A BEAR HUNT IN THE HIMALAYAS.

"The shooting and sport of all kinds in India is magnificent, but consider the infernal elimate," is the answer most men will make when asked if they did not enjoy India for the sport, if for nothing else.

But there is one part of British India where you may enjoy fine sport in the midst of magnificent scenery and in a splendid climate for nine months of the year, and that is the Himalayan hills, between the altitudes of five thousand and ten thousand feet; below five thousand it is too hot at times, and above ten thousand it is equally too cold.

I had the good fortune, in one respect, to get a liver complaint whilst hunting Tantia Topee amongst the jungles of Central India, and was sent by a medical board for nine months to the hills-Nynee Tal (or the lake of the deity "Nynee") was my headquarters; but after two months' recruiting my strength there, I departed on a four months' "shikardour," or sporting tour, towards Tibbet and Ladak. To those accustomed to shooting in Scotland, where you may bang away all day, and every day, the change is very great. Here, in the Himalayas, you must work very hard, and walk very far to get a shot at all, one day in a week being more than the usual proportion of sport in such shooting.

Some of the best bear hunting I ever had was in company with the old Kumaon rajah, a Ghoorkha king whose territory had been an-nexed by the English thirty or forty years ago (when he was quite a boy), and who has ever since lived quietlyin his own capital on a pension of six hundred pounds per annum from Government. It is a remarkable instance of the aptitude of the English for conquest, that they should have taken by force of arms this ancient kingdom of Kumaon, as large as Wales, and held it peaceably ever since, though it is not garrisoned by a single British soldier, the only troops in it being generally two bat-talions of its own people in the pay of the English. When I was there the troops were the First Kumaonees and the Fourth Ghoork-has, with three English officers in each regiment-dressed in their own national costumes, with the ancestral weapon, "the Kookra," by their sides, manufactured though of the best English steel after an ancient Ghoorkha model. The only thing that marked them as British troops was the Union Jack which they carried as their standard.

I had made the acquaintance of the Kumson rajah by having been fortunate enough to relieve him from a very unpleasant position. I was out shooting pheasants in a rhododendron forest, when I heard loud shouts, and on hastening to the spot I found the Kumaon Rajah up a tree, his gun lying on the ground, which he had evidently dropped in climbing; and at the foot of the tree a large black she-bear with a broken fore leg, who could not climb the tree, but was scratching and snarling in a most unpleasant way. I relieved him by neatly putting a bullet through the brute's heart as it stood on its hind legs snarling at the rajah; since which he had always sent word to me when he have of any "chilar"? word to me when he heard of any "shihar," and, of course, he always got the first information from the country people, who knew his devotion to sport. He had a good collec-tion of English guns all made by "Daw." Six hundred pounds a year for a native in the hills, without any court or followers, is more than six thousand a year to a country gentleman in England.

I was lying in the verandah of my bungalow after tiffin one day, when the rajah's head shikaree, "Omrah Dean," appeared, and salaaming low, said, in the hill patois:—"The rajah, sahib, has heard of three reis' (bear) at Baghesur," mentioning a village on a river about twelve miles off; "he starts at sundown to sleep there, and attack them in the morning, and he hopes your royal highness (the usual way of addressing English in the hills) will accompany."

"Good," I said, "I will be at Baghesur at ten this evening."

At half-past nine, as I was slowly jogging on my tattoo into the village, I noticed a com-motion about the huts, and as soon as they caught sight of me several of the inhabitants run up, saying:-"O master! O doctor! hurry to save the man who has been torn by a bear and is dying," (they think all English are doctors; and if any Englishman travels far into the mountains he will find at his tent-door every morning all the sick of the surrounding districts assembled—goitre, fever, and rheu-matism are the chief disorders).

"Where is he?" said I. "Down by your tents, sahib," said they, pointing to the river where mine and the rajah's tents, which we had ment on, were pitched. I hastened on and found an unfortunate hillman lying on his face in a fainting state, his back torn to pieces, covered with blood, and his friends round him plastering his wounds over with cow-dung, which is their sovereign remedy for all cuts. I ascertained that the man was suffering from loss of blood; in an European, I should have been afraid of inflammation, but in the natives it is never to be feared, owing, I suppose, to a low diet and cooler blood. I therefore administered brandy, and with a sponge and warm water washed all the muck and dirt off his back. As he was too ill to be carried home, I laid him down under the fly of my tent, and told his wife to keep wet clothes on his back all night. A little opium and brandy gave him a quiet night, and the next morning the wounds were showing signs of healing. His wife told Omrah Deen, the rajah's shikaree, how it happened; and it appears it was one of the bears we were after. The man, coming home from working one evening, espied a bear feasting on his honey. Without a moment's thought, he his honey. rushed at the animal and began to belabor it with a "luttie," a heavy bambod shod with iron, which the native hill-men carry. At first the beast bolted, but on the man following it, it turned on him; he then ran, and falling down, the beast clawed his back. His screams brought out his wife and children, who drove the bear off with stones. The account cheered

was true, and we began to look up our wespons for the following day.

I had just received by coolie-dawk from
Barelly a box of shell bullets to fit my breechloading Prince's carbine, and I was very anxious to try them on some big beast, and expected some grand result if I hit a bear on

ns up as sportsmen, showing, as it did, that the report of bears being in the neighborhood

a hard place, such as his forehead. The bear is ane of the bardest animals to kill. The best place to aim at is the white patch in front of the chest, called by English sportsmen the "horse-shee." This is a fatal spot; the ball traversing the lungs causes a collapse of the vital powers, the beast generally falling on his back at once; but if you are very close to the bear, such as in a melee, or when he is grasping one of your coolies, the place to fire at is the head; but care must be taken to get a direct shot, as the ball will glance off at a very sharp angle.

The native hunters are more afraid of attacking bears than any other animals; for they say, from a wounded tiger or a leopard we can climb a tree, but a bear climbs up

after us, and faster than we can go. But I bave always maintained, and endeavored to persuade them, that two determined men with spears and shikar knives, or kookries, are a match for any bear; the only requisite qualities are firmness and courage to look the bear in the face; give the point as he comes up, generally it will be in the mouth, as the bear endeavors to seize the spear in his teeth; the moment he feels the wound he throws himself on his back, and with his fore-paws pushes the spear out of his mouth with ease, notwithstanding any endeavors of yours; indeed, you are lucky if the spear is not wrenched from your hand, as it very often is. Now is the time for your comrade, who steps up and plunges his spear into the breast between the fore-paws; you with your shikar knife sever the tendons under the fore-leg, both if you have time. The strength of the beast is enormous, and he will sometimes rise for a few minutes, and one blow from his fore-paw has been known to kill a man.

The haunts of the bear are rocks on a hillside, particularly those overlooking cultivated valleys; they sleep all day in caves, and issue out at night to feed in the sugarcane plantations. They do not stay long in the same cave if at all disturbed, but move about the country from cave to cave. Many of these caves are very deep. I have been in some running for one hundred yards into the hill side, and six or eight feet high, perhaps twenty feet wide at mouth, and narrowing away into the interior. The bears sleep in a mass together at the far end, and are often difficult to get out. The natives take advantage of a favorable wind when they have tracked a bear to a cave, and light large fires of wet leaves; the smoke, driving into the cave, sometimes forces the bear out, but it is tedious work, taking some hours. The natives hide themselves behind pieces of rock, and shoot poisoned arrows at the bear, as their great object is to get rid of him for the sake of their crops and honey, getting the flesh and skin being a secondary object, and hardly considered worth the depres of their crops. sidered worth the danger, they being, as I have observed, very fearful of the bear.

These caves, which abound throughout the Himalayas, are used very much, when they are in practicable places, by the Bhooteas who travel every year with large flocks of goats and gibboos (tame yak) from Tibbet and Hoondes to Hindostan, bringing salt, borax, and camphor in wallets both on the goats' and gibboos' backs, and taking back grain. Some of the passes are only open three months in the year; that of Niti, which I once crossed, is eighteen thousand feet at its lowest point, being three thousand feet higher than the summit of Mont Blane; consequently, the time of the communication being so limited between the people of the two sides of the mountain, when they do cross, it is in large parties; and a very unpleasant thing, when going along a narrow path, a roaring torrent forty or fifty feet below you on one side, and the bare wall of rock one thousand feet high on the other, to meet one of these long streams of men and animals in single file. If you are riding, the only thing to be done is to turn round, and ride back until you come to some open space or recess or cave in which you can stand while they pass, otherwise you are certain to be pushed over, horse and all, into the torrent, and dashed to pieces by the boiling and leaping waters in five minutes. It is impossible for the leading animals to stop, as the pressure of the multitude behind, reaching, perhaps, half or three-quarters of a mile, would force them over the precipice at once. When on foot we generally managed to squeeze up against the cliff-side, and let them pass, occupying ten minutes to half an hour. It was very amusing, when standing in this po-sition, to see the astonishment of the Tibbettans who were coming along with their flocks (they had no time to stop, hardly to speakas I said before, in these parties every one must keep moving, or over the precipice he goes), when they suddenly come upon-for the first time in their lives, perhaps-two white men standing against the rocks. They would shout out, in Mongol dialect, to their friends behind: "Look at the white man;" "Look at the 'Room' man," supposing, per-

haps we were Russians. I once lost a valuable animal with a very valuable load in this way. It was a large gibboo ox, which I had bought from a Hoonia chief; it was laden with two large wallets, in which were all my stock of brandy and medicine, and also lead, powder, and small shot. One of my paharries (i. e. hill-men), was walking in front of it as usual, leading it by a rope through its nose. It was on a narrow path, with a very steep precipice of several hundred feet on one side, clothed with thick brushword. The rest of my party, tent, etc., were some mile or two behind. This man was going on ahead, as he knew the country, to elect a place for an encampment. I was on the opposite side of the valley, stalking some snow pheasants which I had marked down. Turning my head to look at the valley, I saw coming down the narrow path a large party of Bhooteas, with ponies, goats, gibboos; in front were three with large wallets, full probably of salt, which is heavy and packs very close. Looking back down the valley to see where my party were, to my horror I saw my paharry with the gibboo ox and his valuable cargo strolling along up the path with his head down, and evidently quite unconscious of the approaching party, which a projecting rock, round which the path went, hid from his sight -the noise of the torrent below, I suppose, prevented his hearing the bells of the Bhooteas, which all their animals have round their necks. I shouted, fired my gun, threw my cap in the air, but all in vain; the noise of the torrent made him deaf, and his eyes on the ground prevented his seeing my signs. I then cast my eyes along the path to calculate where they would meet, and see if it was broad there. It appeared to me that the projecting rock, where the path was very narrow, was nearly half-way between them, if anything, nearer my man; but as he moved slower, going up hill, I hoped the leading ponies would come round the point of rock in time to warn him; but in a few moments I saw that I was wrong, and that in all probability my man would pass the point first. I held my breath as they approached each other. Now the leading ponies were out of my sight coming round the projecting rock—my man also approached it. He was not a gibboo's length from the point when the leading pony's head appeared round it. In an he let go the rope and drew himself close to the cliff; the poor gibboo began to turn round outwardly, in another second he would be safe. The leading pony, with a tra-veller's presence of mind, took in the whole unavoidable, slipped in between the gibboo and the rock, his bag of salt, I suppose, got under my poor animal's wallet, and the next moment I saw my property tumble down the precipies, and crash through the brushweed out of sight. I never saw any more of it; and it and the poor animal were doubtless pounded to a thousand pieces among

The rajah and I dined together that night. He was quite a civilized sort of a fellow, and sahib! reis!" I now took my position with

the sharp rocks of the tor rent.

did not disdain to smoke one of my havanahs; my rifle, kneeling on the track, looking down, he even took a slice of my European bacon and close to the projecting rock, behind which (sent out in tins from Fortnum and Mason) with his curry, but on the sly, when the Kit-mutgars were outside the tent. We turned in early, and by three the next morning the camp was astir. After two delicious mussucks of ice-cold glacier water from the river, I had a cup of tea, lit a cheroot, and felt "fit" for any bear. My arms were my shot-gun, with a bullet in left barrel; in my waist-belt a five-barrelled revolver, and a huge conteau de chasse, or sword bayonet, which would fix on to my short breech-loading rifle, carried by my gun coolie, who also had most of my ammu-

We strolled down to the river by starlight, the rajah and I with our gun coolies, his head skikaree, and a villager who had tracked the bears the day before to their cave, and crossed on two inflated buffalo skins; the other shikarees and beaters went up the river to cross at a ford, and beat the cultivated flat ground up to the hills where we were to be posted.

On arriving at the foot of the rocky cliffs, the villager showed us a sort of track winding up the sides, which were covered with low brushwood, and which he said led to some caves about two hundred feet higher, and that, about a mile on, there was another track which ran back to the same caves, and that the bears would come up one of these at daylight, or when disturbed. It was settled that I and my gun coolie should go up the first track, and that the rajah and his men should go on to the next one, as it was a wider one, with branches, and required several men to be on the watch, lest the bears should slip by and get into the caves unperceived. I was glad, before I had gone many hundred yards, that it was the coolest part of the twenty-four hours, for the track was very steep and very rough, hand-and-feet climbing most of the way, and by the time I reached the caves, and stood on the platform of rock in front of them, I was running with perspiration. From this spot I had a view of the whole valley, and could see the beaters just crossing the ford, preparatory to beating the flat ground below us, which was covered with sugar-cane and plantains. In the distance were the snowy summits of the highest Himalayas, thirty thousand feet, now gloriously tinted with red and gold from the beams of the rising sun, which had just caught them. As soon as I had recovered my breath I took a survey of the caves and their approaches, and quickly observed a projecting rock, round which the pathway or track wound, about fifty yards below the cave. Behind this I and my gun coolie ensconced ourselves. I placed a two-ounce bullet in each barrel of my smooth-bore, which I held in my hand, as the handiest and deadliest at close quarters; in my rifle held by the coolie I placed a shell bullet with a percussion head, and fixed the sword on ready for an emergency. Soon the shouts and cries of the beaters disturbed the valley below, and raised up clouds of birds-ducks from the river, and pheasants and hawks and pigeons from the

We had been peering over the rock behind which we were ambushed for some ten minutes, when my gun coolie gave me a nudge, as his quick ear detected something coming up the track, and in less than a minute appeared the shaggy black head of a bear shambling up the track. I cocked both barrels, determined to give him a broadside as he passed our ambuscade, and then to seize my rifle to finish him. As he approached our rock we could hear him growl and swear as his nose evidently detected us; but his desire to get to the cave, away from the row of the beaters, was apparently stronger than his prudence, and in half a minute his black head and forequarters loomed out between me and the sky as he trotted along the edge of the track. Bang! bang! went both my barrels pointed behind his shoulder, and in a cloud of dust and smoke he rolled over the precipice, and crashed through the rhododendron bushes. I handed my gun to the coolie to reload, and seizing my rifle, I moved to the edge to look after him, and see if he required anything more in the shape of a quietus.

About twenty yards below his carcase had caught in a thick bush, and I could see he was recovering and trying to get his footing. I immediately raised my rifle. and was peering about to get a fair shot at him between his eyes, which I could hardly see for the intervening bushes, when an unearthly vell from my coolie made me quickly look round, and, behold | four yards from me, two bears rushing up the track. One, a half-grown one, rushed, apparently to get past me, and get up to the caves, while the bigger reared on its hind legs, and evidently meant fighting. As the young one approached me I lowered my point and hinged at its chest, but it caught the sword in its mouth, and the point came out of its cheek on the other side. I had just time to observe this, and was about to withdraw it, when the big bear rushed at me and knocked me backwards. In falling I managed to get my face downwards, to save it and my chest from the clawing I expected, and immediately began to feel for my revolver, but, to my surprise, directly I fell the bear left me and went to the young one, who was kicking up a tremendous row about the sword in its cheek. I rose as quickly as I could, and shouted to my coolie for the smooth-bore. He was standing on the rock, up which he had climbed for safety, and was screaming for help, though there was no one to hear him; but almost as I rose, the young bear got his head clear of my rifle and sword, and he and the big one, which was evidently the mother, trotted off down the hill again. I discharged my revolver at their vanishing sterns, but apparently without effect, and now I heard again the scramblings of the first wounded bear trying to get up the cliff; his advent, though, I waited with the utmost composure, as I was sure he must feel very sick after my broadside. I crouched down, and soon his forepaws appeared on the edge of the track. I stepped up, and as his head appeared uttering flerce growls, I plunged my point into the centre of his chest. A dark stream of blood poured out, and the bear fell backwards and disappeared, crashing through the under-

I now retired to the old corner behind the rock, and refitted; my right arm was torn with the she-bear's claws-this I tied up; my rifle was much bruised and dented, and the sword was slightly bent by the efforts of the young bear to free himself; however, nothing had bappened to impair me or my weapons and I was soon ready for anything that might turn up. In a few minutes I heard two quick discharges, and then one from the direction of at a glance; seeing a collision was the rajah, and loud shouts. I hurried up the able, he lowered his head, and track to the mouth of the caves, thinking the rajah, and loud shouts. I hurried up the to intercept any bear that might have passed his party. However, I waited there some minutes, but nothing appeared, though another shot and loud shouting came from the same spot; and as I heard from the noise below that the beaters were nearing the foot of the cliff, I hurried back to my old ambush, in the hope of the she-bear and young one appearing again. Soon the shouts below us re-doubled, and we could hear the cry of "Reis!

I could spring if I should fail to bring down anything coming up, and in a few minutes a three-quarter grown bear came shambling up the path, followed by a yapping dog of the village, on whom he turned every now and then. He did not see me at first, and I waited until he was within twenty yards, then his little eyes caught sight of me and glistened with rage. He uttered loud growls, and re-doubled his pace; but the bead of my foresight was on his nose. I pulled, and the animal turned head over heels like a rabbit. My coolie handed me my smooth-bore, and I hurried up, but he was quite dead, and the village dog was worrying his carcase. The shell bullet had struck just under the left eye, having grazed along his nose (my aim had been the point of the snout), and apparently exploded at once, as all that side of the head was blown open, and the ear hanging down. By the time I had done examing and measuring the brute, some of the beaters appeared on the track I had come, so there was nothing more to expect from that quarter. Leaving my gun coolie to point out to the shikarees where my first bear had fallen over, I hurried on to see what the rajah had done. On arriving, I saw the rajah's shikaree, Omrah Deen, lying down, looking very sick, and a good deal of blood about; the rajah's rifle, with the barrel bent to an angle of forty-five degrees, and a half-grown bear lying dead on the path. It appears that the young bear had appeared first, when the rajah had knocked it over with the double shot, and that Omrah Deen had run out with a kookree to settle it, and drag it off the path. Whilst so employed a great she bear had come up suddenly, and clawed his back; the rajah had run out with his rifle, and afraid to fire for fear of hitting his man, had crammed the muzzle into the animal's mouth. He then, as he affirmed pulled the trigger with the muzzle pointing at its head, but I expect the bullet must have gone out of its cheek; however, the brute had bent the barrel nearly double, and then souttled off up the path, and must have gone into the cave before I arrived there. Soon afterwards another bear had come up the path at which the rajah had fired, with what effect he knew not, as the beast had turned a run down the path again. Some of the beaters said they had seen another bear get up to the caves by some track we had not known of; this was probably the bear that the rajah had fired at last. We now all moved up to the caves to see what we could do for the bears inside. There was no wind stirring, so a fire was hopeless to smoke them out; however, by the fire made we get some hot tea and chupatties; and our coolies in-dulged in the social hubble-bubble, made of a cocos-nut, which was handed from one to another. Omrah Deen began to feel rather faint from the loss of blood from the scratches on his back, so we made a litter for him, and determined to return to camp, leaving a shi-karee and two coolies to watch the cave; and how we got the two bears out I must relate at another time. We were fairly pleased with our success, having bagged three out of five bears seen, though certainly only one was full-grown; and if it had not been for poor Omrah Deen's back we should have had a very jolly morning .- From Temple Bar.

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681 Uniform Artillery Coats, 1087 Uniform Infantry Coats. 145 Uniform Cavalry Jackets. 822 Uniform Light Artillery Jackets. 122 Uniform Veteran Reserve Jackets. Footmen's Trowsers.

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