered a very formidable enemy which they could not readily account for. These dogs were kept in a court before the dwelling-house, and one of them had, on a previous occasion, destroyed a native *dacoit* (a burglar), whilst in the act of effecting an entrance into the tenement. For several successive nights these animals appeared to manifest signs of much uneasiness, by indulging in unusual howling ejaculations, as if they vocally sympathised with their own fears and apprehensions, or as if they anticipated some unpleasant catastrophe. Two of the inmates marvelling at the event, became determined to unravel, if possible, the mystery of the canine spell, and arming themselves each with a double gun, loaded with ball, they took up their position on the wall, about ten feet high, which faced a broad deep tank, communicating with a paddock adjunct to their abode. They had not been posted there ten minutes before the dogs began to bay, simultaneously, evidently labouring under a languid paroxysm of dread and consternation. They did not appear to possess courage enough to bark or challenge the object they had in view; their natural tone of courage was palsied, indicative, that there was, close at hand, some apparition which inspired them with a doleful panic. By the faint portion of the light shed by a few feeble stars, the two sentries could indistinctly discern a large grotesque object, moving slowly towards the tank. At first they mistook the beast for a bullock, but then, again, all the bullocks on the farm were impounded, and safely housed for the night. Still, the object proceeded to advance at a sluggish pace, occasionally pausing and apparently looking around. The nearer it approached, its form became more apparent, and to their surprise, they discovered the beast to be a huge rhinoceros. It was of no possible utility for them to wage summary war against a thick

mailed beast of the above description, with common fowling pieces, whose hide would prove impervious to the missiles that might be directed against him, nor were they desirous to discharge the contents of their guns at him, which might have only alarmed him, and probably tended to have deterred him from revisiting his favourite tank, which it was but too evident he had been in the constant nocturnal habit of doing, as the indentations of his broad footmarks were correctly traceable on the ensuing morning, on the path verging upon the reservoir. They were desirous to effectually destroy the annoyance, and of ridding the locality of his presence, by having recourse to a more summary expedient, which was afterwards adopted. They retired for the night, and early on the morrow they despatched a servant to their Calcutta residence, detailing the facts of the case to their friends and desiring them to come down immediately, and to bring with them a four-pounder carronade, such as is used on board the coasting ships, with a necessary supply of grape shot. This summons was promptly obeyed, and in the course of the following afternoon Mr. Lewis arrived at the farm, equipped with all that was necessary to carry out the object of their intentions. By the help of a dozen coolies, the ordnance was fixed in such a position that the muzzle should point immediately opposite the last stage of the animal's descent to the water, whilst a rope ladder was furnished to enable the gunners to escalate the wall, and descend, at pleasure, to the *locus operandi*. These preparations having been effected, all was complete. The signal of the dogs was the word "onward" with them; and a little after one o'clock in the morning, "Growler" began to bay the beast's approach, while "Griper" joined in the complaint of his mate; and now, that all was ready, Mr. L. proceeded with a lighted rope in his hand, and scaling the wall, took up a position just behind the gun, whilst his two companions took possession of the parapet. The monstrous beast was seen to approach, and the critical moment arrived, which was to decide the merits of the adventure. The unsuspecting brute heavily paced his way down the slope to the margin of the waters, when, in the act of slaking his thirst, the portable thunder resounded in reverberative reverberations through the dense forest fastnesses. After a few seconds had elapsed, it was deemed necessary to ascertain whether they had succeeded in dispatching the beast or otherwise. Upon examining the spot no appearance of a rhinoceros presented itself to their notice. It was evident either that his ugly hide had repelled the shot, or that he had walked away with the annoyances, despite of their murderous tendencies. Search was, however, made on the following morning for the beast, and his carcass was discovered lying under a Soondree-tree, about 40 yards in the jungle, in the act of being banquetted by an army of vultures. This ferocious monster had killed no less than 14 ryotts within two months of his being destroyed. Mr. Lewis cut a few stripes from his hide as thongs, which he preserved as lasting trophies of his successful adventure.

DOWNING-STREET, JANUARY 10.—The Queen has been pleased to appoint John Bowring, Esq., to the Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the colony of Hongkong and its dependencies; Willoughby Shortland, Esq., some time President and Senior Member of the Council of the Island of Nevis, to be Lieutenant-Governor of the Island of Tobago; Frederick Seymour, Esq., to be President and Senior

Frederick Seymour, Esq., to be President and Senior Member of the Council of the Island of Nevis; William Robert Inglis, Esq., to be President of the Council of the Turks and Caicos Islands; George Cream, Esq., to be Surgeon and Medical Attendant of the Convict Settlement at Masserony, British Guiana. The under-mentioned gentlemen to be members of Legislative Council of the Colony of Victoria, viz.:—Hugh Culling Eardley Childers, Esq.; John Vesey Fitzgerald Foster, commonly called John Fitzgerald Leslie Foster, Esq.; James Horatio Nelson Cassell, Esq.; Andrew Clarke, Esq.; William Henry Fancourt Mitchell, Esq.; William Henry Wright, Esq.; James Graham, Esq.; William Highett, Esq.; Dr. Andrew Aldecorn; Edward Stone Parker, Esq.; and Andrew Halley Knight, Esq. Lieutenant William Langdon, R.N., to be a Member of the Legislative Council of the Colony of Van Diemen's Land; David C. Smith, Esq., to be a Member of the Legislative Council of the Turks and Caicos Island. JANUARY 11.—The Queen has been pleased to appoint Charles Elliott, Esq., Captain in the Royal Navy, now Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Bermudas or Somers Islands, to be Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Island of Trinidad and its dependencies. JANUARY 27.—The Queen, has been pleased to appoint Lieut. Andrew Clarke, of the Royal Engineers, to be Surveyor-General for the colony of Victoria.

**DESCENDANT OF DR FOE.**—We had occasion recently to speak of the rewards of literature, and this week a curious illustration comes to hand. Let a man win a victory or so, and his descendants will sit in the House of Lords to give the nation the entailed benefit of their unwise council. But let him win never so many victories over ignorance---let him teach and delight millions---he founds no family, he leaves no fortune. From obscurity he sprang, into it his family vanishes. It was but the other day that a descendant of the great Corneille was discovered in France. The Emperor, knowing his countrymen, immediately pensioned her. Will our Government pension the descendant of De Foe, recently discovered! Our Government can, from its niggard stores allotted to literature, science, and art, pension widows who have houses in Belgravia, and live "in the first circles" but if it finds one penny for a great-grandson of De Foe, the amazement of the nation will be immense. Yet, it is true, and think of it all, ye readers of "Robinson Crusoe," the great-grandson of the man whose imagination has enchanted you, whose creations have been the long familiar household words of Europe, is now alive, destitute, seventy-seven years old, with a wife, aged sixty-nine, and five children alive out of fifteen, one of whom helps the mother in her washing, the others not able to do more than support themselves. The first public intimation of his existence was made in 1830, in Wilson's "Life and Times of Daniel De Foe," from which we borrow an extract:—  
"From information communicated by the representative of the family in the male line, it appears that De Foe had a grandson named Samuel De Foe, but from which of his sons he descended, is, it seems, uncertain; although most likely from the one who continued in England. Upon the 1st of April, 1743, he was put apprentice to a calico-printer in London, and afterwards followed the business upon his own account; but marrying a person who kept the Royal Tun, at West Ham, in Essex, he removed thither, and conducted the concern until the death of his wife, when

conducted the concern until the death of his wife, when he returned to calico-printing. He afterwards married a second wife, proved unfortunate in business, and dying at Pedlar's-acre, in November, 1783, was buried in Lambeth Churchyard. By the first marriage he had three sons—Samuel, who died young; Richard, bred a carpenter; and Joseph, who came to an untimely end. By his second wife he had four sons and four daughters. Daniel was bound apprentice to a watchmaker, but ran away and went to sea. He afterwards became cook on board the Savage sloop of war, and was living in that employment in 1787. Samuel has been dead some years, Joseph was brought up a caulker, and went to sea. He married, and had two children; one of whom, bearing his own name, is still living. James, the younger son, is living at this time, a box-maker and undertaker, in Hungerford Market, London. He has had a family of eight children, of whom two are now living, James and Priscilla." Mr. Wilson gave a copy of his book to this James De Foe, having established his identity. And Charles Knight—ever ready when generous work is to be done—has satisfied himself of this identity by examination of his account books and marriage certificate. In 1846, James De Foe, then in business in Bedford-street, failed, and was compelled to divide his effects among his creditors. Since then he has struggled against poverty, bearing a most excellent character. We have stated briefly the few facts within our knowledge, and now leave the matter with the press. Our brethren need not be told that the author of "Robinson Crusoe" was also a journalist; for the name of De Foe is enough in itself to move every English pen in behalf of his descendant.—*The Leader*.

THE REV. W. B. COLLYER, D.D. — This aged, eminent, and learned minister of the congregational body, died on the 11th. He was born at Blackheath, where his father carried on the business of a builder. He was the oldest Member of the London Board of Congregational Ministers, to which he was admitted at the beginning of the century. He was a boy preacher, having begun to preach at the early age of sixteen. Hanover Chapel, Peckham, was his first charge and his last; a stated ministry spread over upwards of half-a-century. Towards the close of the year 1808, the University of Edinburgh, in token of their approbation of his "Lectures on Scripture Facts," conferred upon him the degree of Doctor in Divinity. He was subsequently largely honoured with the degree of LL.D., and was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

RAILWAY LITERARY INSTITUTIONS. — The Committee of the Library and Literary Association connected with the London and North Western Railway have just published their first annual report. It states that the number of members on the books, including life members, is 280—119 of whom are resident at the country stations of the railway; and although there was, in the early part of the year, a large number of subscribers enrolled, the committee consider the steady adherence of so large a portion of the members, after the novelty had somewhat subsided, a very encouraging result. On the 1st day of January 1853, the committee commenced the circulation of the books amongst its members. At that time the library contained 672 volumes, and the number has since been increased to 1090 volumes. Of these 200 volumes have been presented to the association, and the remainder purchased. The books purchased have been selected with great care, and embrace the best standard works in the various departments of history, science, philosophy,

various departments of history, science, philosophy, and general literature, as well as a very carefully chosen assortment of works of fiction. The total number of volumes circulated since the commencement of the association is 6400, which would give an average of about 25 volumes to each member. Simultaneously with the opening of the library, the members obtained access to the reading-room of the association, which is regularly supplied with periodicals and newspapers. There is still a balance in the hands of the treasurer of £80 15s. 11d., part of which the committee recommend should be immediately applied to the purchase of additional books.—*Weekly News and Chronicle*.

John Mitchell's paper, the *Citizen*, contains the following instructive information respecting vitriol as an article of defence:—"A friend asks us what the English papers mean by vitriol. We shall tell him. After the French revolution of 1848 the *United Irishman*, Mr Mitchell's paper, contained an article giving a minute account of the barricades and street fighting as practised in Paris, and among other methods adopted by the citizens for checking the advance of soldiery through the streets, throwing down furniture and paving stones, firing from behind window-shutters, &c., the writer mentioned that some ladies judiciously sprinkled the advancing troops with vitriol, which was simply a fact; and we may now add that the same thing was done in Berlin, and with wholesome effect. Is our 'friend' shocked! Foolish friend, read Froissart, and you will find that melted lead, red-hot sand, everything that could penetrate the joints of men's armour, and cause them all the varieties of intolerable agony, were the common means of defence for cities and towns; and to facilitate these operations defensive walls were usually built with projecting machicolations. Did our friend ever see the Congreve rocket used in the British service, so cunningly devised for maiming, scorching, scattering blood and brains! This is all hypocritical trash. In war, everything that will either kill, hurt, burn, or blast an enemy, is good. Bless your innocent heart! vitriol is nothing. If there had been, as there ought to have been, an insurrection in Dublin, in 1848, and if the women in the upper stories could have rained hell fire upon the enemies of their country, they would have watered the revolutionary garden till it blossomed like the rose."—*Times*.

In digging for a well in the coalmines near Prague, the workmen met with a bed of yellow amber, apparently of great extent. Pieces weighing from 2 lb. to 3lb. have been extracted.

**FACTS IN HUMAN LIFE.**—The number of languages spoken in the world amounts to about 3064. The inhabitants of the globe profess more than 1000 different religions. The number of men is about equal to the number of women. The average of human life about 33 years. One quarter die previous to the age of seven years; one half before reaching 17; and those who pass this age enjoy a felicity refused to one-half the human species. To every 1000 persons only one reaches 100 years of life; to every 100 only six reach the age of 65; and not more than one in 500 lives to 80 years of age. There are on earth 1,000,000,000 inhabitants; and of these, 333,333,333 die every year, 91,824 every day, 3730 every hour, and 60 every minute, or one every second. These losses are about balanced by an equal number of births. The married are longer lived than the single, and above all, those who observe a sober and industrious conduct. Tall men live longer than short ones. Women have more chances of life in their favour previous to being 50 years of age than men, but fewer afterwards. The

more chances of life in their favour previous to being 50 years of age than men, but fewer afterwards. The number of marriages is in proportion of 75 to every 1000 individuals. Marriages are more frequent after the equinoxes ; that is, during the months of June and December. Those born in spring are generally more robust than others. Births and deaths are more frequent by night than by day. The number of men capable of bearing arms is calculated at one-fourth of the population.—*English Quarterly.*

**LIBERATION OF CONVICTS.**—During 1853, the first in which the tickets of leave were granted to the convicts serving in the hulks and convict stations in this country, eighty-one were permitted to return to their native places, or such other localities where they were most likely to obtain employment.