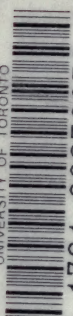


REMINISCENCES
OF AN INDIAN
CAVALRY OFFICER

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



3 1761 00870650 9

J. S. E. WESTERN

200
CHB

82
158
9/1/2
1/2

BERTRAM D SMITH
ACRES OF BOOKS
240 LONG BEACH BLVD,
LONG BEACH, CALIF,

SSAFA

THIS BOOK has been given for the benefit of S.S.A.F.A. Funds.

If, when you have read it, you have no further use for it, we should be glad to have it back again for resale, together with any other surplus books you may have.

THANK YOU !

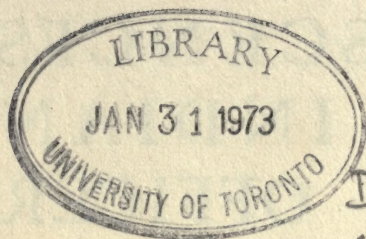
REMINISCENCES OF AN INDIAN CAVALRY OFFICER

BY

COLONEL J. S. E. WESTERN
C.B.E.



LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET W.C.1



DA

68

.32

W42A5

First published in 1922

(All rights reserved)

FOREWORD

THIS book is a collection of Reminiscences of a rather non-eventful life. I hope I have not stood too much in the limelight myself. My endeavour has been to record from the background the motley procession of memories that reflection throws on the screen. The memory slides are apt to get jumbled up, and the recent and the remote crop up without any attempt at a chronological order of events.

FOREWORD

The first is a collection of historical notes, a
second is a collection of historical notes, a
third is a collection of historical notes, a
fourth is a collection of historical notes, a
fifth is a collection of historical notes, a
sixth is a collection of historical notes, a
seventh is a collection of historical notes, a
eighth is a collection of historical notes, a
ninth is a collection of historical notes, a
tenth is a collection of historical notes, a

SYNOPSIS

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
Early Days—My Father—Sir Hugh Rose—Mutiny Experiences— Undecipherable Caligraphy—Vaughan of the 6th Punjab Infantry—One in the Eye—Gymnastics and Repentance— Schools in the Sixties—Swimming Lessons and a Close Shave— Cheltenham College—Jex Blake—Football and Chipped Shins— A "Rag" and its Consequences—Boating and a Thames Immersion—Competitive Examination—Unexpected Success .	11-27

CHAPTER II

Army Crammers—A Bone-breaking Escapade—Servants to the Fore with Bad News—Lendy's—Examination Prescience— Shooting the Weir—Hyde Baker—Sandhurst in the Old Days—Accidents, and a Few Reflections on Polo—Woodcock in Essex—The Wine Merchant's Caution—Men or Gentlemen —Native Officers in England—Royal Napery— <i>Toujours la Politesse</i>	28-42
--	-------

CHAPTER III

The Adventurous Riding of Youth—Burmah—Sport to be found there —The Burmese Tat—A "Stroke of the Wind"—The Burman's Love of Pony-Racing—Surgeon-Major Bevan— <i>Toujours Pret</i> Confederacy—The Shah—A Devil—The Wily Owner—The Bamboozled Purchaser—An Unpleasant Racing Incident— Armstrong Services—To interview the Stewards—Racing Guile —Sudden Death—A Devoted Servant—Master getting a Thrashing—A Whip Substitute—Law for the Motorists—A Stampede in Camp—Night Manceuvres—The Dharmala Earthquake	43-62
---	-------

CHAPTER IV

Indian Troopships—Hair-dressing Dangers—A Callous Hostess— A Famous Restaurant—A Spoilt Beauty—A <i>Surprise</i> —A <i>Bon Vivant</i> —Oorial-Shooting and a Hungry Christmastide—The	
--	--

	PAGE
Intoxicating Qualities of Curaçoa—A Slip on a Precipice— A " Long March "—A " Radical Cure "—The " Piffers " in the War—Hydrophobia—A Frontier <i>Dak</i> —A Three-legged Centi- pede—Hansom Cabs	63-84

CHAPTER V

English versus Indian Hunting and Polo—Packs of Hounds in India—Harry Blewitt's Hunting and Polo Experiences	85-100
---	--------

CHAPTER VI

Amenities of Language—Murree—A Young Lady's Experiences— A Spiritualistic Incident—Chiromancy—Big Jumps—The Grand National—Steeplechase Riders—A Grand Horse—Lord William Beresford—Starting an Office—A Chasing Incident—Modes of Expression—P. & O. and Other Lines to India—A P. & O. Steward—Extravagance—Our Ancestors' Taciturnity—Hands up—The Old Spirit	101-121
--	---------

CHAPTER VII

The Old Days—" Off Reckonings "—Sir John McQueen—The Black Mountain Expedition—Sir Charles Egerton—Short Rations— General Gatacre—General " Bobs "—Sir Reginald Pole Carew —A Good Arab—A Climbing Alpenstock—Sir Edmond Elles— Assassinations—A Lucky Escape—Indian Shekarris—The Taj— Sport before Scenery—The Inconveniences of Too Much Flesh— Sir William Western—Sir Charles Monro—Nicknames—" The Queens "—General Burn Murdoch—General Broadwood—Sir Beauchamp Duff—Tact—Sir George Corrie Bird—Umbrella versus Horse—Corruption and Retribution—Cavalry to the Front—Sir Power Palmer—Sir William Lockhart—Do the Stars determine our Courses?—Sir Edmund Barrow—A Latin Tag—Sir Walter Kitchener—Sanitation and Health—General MacCall—General Collins—Sir Louis Dening—A Judgment of Solomon	122-144
---	---------

CHAPTER VIII

Idiosyncrasies in Dress—The Revenge of the Marquis—The Duke's Sixpence—Grinding his Teeth—The Hospitable Major—The Deaf Hostess—The Modest Youth and the Cuckoo—A Different Type—The Chi-chi Language—The Resourceful Officer and the Young Lady—A Starving Officer—The Effects of Drink—A Famous Doctor—The Writer's Vanity—Ministry Methods— General Clery—Broadwood and Minor Tactics—Assassinations	
---	--

AN INDIAN CAVALRY OFFICER 9

PAGE

—Missfires—Sir Harold Deane—Holding the Reins—Policy for Irish Gunmen—The Audacious Horse-Stealers—Blackmail—Indian Telegrams—Anæsthetics for Dumb Friends—The Delhi Durbar—Lord Kitchener on the Frontier—Frontier Sores—Efficiency Tests 145-168

CHAPTER IX

Luck in Numbers—Thirteen—Sam Lewis—My Number Eighteen—Tent-pegging Experiences—Horsemanship and Trick-Riding—Naked Horses—How Pegs should be driven—Pig-sticking—Jodhpur Hospitality—Indian Gentleman Experts—Sir Pertab Singh—Itinerary of a Sporting Day—Size of Arab Horses—Riding Pig with Bamboo Cudgels—A Cruel Sport—The *Coup de grâce*—Dhokal Singh Polo-Player *par excellence*—Jodhpur Training—In Polo Youth must be served—Pony the Chief Factor—An Ordinary Officer—Confidential Reports—Dera Ghastly and Dreary Dismal—A Spear through the Instep—Snake under the Bed—Prepare for Cavalry—Poor Dog—Pace behind Cut—Black Buck-Coursing—Kellow Chesney—The Greater Bustard—Riding Birds—Hawking on Frontier—An Unusual Form of Yachting—Shark! 169-190

CHAPTER X

Tact—Troopships of the Old Days—Malta to Syracuse—A Trip through Italy—Indian Customs unsuited to Italians—Pompeii and getting even—Linguistic Talents—Staff College Examinations—The Colonel's Language—Estimated Life Values—A Warm Man—Coaches and Trains—Bread and Beer Fallacy—The Omnipotent Flapper—Drink defeated by Athletics—Polo Tournaments and Expenses—Polo Clubs and Polo Ponies—The Physical Factor—Height of Polo Ponies—Officers' Prestige—Roddy Owen—Cold Meat Trains—A Train-Stopping Device 191-209

CHAPTER XI

My Best Hunter—An Irish "Customer"—The Penalty for boasting—The Biggest Liar in the Army—Horse Copers—The Grey who did not like Hunting—The Horse with the Weak Heart who did—Humiliation in the "Row"—A "Review Order" Casualty—How to keep the Dust down—A Gallop for Water—An Afghan Boundary Commission—The Commissioners—Eastern versus European Diplomacy—A Record Head—An Appreciation of a "Topping" Regiment—Oorial—Snakes—Inaccessible Frontier Stations—A Score off the Staff—Turtle-Turning and an Appreciation of Beer 210-232

CHAPTER XII

PAGE

Tiger-Shooting—Early Disappointments—A Lost Collection—The
 Neilgherry Hills—Major Cust—The Neck Shot—Central India
 Horse Shoot—The Chambal Valley and Gwalior—A Group of
 Tigers—Profitable Snookers—The Married Man—Spence,
 Pinney and "Byngo" Baynes—The Gipsy "Patteran"—
 Leopards—A Lesson learnt—A Trap Incident—Some Foolish
 Incidents—Unparalleled Luck—The Pendulum swings . 233-245

CHAPTER XIII

General David Shaw—A Piccadilly Flat—Drawing the Wrong Officer
 —Cavalry Training and Musketry—Alarming Creepy-Crawlys
 —Passing on the Jest—Confusion of Language leads to the
 Wrong Place—A Dance Incident—Don't mutter—"Baxter,
 fire"—Baptism and a Buck-nigger—Brevet Rank—A Bad
 Illness—Royalty and Life Below Stairs—That d—d Irish-
 man—Baboos—Office Stool for Saddle—Non-appreciation of
 Humour—"Charles! open the window"—Port Wine and
 Claret—The Truffle Merchant 246-266

Reminiscences of an Indian Cavalry Officer

CHAPTER I

Early Days—My Father—Sir Hugh Rose—Mutiny Experiences—Undecipherable Caligraphy—Vaughan of the 6th Punjab Infantry—One in the Eye—Gymnastics and Repentance—Schools in the Sixties—Swimming Lessons and a Close Shave—Cheltenham College—Jex Blake—Football and Chipped Shins—A “Rag” and its Consequences—Boating and a Thames Immersion—Competitive Examination—Unexpected Success.

I CANNOT recall many very interesting remembrances of my early youth. All my best fun seems to have come after I arrived at years of discretion, yet my earliest days were spent amongst surroundings of an intensely exciting and anxious nature.

I was born in March, 1857, at Saugor, in the Central Provinces of India, a short time before the Mutiny broke out. My Father was at that time Deputy Commissioner of the Saugor and Nerbudda territories, and for many weeks my sleeping chamber was the interior of a travelling carriage, with the horses harnessed and close at hand. My brothers and sister, all older than myself, were luckily safe in England with relations, but even one helpless infant must have been quite

sufficient worry and anxiety in those hazardous times. Although both my parents lived considerably past the allotted span of man or woman, and did not die until many years after I was grown up, I have never been able to induce them to talk freely upon the painful recollections of those days.

The Central India Campaign took place, as probably many of my readers know, in 1858, some months after the Mutiny had broken out, and Saugor had been invested for something like seven months by the rebels before it was relieved by Sir Hugh Rose, afterwards Lord Strathnairn, in February, 1858. While this fine soldier was in the Saugor and Nerbudda District my Father, as Chief Civil Officer, accompanied his force on Political duty, and for these services received the thanks of both Houses of Parliament. I have frequently heard him express his admiration for Sir Hugh Rose, who was a fine type of Englishman of the old school, one who embodied in precept and example that excellent soldier's motto: *L'audace, l'audace et toujours l'audace.*

It was Sir Hugh Rose's custom to go straight for the enemy, wherever and whenever he found him, and not to leave him until he had exterminated him, and there is no better policy in Indian warfare. He spared neither himself nor those with him, a fact exemplified by his suffering no less than five sunstrokes during his campaign, a dose that, coming as they did quickly one on top of the other, would have been sufficient to finish off most ordinary men.

I remember my Father telling me that Sir Hugh

Rose customarily wore throughout the day a forage cap, with a white linen fringe to it, as his sole protection against the sun, and when it is remembered that the Central India Campaign was carried out through the extreme heat of the Indian summer, and that at the Battle of Kunch the thermometer stood at 110° in the shade and Heaven knows what in the sun, the sunstrokes are not to be wondered at, and it is marvellous how our ancestors' heads stood it. Perhaps their heads were harder than ours, or perhaps they learnt wisdom through painful experience; for when I returned to India some eighteen years later large sun-topes and helmets were the vogue, and have been since.

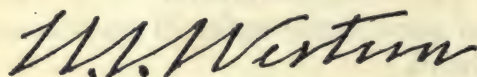
At a time when the recollections of the infamies of Cawnpore, Meerut, etc., were still seething in the hearts of all Europeans, probably human life, particularly that of the native, was not regarded as sacred as it is in the piping times of peace. On one occasion my Father came across an extremely worried European non-commissioned officer, who appeared to be in command of a small firing party, and some dead bodies of natives were lying close at hand.

My Father asked him what was troubling him, and the man replied, "Well, sir, we were ordered to shoot some mutineer prisoners, and I am afraid they handed over to us the wrong men." My Father suggested that he should report to the nearest Staff Officer, as he, in his civil capacity, had no jurisdiction over the troops. The Sergeant said he had already done so. "Well, what did

he tell you to do?" asked my Father. "'Shoot the right ones,' sir, is what he said, and then he rode on."

Whether the right ones *were* added to the tale of the dead I never heard, but the story exemplifies the callous spirit that no doubt prevailed at that time. During the long investment of Saugor by the mutineers, the civil administration of the District had naturally become somewhat hampered, and amongst other difficulties that arose, the money in the treasury ran short, and my Father found it necessary to institute a paper currency.

Hoping to guard against fraud, he took a step that made it only too easy. He arranged that all notes should bear his own personal signature. Now, caligraphy has never been a strong point with the Western family, and the curriculums of Felsted and Addiscombe, however admirable in general culture, do not seem to have fostered pencraft in my Father's case. His names were William Charles, and he wrote his signature by a series of pointed up and down strokes in the Italian style, thus



The astute brain of the native was quick to seize upon the openings for wealth presented by such easily copied hieroglyphy, and the pen of the ready writer became rampant amongst the impecunious in the land. Notes galore, far in excess of those subscribed by the hand of authority, were speedily in circulation, and the redemption of

the same would have been a serious matter for the financial department had not the fraud been early discovered and put right. I never heard what particular steps were taken to equalize matters, but the story and the moral were occasionally pointed out to us children with the view of inducing us to cultivate a more distinctive style of signature.

A good many debts, no doubt, had to be written off in those days, as in the days of all other campaigns.

I am reminded of an experience that occurred to a friend of mine, Vaughan of the 6th Punjab Infantry, and formerly of the Gordon Highlanders, now, alas! with the majority. He was hacked to pieces by Burmese dahs during the annexation of Upper Burmah in the latter eighties, while putting up a plucky fight against overwhelming odds. He was generally known on the Punjab Frontier as "the General," from his supposed likeness to a famous Frontier Force officer of the same name, General Vaughan, one of the heroes of the Umbeyla Campaign of 1863. My friend was one of the cheeriest, brightest, pluckiest and most popular officers to be found.

During the Jowaki Expedition in 1877, Vaughan, then a subaltern, was directed to take up a temporary appointment in the Commissariat Department, and one of his duties was the purchase of supplies, transport animals, fodder, etc., for the force. During the operations his office was "looted," and all receipts were lost, stolen or destroyed. Some two or three years after the campaign I was

attached to the 6th Punjab Infantry, and the monthly "Objection Statement" against officers' pay was always a subject of interest and amusement to us youngsters, as, with the greatest regularity, against the miserable monthly stipend of 300 rupees or so, pay earned by Lieut. Vaughan, appeared a claim of several hundred pounds for miscellaneous items, such as 500 camels, 1,000 mules, so many thousand maunds of hay or straw, for which the original looted receipts had naturally not been forthcoming. All was eventually written off, as no doubt were the losses, if any, incurred by the Saugor paper currency.

As soon as this financial *imbroglio* and other matters of State were wound up, my Father, who had earned his pension, and could have retired previous to the Mutiny, sent in his papers, and my Mother and myself accompanied him to England, and I made the first of my many voyages to and from the East in the *Vernon*, one of the old "Green's" sailing vessels, round the Cape.

As far as I am aware, my boyhood was as uninteresting and as uneventful to all except my parents and myself as the stories of "Henry and his bearer 'Boosey,'" of young Washington, who could not tell a lie, and of "Sanford and his tutor Merton" are to most English boys who were—I doubt if they are now—forced to peruse these mawkish tales on Sunday afternoons.

One of my earliest recollections is getting "one in the eye," not from the fist of a pugnacious playfellow—that came later—but a stream of warm juicy yeast. We were then living at Bath, where

my Father had a little property, and we were starting on a driving tour through Wales. We were a family party in an old-fashioned landau with a rumble behind, in which, in the company of luggage and a servant, I had been placed. My Father was on the box driving, and the rest of the family were packed in the body of the carriage. In the streets of Bristol we passed a brewer's dray laden with casks of yeast. It was a hot summer's day, and at the crucial moment of passing one of the bungs flew out, and to my astonishment I suddenly found my small self blinded and drenched in a stream of nasty, warm, smelling yeast. Incidentally, a beautiful blue velvet suit—so my Mother declared—was utterly spoilt.

However, I do not seem to have been much the worse for the episode. The next day we passed over the Clifton Suspension Bridge, and were told to get out of the carriage and walk across. I have always been rather fond of gymnastics, and a few years later I was the youngest boy in the Gym eight at Cheltenham, though my monkey tricks there were feeble and tame compared to those of a shining light named "Tickell," who, had not his fate placed him in happier surroundings, could no doubt have made a fortune for himself on the boards, and who will no doubt be remembered by old Cheltonians of those days. While the carriage was being led across the bridge, and the eyes of my family were directed to the scenery of the chasm, I gratified my climbing instincts by mounting into the upper chains of the Suspension Bridge,

and when I was a good way up suddenly realized I did not like it. My people had by this time seen the danger, and danger it undoubtedly was, the drop to the River Avon at the point of the bridge's suspension being some 250 feet. I believe some foolhardy diver met his death there a few years later, attempting to dive from the bridge into the river. Nobody dared speak or call to me for fear it should startle me and cause me to lose my hold, and as nobody could help me I had to tremblingly find my way down the way I got up, and arrived on the roadway a considerably chastened youngster.

It was about this period that I was first sent to school, at the tender age of seven. The school was in Lansdowne, and kept by a man called Daniell, a bit of a bully, who certainly carried out the precept of spare not the rod.

Schools were considerably rougher in the 1860 decade than they are nowadays.

For the first term I went as a day-boy, being escorted daily to and from the school by a Bath chairman named Pillinger. Chairs were common enough in Bath in those days, though I believe they are nearly non-existent now; and the chairmen were rather a superior lot of men, available for all sorts of handy jobs when not drawing their vehicles.

My first day at school brought me another "one in the eye," as I had not been there many hours before I found myself engaged in a pugilistic encounter. In the play interval we were turned into a sort of garden with a walnut-tree in it, and several of the green walnuts were laying about

on the ground. "Here's a new boy, let's cork him," was the pleasing introduction I received from my playmates, and the stinging reception caused me to go for the nearest attacker, and we were both soon at it hammer and tongs. Pillinger that afternoon escorted home a swollen-faced, disfigured child, and my big brother I remember gave me a shilling.

My career at Daniell's ended with whooping-cough. On Sundays we used to be taken to the same church which my parents attended, and we schoolboys used to sit in the gallery. Feeling, I suppose, a bit seedy, I had asked leave off church, and instead of receiving it, had come in for one or two sharp cuts with the cane for trying to evade my religious duties. During the sermon I had a fit of coughing, followed by a few piercing whoops. Shocked eyes were directed to the gallery, and one of the ushers was told to take me out. I, however, saw my opportunity, and made a determined resistance, holding to the front of the pew and kicking, and thus caused so much disturbance that I was left alone. After service was over I always used to see my people, and my Mother's first remark was "Which of you boys has got the whooping-cough?" The Head Master had also come up, no doubt to complain of my unruly behaviour, so I gave a convincing and personal demonstration as to whom the invalid was. My Mother flashed a reproachful glance upon the master and my Father, and I was led away there and then, never to return.

I had my first swimming lessons in Bath at a

very early age. Bath can easily beat the seaside in that direction, for owing to the water from the springs coming out of the earth quite hot, it is easy to keep a swimming bath full of warm water, and thus one can bathe summer and winter, and I was able to swim quite comfortably by the time I was seven years old.

However, I was nearly drowned there, for all that. My Father used to give me swimming lessons himself. The dressing-rooms of the swimming-bath were closed rooms, and used to open out on to steps into the water. The space between each set of steps was some ten or twelve feet. When I had undressed, I used to be told to sit outside on the steps, with the door closed, while my Father was undressing. On the second occasion of my going there, instead of waiting as I had been told to do, I thought I could swim from my set of steps to the next ones, and made the essay, only to get frightened and sink at once. To this day I can remember the horrid, suffocating sensation, and the awful funk I was in, as I went under, to come up, spluttering and helpless, only to sink under again. Very fortunately, before I was quite done for, some other gentleman came out of a neighbouring dressing-room, and seeing my perilous plight pulled me out into safety.

The Clevedon Swimming Baths, supplied with water from the Avon, was another summer swimming resort, and its proprietor was a man called Evans, rather a famous trick swimmer and diver. He used to have a yearly fête, at which he finally dived off a very high platform ninety feet high, into

seven feet of water. It was a thrilling moment watching his body shoot through the air, and his hands seemed to come out of the water almost as soon as he touched it, as indeed was necessary in such shallow water. It must have been a terrific strain on the muscles of the back.

Evans kept a lot of monkeys in cages round the bath, and one of these savaged his hand and caused him to lose a finger, and he found that that slight mutilation prevented a quick rise, and he was never able to perform his high dive after the accident.

After leaving Daniell's, I was sent to the Keir House, Wimbledon, for two or three years previous to entering Cheltenham College, where I stayed until I went to Crammers for the Army.

My schooldays at Wimbledon were pleasant and uneventful. The common was far wilder in those days than it is now, neither suburban villas nor golf-links had encroached upon its precincts, and it afforded delightful walks, with bird-nesting opportunities and no fear of trespass. The Rifle Association had its headquarters there in those days, and one of our masters was rather a noted shot, and competed for the Queen's Prize. I remember he lost no opportunity of wearing his Volunteer uniform, and was regarded by us boys with much awe and admiration.

After a few years I was moved on to Cheltenham. I fancy there are few schools that have passed so many soldiers into the Army as Cheltenham—unless perhaps it is Wellington. There were many names of the successful candidates for Wool-

wich and Sandhurst on the large slabs in the big Modern in 1870, and the names must run into many hundreds by this time. I never remember to have been in any military station where there were not a large percentage of old Cheltonians amongst the officers, and particularly amongst Gunners.

Jex Blake was the Principal, and "Gutty" Southwood the head of the Modern in those days. Considerable encouragement was given to games as well as to books, and what with cricket, football, fives, rackets, an exceptional gymnasium, a Rifle Club and a Boating Club, there was every opportunity for exercising our muscles as well as our brains. I don't ever remember hockey being played at Cheltenham, though I have often played it since I joined the Service.

Football was a considerably rougher game then than it is now. With some local modifications we played Rugby rules, and as hacking was permissible both in the scrimmages and running, it was quite easy to think oneself a bit of a wounded warrior at the end of a large game. I have dents on my shin-bones to this day, but I don't remember any broken limbs or bad accidents occurring to myself or to any of my playmates. I don't understand why hacking has been so universally abolished, it did no particular harm, and made boys more hardy.

There were a good many fights in those days, and I participated in one or two memorable ones myself. "Why, surely you are Chicken Western who fought Nigger Smith in the racket court"

was the greeting I received, some thirty years after the event, from a distinguished gunner Colonel whom I met at the Royal Manœuvres in India in 1905, and as the greeting took place at a pow-wow of very eminent officers, I felt some embarrassment at my youthful peccadillos being thus brought prominently forward.

Imposition school, or Impot school as we called it, when the delinquents were packed into a school-room to write out lines under the eyes of a master on half-holidays, was a common, and to my mind rather foolish, punishment of those days. A few cuts with a cane would probably have been better both for our minds and bodies.

There was a good-natured master at Cheltenham in those days who, however learned in book-lore, was a weak disciplinarian. I cannot remember his name, the boys always called him Jim Flop. It fell to Jim Flop to be in charge of a rather large and unruly Impot school one sunny summer afternoon. Whether the call of the weather was too strong or the discipline too weak matters not, but before we boys had been in school many minutes insubordination and riot were in the ascendant, ending in a rush for the doors and breaking out of all the boys.

Next morning the whole of the College was assembled before the Principal, and he informed us that unless the twelve boys who had been sitting at a certain table from which it was decreed the rioting had commenced came forward and gave themselves up, he would have to take a step unparalleled in the annals of public-school history

and expel every boy who had been in Imposition school. It was my luck to have sat at this particular table. After a little pause twelve subdued, depressed and anxious young gentlemen were seen reluctantly moving from different parts of the room towards the Principal's dais. The rest of the College were then dismissed, and some 900 boys left the big Classical, with backward glances at the selected victims, and making significant gestures to denote the wholesome whipping that, whatever other punishment followed, was looked upon as a certain preliminary. As soon as the room was emptied Mr. Jex Blake turned to us, and said he was most pleased that we had come forward as we did, and that as we had done so he would only give us a nominal punishment, and we were directed to write 500 lines apiece. Like Arnold of Rugby, Jex Blake always knew how to appeal to the better feelings of his boys, and trusted to their honour. When he gave an imposition he never counted or looked at the lines, he just used to ask the boy if they were complete, and if the boy said yes, tear them up.

When I was at Cheltenham the school consisted of the boarders at the different big boarding-houses, private boarders, and some day-boys. I was first sent to "Sammy Green's," one of the big boarding-houses, but after a bad go of scarlet fever, during which I nearly died at the College Sanatorium on Leckhampton, I was moved to Hattersley Smith's, one of the private boarding-houses. There were only four or five boys at this latter house, and we were very well done.

Hattersley Smith was an old rowing Blue, and took a great interest in the Boat Club, and under his tuition I managed to win the "under fifteen" Sculls. We used to go to Tewkesbury on the Severn for our rowing, and most enjoyable were the jaunts to that lovely river.

My slight success in the rowing line eventually led to an ignominious ducking in the Thames. When I was about seventeen I was taken away from Cheltenham and sent to an Army Crammer. I deal with my experiences at Crammers in a later chapter, but will tell of the watery episode now. When I was cramming at Coutts' I one day went to Hammersmith and hired a wayer boat from Biffen, who was then, and whose successor may now be for all I know, the principal boat-builder near the bridge. I had not been rowing much for a year or two, but feeling pretty confident about myself started off gaily. When I was about the middle of the river just above the bridge, I thought I heard a steamer coming up, and turning round quickly to see, caught a crab, and upset the boat. I had to swim about in the middle of the Thames, holding on to the capsized craft that was floating bottom upwards, until they put off from Biffen's and picked me up. I had put my coat and waistcoat between my legs in the boat, and had no change of clothes. The Mr. Biffen of those days was a huge man, standing well over six feet, with girth in proportion. The only clothes I was able to obtain was a suit of his. The trousers about came up to my neck, and the coat to my ankles, and in these weird garments I had to drive

in a hansom to Coutts' cramming establishment in Bayswater, where my exit from the cab was viewed with intense delight by my fellow students.

The usual vexatious question of how to best succeed in getting the boy of ordinary talents through the thorny educational zariba that stood between him and a commission now arose for my parents.

The good old purchase days were over, and its antithesis in a number of candidates for commissions in a ratio of over nine to one was the prospect to be faced. My Uncle was at this time Lord-Lieutenant of Essex, and the Lord-Lieutenant was the patron of all first commissions in the Militia; so it was arranged that should the combined efforts of the Army Crammer staff fail to instil the necessary knowledge into my wits (as was thought highly probable), I should take the easier though considerably longer course to the desired end, of entering through the Militia. But the Crammers were to have the first try, and strange to say they succeeded.

I was staying at Felix Hall, one of my Uncle's places in Essex, when the long-expected list came out. There was great excitement, and many heads bent together over *The Times* on the eventful morning. So little confidence did I feel myself that I remember I commenced reading from the bottom of the list upwards, and as my eye flitted rapidly up the list my hopes sunk lower and lower. However, someone more sanguine had commenced at the top, and soon a joyful shout proclaimed that my name was included in the roll

of honour, and to my surprise I found I had secured the eighteenth place.

Does any subsequent joy in life quite come up to that first youthful realization that you are free of school, and have become a splendid, wonderful and glorious officer? The adjectives do not generally materialize in after life, but you quite believe they will at the time. And the congratulations, the surprised relief of your parents, and the presents, are they not more than worth the toil and midnight oil, the expenditure of which you thought so irksome?

I remember a handsome cheque and a D. B. Westley Richards gun were part of the delightful realizations caused by the inclusion of my name.

CHAPTER II

Army Crammers—A Bone-breaking Escapade—Servants to the Fore with Bad News—Lendy's—Examination Prescience—Shooting the Weir—Hyde Baker—Sandhurst in the Old Days—Accidents, and a Few Reflections on Polo—Woodcock in Essex—The Wine Merchant's Caution—Men or Gentlemen—Native Officers in England—Royal Napery—*Toujours la Politesse.*

WHEN I passed for a first commission in the Army, in 1875, the competition was fairly stiff; as far as I remember over 900 youths up for 90 vacancies. The Public Schools passed few direct, and Crammers were then much in request. Life at a Crammer was as bad then as it is now for most young men, but rather alluring to those getting tired of school-life, and I somehow managed to persuade my parents that my chances of passing from Cheltenham were inappreciable, and when a little over the age of seventeen I was transferred to the care of a Mr. Coutts, at that time a well-known Army Crammer living in Colville Square, Bayswater, almost next door to Wren's, an equally well-known cramming establishment for the Indian Civil Service.

Here I commenced my bone-breaking proclivities, and incidentally checked the cramming process, by foolishly jumping from the portico of the house on to the pavement stones below, breaking bones in both my ankles.

In the intervals between studies we "young men" used to congregate on the portico and smoke cigarettes and yarn. When we were one day returning into the schoolroom by the window that opened on to the portico, somebody shut it down for a lark before I could get in, and shouted out "jump down," and by way of bravado, and without thinking, I did so. The first and only time in my life I have ever fainted was while lying on the pavement somebody tried to take my boots off. My people were in town then, so I was put into a cab and driven home. They were all out excepting my sister, who was seriously ill in bed with some injury to her spine and unable to move. I could not put my broken feet to the ground, and had to be carried in. One of the female servants, with the inexplicable anxiety to be the first to communicate bad news so common among the lower orders, rushed into my sister's room and shouted out, "Oh, Miss, Master Jack brought home in a cab!" and rushed out again, leaving her to listen to the sounds of a helpless body being hauled up the stairs. She concluded the worst, and was much reassured to hear a little bad language from my lips as I was jolted past her door.

Young bones mend quickly, and in a few months I was located with another Crammer, one who was considered *the* Crammer of the day—Mr. Lendy. I think his nationality was Swiss. He was almost uncanny in his prescience of the thoughts that animated examiners' brains. He took in not only young men cramming for the Army, but also officers of some service working for the Staff

College. The course of study for us youngsters was more or less like the routine of a school, but a day or two before the examination commenced Lendy would take the different classes himself. The embryo officer who at this time did not take very careful notes of his remarks had only himself to blame for failure. I remember distinctly that in every subject I took up the gist of one or more of the questions actually set in the examination papers had been given to us by Lendy only a day or two before the examination took place.

When one considers that there were probably only ten or twelve questions in each paper, and that ten or twenty marks might mean the difference between failure and success, it is easy to understand why parents anxious to place their sons in the Army were ready to pay the considerable fees demanded by such foreseeing teachers as these. How the knowledge was arrived at I know not, but it was arrived at.

In those days Lendy's establishment was at Sunbury, on the Thames, and we used to spend most of our leisure hours—which were not many, as our noses were kept to the grindstone—on the river. When there was sufficient flood on one of our amusements was shooting the Weir in a punt, the actual shoot, a small edition of "shooting the chute" at Earl's Court, was, if there was a good head of flood-water, easy of accomplishment. It was on reaching the broken water at the foot of the Weir that the upset usually took place. The ambition we aimed at was to shoot the Weir

standing in the punt, a proceeding that, as far as I was concerned, always ended in immersion.

A friend of mine, Hyde Baker, with whom afterwards I did a lot of soldiering on the Indian Frontier, was also cramming at Lendy's. A flood had just come on, and we had been talking about the delights of shooting the Weir, and our little flotilla of punts had arrived at the foot of the Weir, when we saw a punt arriving at the top with a young man, Hyde Baker, standing up in it. He could not swim in those days, and did not know there would be any assistance at hand; but the spirit of his relations, the famous Samuel and Valentine Baker, the same spirit that later on led him to various feats of gallantry in our little Frontier wars, animated him then to try the hazardous. He got his ducking all right, and we were luckily there to pull him out.

Failure to pass from Lendy's was almost unknown. An ordinary education plus the tips that you were certain to receive ensured success. Lendy had a funny foreign way of talking, with a guttural "air" interpolated between his sentences. I do not think he had much belief in the ultimate careers of any of us. "Air you beast," was a common phrase of his, "I will get you een, but you will navair stop een—air—you will be cashiered no doubt." I am not aware that any of his pupils did arrive at this unwished-for distinction, but he regularly prophesied it for nearly all of us, and he got us "een."

At this period the channel for admission to the commissioned ranks in the Army was chiefly

by competitive examination, but there were a good many administrative changes going on, and subalterns of the same unit seldom experienced the same routine before they reached the rank of Captain. Some might receive commissions from the Militia, and be excused certain obligatory examinations on that account; others would have spent a year or so with their regiments, and then have been sent to a Garrison Course, or to Sandhurst; others would receive their Sub-Lieutenant's commission, and be sent to Sandhurst before joining their regiments; but the system of sending them there as cadets was at this time in abeyance. It may be imagined that the system of allowing young officers a year or two of freedom with their regiments and then sending them to school again was one neither conducive to serious study nor to seemly scholastic behaviour at the Royal Military College.

I was one of the first batch of Sub-Lieutenants who were sent to Sandhurst *previous* to joining their regiments. We all had our commissions, but being fresh from school or Crammer were comparatively easy to tame. We heard many wild rumours about the proceedings of the students of the previous terms, who were youngsters haled *back* from their regiments. Young bloods, arriving with coaches, tandems, hunters, valets and other impedimenta, and playing what the Americans call "hell promiscuously."

I am sure we were trouble enough with our heads turned by our new uniforms and officers' rank, but simple and tame compared to those who had

preceded us; and I do not think the position of an officer of a company at the Royal Military College was a much to be envied berth in those days.

I played polo continuously and consistently from the time I was eighteen until I reached the ripe age of fifty, and the first game I ever played was in front of the Royal Military College in 1876. Polo was in its very young stages in those days. I believe it was about this time that the Hurlingham Club commenced some organization of the game, but little was known of rules, offside, fouls or penalties in those days, and periods of play or "chukkers" were as long as you pleased or the ponies could last. A small crowd of five or six used to play on each side, and until, I think, about 1877 the game was generally played with five instead of four aside. We were all mounted on unmade animals of different heights, most of which were hired from adjacent livery stables, but I remember no accidents in the few games we played at Sandhurst.

That polo is an exceptionally dangerous game is certainly not borne out by my experience. Playing regularly all the year round, as one does in India, and on a hard ground too, I must, in over thirty years of polo, have played in some thousands of games, and I have never been on the ground when a fatal accident took place.

Accidents there are bound to be as in all other games, and nasty ones occasionally, but not a very undue proportion of them. I have broken a good many bones, an unaccommodating collar-

bone having gone five times, and I have cracked quite as many if not more ribs; but I have met with more accidents hunting and riding over fences than I have on the polo ground.

After I was married I promised my wife I would stop polo at the age of fifty, but when I reached that age I found myself with some good ponies, and I eased my conscience with the thought that if I disposed of my stud before I was fifty-one I should still be stopping polo at fifty.

As is usual, retribution waited on wrong-doing. I was playing in an ordinary game one day when my pony crossed his legs while going very fast, and we went a bad somersault, the result being a broken rib, a broken finger, and a dislocated wrist, and to add to misfortune my wife drove on to the ground just as I was lying crumpled up under the pony. Thus was my polo brought to an abrupt close, for I took the rather forcible hint and sold my ponies.

Looking back now from a further term of years, I am doubtful whether it is wise for a man to keep up polo much past the forties. Of course, there are a few wonderful exceptions, like Lord Harrington, but generally it is the youngsters who play best. Suppleness and quickness of eye and wrist are as necessary at polo as at racquets, and the value of an elderly man in a polo team; if valuable he be, lies more in his powers of captaining his side than in his own individual prowess.

To all youngsters joining the Service I would say, Cultivate all-round sport. Play polo, hunt, pigstick and steeplechase if you like, but also go

in for racquets, cricket, golf, tennis, hockey, etc. If you can play and are keen on all games, you will have a far better time than if you devote yourself to the riding ones only; and if, added to these, you are fond of shooting and fishing, it is either your own fault, which you can help, or the fault of your pocket, which you may not be able to help, if you cannot keep yourself healthy and happy till old age overtakes you.

There are not many woodcock in Essex. When I was a boy my Uncle preserved rather largely at both his Felix Hall and Rivenhall estates, and I shot there a good deal before I sailed for India. I can only remember one occasion when woodcock figured in the bag. I think it was the first occasion on which I was to join in a big covert shoot. Very young and full of zeal, I was out in the early morning with the head-keeper who was having the home coverts beaten out towards Olney Wood, which was the principal covert. I cannot ever recall seeing Musk, the head-keeper, without his gun, but I was just pottering about with a stick in my hand. Suddenly from one side of the park coverts a bird, species then unknown to me, flapped out. I use the word advisedly, for in the open a woodcock's flight seems quite slow and easy, none of the rapid zigzag dartings that make it such a puzzling shot when amongst the trees. The old keeper, muttering "By gum!" or some such keeper's expression, put up his gun, and after what seemed an unconscious long aim, pulled the trigger, and down came the bird.

He picked it up and said, "There's no occasion to say anything about this cock, Master Jack." When the morning shoot was over and the game was laid out at lunch-time, the rather unusual sight of a longbill amongst the bag was at once commented upon. Who shot the cock? was the query. With the embargo of silence upon me, I began to feel rather guilty, and no doubt flushed up a good deal. My blushes were not lessened by Musk exclaiming, "Master Jack knows all about that bird," and I found to my further embarrassment that I was credited with not only having made a good shot, but also with having very modestly refrained from talking about it. At any rate, I had the satisfaction of later unburdening my guilty conscience to my Uncle, who merely laughed, and did not seem to think the fraud required any further explanation.

I think it was the late Lord Grey who used to shoot occasionally at Felix Hall at about this period. He was well known as a very exceptional shot, and I can remember that when I first tried my hand at driven partridges, and discovered how hard it was to attain to any success in a sport that looked so easy, I was filled with admiration at the neat and workmanlike manner in which he could dispose of his four birds out of each covey, taking his second gun from his loader without the slightest appearance of hurry, dropping two as they came towards him and two as they went away, with the exactitude of clockwork. Everybody I suppose who shoots much has found out that with birds coming towards you, nine out

of ten of the misses made are because the shooter is behind the bird. When I was quite young, I remember some driven partridges coming past the edge of a wood; I missed very clean, but I saw the shot strike some branches, and it was difficult to believe that one could have been so much behind.

I do not know whether this country is really turning "dry," as our American Lady Member of Parliament hopes it is, but certainly in the wet days of our ancestors a good deal of money was made by the sale of alcoholic refreshment, and some rather fine properties were bought, and I daresay are still in the hands of the descendants of vendors of "wine that maketh the heart of man glad." I can remember that in the days of my youth a certain wine merchant settled with some pomp and *éclat* in our county, established a footing, and in due course of time was called upon and an exchange of hospitalities took place. I heard the story, but will not vouch for its accuracy, that this wealthy one was dining at the house of one of the county magnates, and to the astonishment of his host refused to take any wine. On being pressed, it is reported that he made the rather rude remark, "I never take wine in other people's houses, because I do not know what it is made of." The rather nettled host suggested that he should have some of his own wine, which he said was in the cellars. "No thank you," replied the merchant, "I never drink that, because I *do* know what it is made of."

In these democratic days merit is considered to outweigh birth. Quite right that it should do so, but my tenets lead me to the belief that merit with breeding is generally more trustworthy than merit without. I do not think it can be claimed that the majority of our present-day Ministers trace their ancestry to "a hundred earls," and is it possible for any looker-on, old enough to remember the wise and statesmanlike debates of our ancestors, to believe that the welfare of the Empire is nowadays always considered to have a prior claim to the immediate personal needs of some of these rulers? I do not believe that it is possible for the new gentleman to have the same pride of position as the old one. Generations of tradition that the game must be played fair under all circumstances is not always the birthright of those who have had to fight their way up, and when the pull between self and country comes, the man with the old name to uphold makes the better statesman, though, maybe, not the better politician. My Father once told me that when he was a probationer in the Political Department in India some haughty bigwig suggested some treatment of an Indian Rajah that appeared to my Father unjust. My Father suggested that less severe measures should be adopted, and let it be understood that he himself would not carry out the action proposed. The Civil magnate rather lost his temper, and said to my Father, "You, Sir, are only a probationer, and if you do not carry out the order, there are plenty of men to be found who will do so." My Father replied,

“ There may be a few *men* who will do so, but I do not think you will find any *gentleman* who will do so.”

When her late Majesty was on the Throne, the now established custom of bringing every year from India to this country a limited number of worthy native officers in the capacity of orderlies to the Throne was first introduced. I think the custom became regular after Queen Victoria's Jubilee. On one occasion about that period, in my non-benedict days, I was at Windsor with a lady. We were wandering about the Palace grounds, and at one of the side gates near the Round Tower we saw a four-in-hand brake drawn up. So we waited to see who would issue. When the doors opened out came the contingent of native officers who were at home. Amongst them was a native officer from my squadron. The man was surprised and pleased to see me, and rushed up and salaamed, and I had a little chat with him and some other native officers. One of Her Majesty's Staff came up, and as soon as he grasped the situation said, “ What, *are you in this man's regiment?* What can we do for you? They are going for a drive through the Park, would you not like to accompany them ?” Although I felt much flattered at this favour being offered me, on account of my having the honour of being in my own native officers' regiment, I bethought me of my lady companion, and as I could not picture her driving through Windsor Park in the company of these gaily bedizened, dark-featured gentlemen, I declined the flattering invitation and explained the reason. “ But we

must do something for you," continued the polite aide-de-camp. "Would you like to go over the 'private apartments'?" This suggestion did appeal, and we had an enjoyable private view, and amongst other apartments through which we passed was the one in which Her Majesty had lately lunched. My friend touched me on the sleeve and whispered, "Look at the tablecloth, it is not clean." And sure enough on the immaculate whiteness of the royal napery were one or two almost indistinguishable marks, which for reasons I cannot divine seemed to afford my companion considerable satisfaction.

Toujours la politesse is an excellent motto, but I do not think it is very closely followed by the rising generation, who seem to cultivate a rather brusque and outspoken utterance, and pay more attention to what they want to arrive at than to the mode of expression. With the elder generation polite diction is found more amongst the "new poor" than the *nouveaux riche*, who appear to be an even more objectionable class than their pre-war equivalents. Of course, politeness may be carried almost too far. In India the custom of paying calls is the reverse to that which obtains at home. In that land of quickly made and quickly forgotten acquaintances the new-comers call on the old residents, though few residents have much claim to the latter adjective, as the usual sojourn at an Indian cantonment is anything from two or three months to three years, which latter period makes one a very old inhabitant indeed. To make the preliminary card-leaving

procedure easy, most people have little white boxes hung up during calling hours on the gateposts of their residences. Some strange dispensation has fixed as calling hours the hottest hours of the day, from 12 to 2 p.m., during which period it is possible to get rid of a considerable quantity of pasteboard. My wife and a friend of hers started on one of these card-shooting expeditions one hot summer day at Lahore; the friend had a comfortable buggy with a nice hood to keep off the sun's rays, and a waler mare in the shafts, which had only for a short period struggled with their restraining influence. He was prepared to struggle again, and the rein getting under his tail provided the necessary excuse. In a short time the buggy was on its side, and the ladies enveloped in the hood, through which at unpleasantly frequent intervals flashed the shod hoof of the frightened animal. This rather exciting interlude was the appropriate moment chosen by the two ladies for an exchange of courtesies. "Oh, I am so sorry, Mrs. Western," said the other lady, dodging a hoof, "that our horrid horse should put you to this inconvenience."

"Please don't mention it," said my wife, trying to struggle into the farthest corner of the hood; "I assure you it is nothing."

"But I should never have asked you to come with me," said the lady driver. "Oh, I *am* so sorry!"

"But really it has been quite a pleasant drive till now," replied my better half.

The syce (native groom), who had been thrown

out from his seat behind, was in the meantime collecting from the ground the visiting-cards that had been scattered in the fall and carefully dusting each one; it never entered into his dense skull to proceed to the horse's head or to help the ladies. Fortunately, some Englishman, riding or driving past, came to the rescue.

CHAPTER III

The Adventurous Riding of Youth—Burmah—Sport to be found there—The Burmese Tat—A "Stroke of the Wind"—The Burman's Love of Pony-Racing—Surgeon-Major Bevan—*Toujours Pret* Confederacy—The Shah—A Devil—The Wily Owner—The Bamboozled Purchaser—An Unpleasant Racing Incident—Armstrong Services—To interview the Stewards—Racing Guile—Sudden Death—A Devoted Servant—Master getting a Thrashing—A Whip Substitute—Law for the Motorists—A Stampede in Camp—Night Manceuvres—The Dharmasala Earthquake.

I HAVE always been rather strongly attracted towards racing, particularly the jumping side of the business. Indeed, when I first went to India, 1876, with polo in its infancy, unless there was pig-sticking in the neighbourhood, there was little outlet for the adventurous riding beloved of youth except between the flags.

Packs of hounds are few in India now, and were fewer still in those days. Neither time nor climate permitted riding in armour with a closed visor and lance in rest in search of the romantic, and as the atavistic tendencies of young England must always induce him to risk his neck somewhere, it was between the flags or pig-sticking that he found his opportunity. I had only been a year or two in the Service when my regiment was ordered from Trichinopoly in the Madras Presidency to Burmah.

What it may be now I can't say, but in those days Burmah was not at all a bad place for a youngster fond of sport. There was some big game to be got in the forests, which in those days were not preserved by Government for their valuable supplies of teak and other timber, as they have been since about 1890, and tigers, two sorts of rhinoceros, hog and barking deer, leopards and pigs, were to be found in the Arakan Range and other localities; but owing to the thickness and impenetrability of the jungle, but little stalking could be done on foot, and elephants were a necessity.

Of small game-shooting, duck and snipe, there was abundance for all, and bags of twenty or thirty couple amongst the paddy (rice) fields in the neighbourhood of cantonments were easily procurable, and I have joined in many such shoots myself.

In those days, 1877-8, Thayetmyo and Tounghoo were the Frontier Stations. A journey up the Irrawaddy to Mandalay was considered a hazardous undertaking, and was in fact forbidden by the authorities, and the vast tracts of country since opened and occupied by our troops were *terra incognita* in those days.

The Burmese tat, the indigenous pony of the country, was the usual means of transportation. There were very few other horses in the country; such as were imported almost invariably died of a sort of paralysis, which was generally spoken of in those days as a "stroke of the wind." I remember that in 1877 or 1878, when an expedition from Thayetmyo was on the tapis, a battery

of Field Artillery had been brought over from India and was stationed at Thayetmyo. In a very few weeks the battery was, comparatively speaking, immobile, nearly every horse having been attacked by this malady. The native ponies, however, were immune from this illness, and good and useful little beasts they were, many of them very well shaped like little miniature hackneys, up to almost any weight, and for the most part the little brutes had mouths of iron. They were good and bold jumpers, and though in those days the Burman or Shan pony seldom stood over thirteen hands, the majority being about a hand lower, they used to find a successful way over three-foot-six to four-foot jumps, and it was a strange sight to see some long-legged Englishman, with his feet tucked up and back from the knee, negotiating fences that stood nearly as high as the ponies themselves. I am not long in the leg myself, but I remember getting my boot torn open and a nasty cut on the instep, of which I still carry the scar, from schooling on the Rangoon course and neglecting to tuck up my heels going over a fence.

Burmans love racing, and do a lot of gambling in pony-racing amongst themselves. Their favourite course is so many telegraph posts along the 'ard 'igh road, thus a straight run and no favour, and the native racing *cognoscenti* sometimes have a more accurate knowledge of the form of the different village "cracks" than is even claimed for the Derby runners by the Newmarket tout.

This brings me to a racing episode early in my

career, which nearly had the effect of bringing my racing ambitions to an abrupt close. I was in Rangoon for a lengthened stay, on leave to study the language—a useful and considerably availed of method of obtaining leave in those halcyon days, which alas! are no longer with us.

There was quite a lot of pony-racing in Rangoon in those days. A few Indian country-bred and Arab ponies were imported from Calcutta and Madras, but there were very few of them. The “waler” was, as far as I remember, at that time quite unknown in Burmah, and the racing in the latter seventies was chiefly confined to the Burmese tat.

Quite considerable sums of money used to change hands over these meetings, and Jack Burman attended in force and invested his rupee with considerable shrewdness on his own or some other village favourite, which he probably knew under quite a different name to “Captain ——’s bay Burman pony Goliath, rider owner, colours primrose,” as entered on the race-card.

At this time a good sportsman, since dead, Surgeon-Major Bevan, and I had entered into a racing confederacy under the name of the *Toujours Pret* Confederacy. We had a fairly useful string of Burman ponies, amongst them a chestnut pony called “The Shah.” The Shah was, without exception, the worst man-eater I have ever met. A light chestnut, with white stockings and a wicked eye, who, except when racing, generally carried his ears laid back flat against his neck. There was only one syce (native groom) in Burmah who

could enter his stall. If anyone else approached his stall, the Shah rushed at him like a tiger, with his teeth showing, and he would get his forelegs above the bars and look, and was a "devil." He could, however, for a Burman gallop and last, and although on his previous performances he was heavily handicapped, we had considerable confidence in his winning us one or two races during the meeting.

The Shah was a character, and I find it difficult not to let my recollections dwell on him. He was quite well known, at any rate, amongst the racing fraternity, and I remember on one occasion at a gymkhana steeplechase he got rid of his rider at the water-jump by as sudden and clever a prop as ever I saw. Fortunately for the rider, he went on, and emerging from the water on the landing side with the bridle in his hand, he found the jump between them, the Shah remaining on the jumping side. Had he not accomplished this involuntary flight, the next move of the Shah would undoubtedly have been for his jockey. A shout now arose, "The Shah is loose," and quite as graphic an example of a stampede took place as has ever been seen on a racecourse—Burman, native, sahib, lady, anybody and everybody in the Shah's vicinity making impulsive haste to increase their distance, and falling over one another in their anxiety to make it good. As a matter of fact, the old Shah trotted into and out of the paddock and to his stable without taking notice of anyone.

Well, the Shah was the best and fastest pony

for anything up to six furlongs we possessed. Pony-racing in India is over shorter distances than horse-races at home. Polo pony scurries are generally two furlong only, and four to six furlong races make up most of the remaining programme. One evening Bevan and myself were sitting quietly in his bungalow, when we were informed a Burman sahib wished to see us. He was admitted, and informed us he had the fastest Burman pony in the country, and was prepared to sell it, one that could easily beat the Shah at any distance at even weights.

After some conversation he suggested a trial with the Shah. "But," said the cute Burman, "the Shah is so well known, that if he is seen running in a trial on the racecourse and well beaten, as he assuredly will be, any chance of buying the new pony at a decent price in the lotteries¹ will be gone." There was wisdom in this, and the subtle one proposed that we should allow the Shah and the new pony to start in a Burman race along the high road—so many telegraph posts, with a crowd of other Burman ponies, for which the would-be vendor would arrange. One of the sahibs could come to the starting-point and see the weights, etc., were right, and the other sahib could see the finish at the other end.

So the trial was duly arranged, took place on the public road, and the Shah was an undoubted and bad second, the new pony at equal weights

¹ Lotteries where tickets draw the ponies, that are then put up for sale, the winner taking the pool, was the usual form of betting on races in the East in those days.—J. W.

cantering home an easy winner. He passed into our stable, a considerable sum of rupees into the Burman's possession, and the pony was entered for the Burman Cup as the *Toujours Pret* Confederacy's br. Burman pony Distant Shore.

At that time our riding-boy was a half-caste, one C——, a fairly good jockey, who got a few mounts at the various meetings.

When Distant Shore had been in training some little time, we wished to see how he had come on, and agreed to have a very early morning trial at suitable weights with the Shah. C—— was put upon the Shah, and I myself rode Distant Shore. The latter simply could not or would not gallop; he could not live with the Shah at all. We were naturally very much puzzled; other trials at different weights and with different riders were carried out, and we reluctantly came to the conclusion that the Burman had done us, and badly. In due course the meeting took place, and we determined to try and win the Cup with the Shah. Distant Shore having been entered, we thought we might as well let him run, and so give C—— a mount. I rode the Shah. I could ride fairly light in those days, and managed to win on him. I was conscious of something coming up behind me very fast at the finish, and as soon as we had got past the post to my surprise saw C—— on Distant Shore shooting past me. I shouted out something about how well he had run, but realized nothing until Bevan met me at the gate, with a very pale face, saying: "My God! did you ever see such a thing?" It was not until the weighing was

finished, in an expressive silence, that I learnt that C—— had simply pulled Distant Shore from start to finish, and had with the greatest difficulty prevented the pony winning. C—— was there and then warned off the turf for two or three years, and we, the owners, were invited to interview the Stewards.

I hope none of my readers have ever had, or ever will have, a similar experience. However innocent you may feel in your mind, to know you are the owner of a pony that has been disgracefully and flagrantly pulled is a very unpleasant and disagreeable sensation. It soon transpired that Distant Shore was very well known under his Burman name, which I have forgotten, as an extremely good racing pony, and many Burmans were prepared to back him for all they were worth, and did so with a representative of his very astute late owner, the man who sold us the pony, and who was discovered to have paid C—— handsomely for his "armstrong" service. The next day the Stewards published a notice that the owners were acquitted of all complicity in the pulling of Distant Shore.

From that time I have known, and I believe it is known to many racing men, that there are horses and ponies that will not run in a trial and will run in a race. Distant Shore was one of these, and his Burman owner undoubtedly knew it. The proposal that we should try the Shah and Distant Shore in a crowd of Burman ponies along the high road was not made out of consideration for our lottery investments, but because he knew

the pony would not try except in a crowd, and our belief that the pony had either been changed or was a cur was formed upon the trials he had with the Shah and no other pony running. Racing guile is not confined to white faces.

Many people in this country when they speak or think of India forget that it is in no way an homogeneous country. It is an agglomeration of races, nations, and tribes. The Bengalis differ entirely from the Sikhs and Mussulmans of the Punjab, and the Madras and Bombay populations differ from both and from one another. It is the first-named class, of no fighting value whatever, who are, I believe, the most populous and the most seditious, and under the present Jew rule of the East are given a spurious position and stir up trouble and intrigue against ruling authority. Amongst the enormous population, over three hundred millions, it was a very small percentage indeed who showed their loyalty by serving in the War. The Englishman serving in India, whether in Army or Civil employ, is, owing to his position of authority, cast up mainly against the class who serve Government, and of these the percentage of loyal and faithful subjects is undoubtedly large; but from his official position he is not much in touch with and probably unacquainted with the inner feelings of the vast masses whose hitherto dormant passions are now being developed, and I fear against us, by Mr. Montagu's fatal policy of "stirring up." I have myself come across many absolutely loyal and most charming men amongst the upper and

the soldier classes of India. I remember the sad death of one of the most loyal and enlightened native officers I have ever met. He was what is called *Woordi-Major*, i.e. native Adjutant of my regiment at a time when I was Adjutant. The musketry training of the recruits was going on. It was in the old days when iron targets were in use, and I and this native officer were with these boys on the musketry range. The ping of impact of a bullet against the iron target was, if the bullet hit, clearly audible after each shot. There had been a good many misses, and Ali Hussain, the native officer, had called up those who were still to fire and was encouraging them. Amongst these was a youth who had fired at a previous distance and made many misses. Nowadays there are scientific instruments for enabling an instructor to see whether a man is holding his sights on the target or not, but in those days it was a common practice for an instructor to judge of the recruit's aiming powers by directing him to aim at his eye with an empty rifle. Being doubtful whether the youth in question aligned his sights properly, the native officer directed him to aim at his eye. The boy must have loaded in anticipation of it being his turn to fire, and when he pressed the trigger the aim was sufficiently true, the bullet entered the unfortunate native officer's face just under the eye, of course killing him instantly. I was at the moment working at the registers, and when I heard the report and no answering ping from the target, I can remember I shouted out, without raising my head, "What, another miss?"

or some callous remark of that sort. A sort of breathless, tense silence prevailed for a moment, and I startledly looked round to see the native officer lying on the ground. It gave me a worse shock than seeing a man shot alongside in action, and the practice of aiming at an instructor's eye was from that time altogether prohibited by regulation. A poor way for a loyal and devoted soldier, who would have enthusiastically hailed the opportunity of giving his life for his Emperor in battle, to come to his end.

Not less loyal and attached in their way are many Indian servants to their masters. For a great many years I had a most faithful and devoted Hindoo bearer called Khoob Chund. The self-sacrificing way in which he accompanied me to Europe when I was ill, and of his adventures in Cannes, I have told in another chapter. It was several years after that period that he died in my service, and the details of his death are to me, at any rate, intensely pathetic. He had been seriously ill in hospital for some time, where I used to visit him daily. Just at the end, our present King, then Prince of Wales, arrived at Lahore, and, being on the Staff, I was commanded to be in attendance. Two or three times during the day messages reached me that the poor bearer was dying, and asking to see me. It was quite impossible for me to get away until the evening, when I motored to the hospital as fast as I could. The moment I arrived he gasped out, "Sahib, my woman and my children, will you look after them?" I, of course, assured him I would,

and he just turned to the wall with a contented sigh and was dead in half a minute. The doctor in charge of the hospital told me that it was by sheer will-power that Khoob Chund had kept himself alive until I could come to him. Such trust is really pathetic, but is only in accordance with the faithful attachment to their masters so often shown by these servants. I have no doubt many other residents in the East have had somewhat similar experience.

To turn from the sad subject to a lighter side of master and man episodes. What the younger generation call "umpteenth" years ago there was a big military assemblage at Delhi. Those who were there will probably recall the remembrance of a certain native regiment, which shall be nameless and now ceases to exist, which "broke" on the passing line in the march past, and dispersed to retrieve their shoes which had stuck in the mud, and then shuffled past in a rabble with their shoes in their hands. To this nameless corps a certain officer belonged who had the reputation of being excessively severe with his servants. The battalion was encamped on the outskirts of Delhi in the neighbourhood of some ruined houses, in one of which, on account of the wet weather, our tyrannical officer took up a temporary habitation. Something went wrong with the domestic arrangements, and the officer combined a flow of abuse to the servant with the threat of a sound thrashing, adding, "You may holloa as much as you like; there is no one to hear you." The man, who was a sturdy individual from the

North, replied, to his master's astonishment, "If there is no one to hear, I giving master a thrashing." And he set about to do so. Report has it that he did so very thoroughly, and master was unable to show himself in public for several days.

Previous to this Delhi assemblage, I had been Staff Officer with what were in those days called Native Contingents, and are now called Imperial Service Troops. They had done us British officers who were attached very well during the manœuvres, and kept up their hospitable attitude while we were in camp at Delhi, and amongst other conveniences one of the Rajahs had placed a four-in-hand at our disposal. The equipment of carriage and harness was lavish with silver and gold, but the coachwān, as the driver was called, was minus that necessary article a coach whip. His resourcefulness, however, supplied the void. By his side on the high driving seat was a little pile of pebbles, and if one of the leaders was not sufficiently into his traces, the accomplished driver would pick up and throw one of the stones with unerring aim at the delinquent's quarters, which promptly leapt into his appointed place and did his share of the work. I do not know whether, since the disappearance from the neighbourhood of Tattersalls of the famous whip-maker whose name I have forgotten (I think a German one), there has been a shortage of the excellent four-in-hand and tandem-whips which he used to manufacture, and of which I have purchased a few. Probably not, as at the coaching meets at the Magazine I have not seen the pebble-throwing

methods of persuasion employed, but I make a present of it to the Coaching Club should they care to adopt it.

I suppose few inventions have evolved more quickly from uncertainty to reliability than the motor-car trade. It is really only a few years ago since it was quite a common event to see a stranded car and perspiring and perplexed driver by the roadside, now one may journey many a long mile and never meet a breakdown incident. I remember that as short a time ago as 1905 my wife and I were motoring into Cardiganshire to stop with my brother, who then had a place there, and after passing Hereford it was quite a common thing to see the occupants of a cart in the distance hold up their hands as a sign to us to slow down, while the horse, edging and sidling, would be coaxed past the alarming vehicle. Nowadays no self-respecting quadruped takes the slightest notice of a motor. The sympathies of the police and the police bench, too, were in some districts, at any rate at that period, more with the public than the motorist. I can remember that at about that time on one occasion we were motoring through Croydon, my wife and her sister were sitting in the *tonneau* behind, and I was sitting in front alongside the chauffeur. I was reading a paper, when suddenly I felt something wet on my cheek; it was a glorious summer day, and I was sure it could not be rain. At the same moment my wife's sister exclaimed, "That horrid man spat at us as he went past!" I looked and saw that two men had just passed us on bicycles, one had

an inner tube festooned round his neck, so was unmistakable, and my wife's sister said he was the offender. I had the motor whizzed round, and told my man to edge in front of the cyclists and bring them to a standstill. As we "exceeded the limit" in hot pursuit, we passed a mounted constable and I yelled to him to follow, which he did. Edging in, to get the car in front of the offending one, my man just touched with the mudguard the handlebar of the bicycle which was ridden by the man who was accompanying him. It did not knock him over. He just wobbled, dismounted, and wheeled his bicycle up. In the meantime we had stopped the real culprit, and I told him I meant to give him in charge, and the mounted constable soon rode up. Of course a crowd collected very quickly. I told the Inspector I wished to give the man in charge for spitting at a car with ladies in it. He said he was afraid that was not a technical offence, and suggested the best course to pursue would be to prosecute the man through a lawyer. So I asked the Inspector to get the man's right name and address. Then up came his friend, saying, "What about me? I've been knocked over by the motor." I pointed out that he was not knocked over, that no real damage had been done to him or his bicycle, and offered to give him half a sovereign. Here the Inspector chipped in again and said, "I should not give him anything, sir, if I were you; I have the names and addresses of both of them, and a lawyer can deal with the pair." I wrote to my solicitor, sent him the names, told him the situation, that I had

seen nothing myself as I was reading, that the chauffeur and my wife's sister had seen the man spit, and also that I did not want ladies brought to a police court. My lawyer wrote, he thought the chauffeur's evidence should be sufficient. The culprits were duly haled before the Law, and I was requested to attend the Croydon Police Court to give evidence. For all the courtesy I received I might have been a criminal in the dock myself. Motorists were evidently not in favour. The magistrate remarked that the evidence was one man's word, my chauffeur, against another's, the expectorator—case dismissed.

But the case was not dismissed. It was not many days ere I received a notice directing me to attend at another court in Croydon to show reason why I should not pay damages assessed at forty pounds to a bicycle, and a man injured by being knocked over by my car. My solicitor had to employ counsel, the other side brought a doctor, who swore he had attended the claimant, who was seriously injured, and had been in bed for some days. I jumped up in court to say that it was all a lie, as the man dismounted and wheeled his bicycle, but was pulled down by my counsel, who said such a procedure was *lèse majesté* of sorts, and would involve terrible penalties. The matter ended with my being quite fifty pounds out of pocket.

It is really rather wonderful how quickly horses have taken to motors, scooters, ner-a-car's, and the other strange vehicles that now throng our streets. They do not seem much perturbed even by the aeroplanes that now occasionally hover

overhead. I wonder if it has become hereditary, and how Arabs and the many country-breds of more uncivilized countries would accept these strange visitants. Not demurely, I fancy. I think the first motor-car introduced into Peshawar was brought there by Sir George Roos Keppel in his more salad days of authority. I remember it was a white-coloured, noisy and fussy vehicle, but more vividly do I remember meeting it for the first time on the Mall when I was driving our regimental coach with a rather green team of young walers. The scene was probably more amusing for the lookers-on than for the passengers.

When I first joined the Indian Cavalry, and before walers were as common in India as they now are, we, the Punjab Cavalry, were chiefly mounted on country-breds, and many of these were Baluch and other horses purchased more or less locally, and quite unacquainted with the present-day refinements of civilization. Railways had hardly crossed the Indus, and quite a large number of the horses had probably never seen a train; it was quite on the cards that at that time many of the men even had never seen one. On one occasion, when marching in relief, we came to a new line of rail on which only one train ran per day. The camping-ground was alongside of the rail, the soil was rather sandy, and the picketing pegs had but little hold of the ground. Sometime after it had got dark, while we were sitting in mess, a train passed, and almost simultaneously with its passage a number of wild frightened horses, with head and heel ropes attached, at the ends

of which picketing-pegs were flying around with unpleasant velocity, were rushing helter-skelter through the camp, to the imminent danger of men, animals and tents. The frightened animals ran into one another, got caught up with the entangling ropes, many men and animals were injured, and some horses were so thoroughly panic-stricken that they galloped miles. It took us a day or two to collect them from the adjoining country. In the vague light the scene was quite sufficiently exciting and dangerous. But for a real unpleasant mix-up on horseback, an incident that occurred some years previous to the train episode comes to my mind. Our then Commanding Officer became imbued with the idea that cavalry were not sufficiently mobile at night. So he conceived a scheme in which a force of infantry were to be concealed in an unspecified position some distance from cantonments, and the cavalry were to scout at night and discover them. The night was as dark as the famous James Pigg and Jorrocks one. The wretched squadron told off for this unpopular exercise was moving more or less together with a few ground scouts in front, whose rôle in the pitch darkness was markedly useless. Suddenly we stumbled upon the infantry position: these heroes had been armed with blank cartridges, and a sheet of fire and a roll of musketry suddenly spat out of the surrounding darkness. The action of every horse could not with years of practice have been more perfectly concerted. Each and every one started at full gallop in the direction in which his head pointed at the moment. The

success of infantry over cavalry in night manœuvre was clearly demonstrated by the number of casualties that ensued. The language of both officers and men who every moment met in violent collision is not for publication, and the number of patients in man and horse hospital the next day precluded that squadron from any immediate further investigation into the respective merits of the mounted versus dismounted arm in night manœuvre.

Earthquakes are undoubtedly more common in the North of India than they are in Europe. I expect most people who have sojourned in the Punjab for a few years have experienced one. The majority of the shocks are insignificant, a sort of peculiar rumbling noise culminating in a shake that lasts half a minute or so, and then in most cases they are over. When they are bad they are very bad indeed, and the April, 1905, shock, which was at its worst in the neighbourhood of Dharmsala, was a real calamity. I had just been appointed Assistant Adjutant-General of the Lahore Division, but had not actually joined at the time it took place. I had been stationed in Dera Ismail Khan on the frontier, and was travelling via Peshawar, where the shock was felt but not in a very severe manner. After a long journey up the Frontier I had turned in tired, and told my man not to call me till eight o'clock or so. At about six o'clock I was awakened by what I thought was somebody knocking at the door, and, knowing it was quite early, shouted out "Go away!" or something of the sort, and turned round to sleep

again, and that was my first experience of this very dreadful business. The news of great loss of life was, in the inexplicable manner in which news travels in the East, all over the bazaar within a few hours of the shock, and my bearer told me lurid tales of the death-roll, which I at the time thought much exaggerated, but on arrival at Lahore found only too true. For many weeks we were at work with relief measures for the troops, chiefly Ghurkas, who at Dharmsala and other cantonments suffered heavy loss in men and buildings. A friend of mine was on a fishing expedition in one of the worst localities, and he told me how he was suddenly awakened by being thrown out of his bed, and as he lay on the ground, through the opening in the tent, which, strange to say, stood up, he saw the earth moving in great billows exactly like the waves of the sea, and he told me the whole conformation of the land was altered, and the course of the stream in which he had been fishing was entirely changed, blocked up in some places, and the water, where it did flow, muddy and filthy for days. I remember, too, passing through the Straits of Reggio a few weeks after the big Italian earthquake, but on that occasion, although the loss of life had been pretty awful, the outward appearance of damage to the towns and villages was much less than I expected to see. Many houses out of the perpendicular of course, but the general aspect of destruction was not as bad in appearance as in some of the Indian villages I visited, due perhaps to the greater stability of the buildings.

CHAPTER IV

Indian Troopships—Hair-dressing Dangers—A Callous Hostess—
A Famous Restaurant—A Spoilt Beauty—A *Surprise*—A *Bon
Vivant*—Oorial-Shooting and a Hungry Christmastide—The
Intoxicating Qualities of Curaçoa—A Slip on a Precipice—A
“ Long March ”—A “ Radical Cure ”—The “ Piffers ” in the
War—Hydrophobia—A Frontier *Dak*—A Three-legged Centi-
pede—Hansom Cabs.

ON my first voyage to India I sailed from Ports-
mouth in one of the old troopships, the *Crocodile*.
At that time (1876) they were considered fine
vessels, though they have now been scrapped a
long time. It was in one of that class, the *Serapis*,
I believe, that His late Majesty King Edward
sailed when he made his historic visit to India,
as Prince of Wales, somewhere about this date.
A very different vessel to that magnificent ship
the *Renown*, which I saw return one early morning
this spring from Australia and Canada, to the same
port, with his grandson on board.

A voyage to India in a troopship of those days
was a more lengthy proceeding than a similar
voyage in the present days. I think their utmost
speed was about twelve knots, and their economic
speed at which they generally proceeded well
under ten. When I sailed there were about forty
Sub-Lieutenants on board, fresh from Sandhurst,
most of them destined for the Indian Army. We
were all packed into a horrible den a long way

downstairs, where the atmosphere was pretty foul, and a few small scuttles just above the water-line were, I think, not opened except in harbour and during our trip along the Suez Canal. On the deck above were what was called the horse-boxes, in which young officers slightly senior to ourselves were sardined as close as we were. Strenuous pillow fights between the occupants of the two decks used to rage nightly, and I do not remember that any check was put upon the rowdy encounters which made sleeping hours hideous. A lull no doubt took place when the weather was rough, for I do not think even the hardiest mariner could have long held up against the motion and the fetid atmosphere that obtained in "the pandemonium," as our habitation was called. I do not suppose the ages of any of us exceeded twenty years. I think the average age was at least two years younger. It was not thought necessary in those days to inoculate youngsters against enteric, but I do not think any of my batch succumbed to the fell disease that seems more common now and carries off so many of England's youth that travels East.

I remember that when the vessel neared Suez orders were issued that no one was to proceed on shore or visit the town. The result of the order naturally was that everyone of us boys became anxious to do so. Mess dinner on board was at an early hour, I think at 6 p.m. Incidentally I may mention that a bottle of good champagne free of duty could then be obtained in any of Her Majesty's ships for a very few shillings. Shortly

after the meal, the forty Sub-Lieutenants certainly, and I think a good many other junior officers, managed to slip away to visit the interdicted locality. There were one or two gambling saloons, but the pleasures obtainable were not of an attractive character, and before the evening was far gone most of us were glad to wend our way back. We found the vessel had been moored to the Canal bank a little distance from the harbour, and as all shore leave had been stopped no gangways were out. For absentees without leave, there was only one way on board, and that was to swarm up the mooring cables on to the deck. It was a darkish night, but a full moon would have disclosed a number of red-coated and blue-trousered forms clinging with hands and legs to a sagging cable, the top figures who had got nearest to the deck discovering that the last two or three feet of steeper ascent was beyond their powers. Those below prevented the descent of those at the top, and human endurance was giving out. "Get on, you silly ass!" was the adjuration that came from below. "Make way there, I am coming down!" was the reply from above. Soon a plop sounded in the Canal water, then another, then many, as exhausted youngsters dropped from the cable into the dirty Canal, to the complete detriment of their new mess kits. When the gangways were put out the name of each young officer was taken, and before removing their wet garments each was informed that his attendance in the orderly-room was required for the next morning. A lenient view, however, of youth's escapades

was taken, and we were recommended not to do it again, an injunction easily obeyed, as by this time the vessel was again on its way to Bombay.

I do not know the secrets of the modern ladies' coiffure, perhaps the bobbed heads which to some small extent seem fashionable lessen the duties of the hair-dressing fraternity, but some years ago there were some rather dreadful accidents connected with dressing ladies' hair by some paraffin process. I knew a young lady who was very badly burnt indeed. She lived in a large flat down Westminster way, and while she was laying in a very critical state her people learnt that the occupants of the flat below contemplated giving a dance. So the mother wrote a note pointing out the dangerous condition of her daughter and asking if it could be kindly postponed. The answer they received was that the prospective hostess had with great difficulty secured one of the Guards' bands for that evening, that she could not easily obtain it on any other date, but could not dear Miss — be given a strong sleeping draught on that night? Callousness does not seem to be entirely confined to the mining fraternity.

I suppose the war has wrought more drastic changes amongst the famous restaurants and eating-houses in Paris than even it has amongst the similar places in London, but should by any fortunate chance that whilom excellent restaurant Henri's have survived in its pristine state, I recommend any connoisseur who appreciates the delicate

bouquet of French sauternes to persuade Charles of the shorn thumb, should he too have survived, to produce from its cellar mysteries a bottle of the famous *Merle Blanche*, if any remains. I am afraid the "ifs" are too many.

Some few years previous to the War I was staying with my wife in Paris, and we were one night dining at that establishment. It was rather a close evening, my wife was feeling the effects of the close atmosphere with its fumes of cooked food, so we requested one of the waiters to open a window above our table. After a short time two more of our compatriots entered the dining-room and sat at the next table. The young lady was rather beautiful, her cavalier had an attentive and obedient air. She had hardly removed her opera cloak before she remarked in a rather petulant voice, "I can't stand these open windows: shut that window at once, John." The obedient John put down the menu card he was studying and prepared to get up to shut the window. I leant forward and said, "My wife is suffering from the close atmosphere; there are empty tables on the other side of the room where there will be no draught," or words to that effect. The young lady favoured us with a rather insolent stare and merely repeated, "Shut the window at once, John." John got up and shut the window. I called a passing waiter and requested him to open it. John was immediately sent again to shut it. When these alternate evolutions had been performed a sufficient number of times to take the edge off the amusing side of the episode,

I sent for the head waiter and pointed out that we had been the first to arrive, that there were other tables where the lady could sit if she felt a draught, and requested steps might be taken to keep the window open. With the usual French *politesse* the English mademoiselle was implored to change her seat, which she obstinately refused to do. John, who appeared somewhat ashamed and a bit tired of his athletic performances, also put up some form of expostulation. The young woman contented herself with daggerish glances, and the window remained open. Our dinner in due course came to an end. We were going on to some show, and I said to my wife, "Now we had better be off, I will ask for the addition," pronouncing the word to her in the English manner. The English girl let out a loud derisive laugh: "There!" she cried, "there! Do you hear that, he calls *addition* (she pronounced it in the French way) addition." Her claims to social superiority now seemed to be satisfied; as we left, the window was again closed, and even the worried John wore a relieved air.

Many years previous to this, in the early days of Henri's fame, I was dining at this restaurant with my pal Byngo Baynes. In consultation with the head waiter he had ordered a very *recherché* dinner, and the pudding was a *surprise*. These cunning decoctions were not so well known in those days, at any rate the dish was new to me. When it was helped I saw some steam. As Byngo took the first mouthful he said "Cold again," and I, suspecting that he was trying the schoolboy joke of

endeavouring to make me burn my palate, refrained for a bit from eating my portion. The head waiter came up to inquire whether the repast had given the satisfaction which he knew such good food merited, and I said it had all been very excellent, but that I had not yet tasted the sweet, as it was too hot. I shall not forget the troubled expression of the worthy *garçon*, who, confident in the equalized hot and iced merits of the *surprise*, expected fulsome praise. The state of the score between John with his fair inamorata and ourselves was perhaps even, but Byngo undoubtedly had the laugh against me in the matter of the *surprise*.

Just as the drinking division has largely disappeared from the class of officers who keep themselves physically fit at all times, so too the *gourmet* who lived only for his meals is now seldom to be found. I do not think a discriminative taste for the blending of drink and food is a lost art, but the appetite for these good things is now held in check, and they are usually only partaken of in moderation. I was living at the club at Mussoori, a hill station in the Himalayas, in the '80 decade, and at that time there was a large and stout gunner living there who was somewhat of an epicure and *bon vivant*. To him at any rate dinner was the chief event of the day, and his preparations for the consummation of that important repast commenced in the early hours of the morning. In my day Indian servants were very good indeed (I hear different reports from those who sojourn there now), and probably their success at their particular job lay in the fact that they

specialized in the one job and did not embark on any other. Their limited occupations were hereditary, and had been handed down from father to son through many generations; they married only with their own castes and class, and no modern trades' union is more jealous than they were of their rights and privileges. Amongst the cook class, the "Mug" was the caste amongst which the most famous *chefs* were found. The Mussoori "Mug" was a top-sawyer in his profession. Every morning, in the early hours, before the cooking expert departed to the bazaar to make his purchases for the day, our fat Major, in his pyjamas, might be seen pacing the club verandah in serious and earnest consultation with the cook. During the day the Major's chief exercise was taken in pottering to the cookhouse and back to the club, and the meal eventually served at his table was a fit culmination to the arduous thought and exhortation that had been given to the serious subject. The Major was a distant cousin of mine, and I suppose it was the blood tie that procured for me on my arrival an invitation to sit at his table, an honour, I was given to understand, generally only accorded to those of a considerably higher rank than my own. I remember that on the first night oysters, which had been sent by train in ice from Bombay, were served. An anxious look in the eye of my sponsor made me feel as if I was a probationer who had yet to prove his taste. Luckily inspiration came. I ordered some chablis to be brought to me with the succulent bivalves; a look of relief passed over the features of my

stout relation, he gave me a conciliatory tap on the arm, "Quite right, young man, quite right," he said, and for the rest of my stay a seat was always kept for me at the coveted board.

Good food, and possibly too much of it, is one side of the question; those who have lived in the East and taken advantage of any sudden opportunity for shekarrh that has cropped up, have probably also experienced the other side. I do not suppose the stay-at-homes in England have always realized the many thousand square miles of sparsely inhabited country that lies in our Indian Empire, where not a shop selling any form of European goods is to be found. On a shooting trip, except for flour, ghee (a sort of nasty, rancid butter), impure milk, and possibly goat's flesh, you are probably entirely dependent upon the commissariat you carry with you, and if your shoot is of any duration it means a small army of coolies or carriers and a further arrangement for their food—though they can to some extent live upon the country. Shooting leave is generally pretty generously given at Christmas time, and I can recall one or two such expeditions when the inner man was a bit starved, though no doubt the killing propensity of the outer man received some satisfaction. One Christmas I was shooting oorial, a mountain sheep, with my friend Manifold of the Gunners. We had not started on the trip with any spartan ideas of emulating the hardy soldier throughout the expedition, on the contrary we had arranged for the usual Christmas provender to be sent out to meet us from Campbellpore, a

mountain battery station at the foot of the Salt Range, in which we hoped to find these somewhat elusive sheep. I remember that on that particular Christmas Day we had experienced a very long and tiring stalk after a rather fine ram, and our mountaineering efforts had been crowned with success. We had finished up a sufficient distance from the camp to which we had directed the Christmas provender to be sent to make the prospect of a long, up and down tramp peculiarly distasteful, but we buoyed ourselves up with the prospect of roast beef, plum duff and the necessary stimulating wherewithal with which to wash it down, and trudged manfully along. The sun had set ere we reached the camp. The usual bustle, smoke and preparations to receive the tired sahibs appeared to be missing; the servants, instead of being busy round the camp fire cooking the food, were discovered in their tents, wrapped up in blankets and sleeping; our spirits sank to our tired heels. No provisions had arrived, the servants said they had scouted in all directions, and that no sign of the missing carriers was to be found. There were no villages in the vicinity, and to go to bed tired, cold and hungry seemed to be the only prospect. The shekarri came to the rescue. He said he had about his person sufficient flour to make the sahibs some chupattis,¹ and proceeded to discard various torn and odoriferous garments until he arrived at a greasy leather bag wound round his person, from which were extracted some handfuls of a

¹ Unleavened sort of scones, made of flour and water cooked in an iron plate over the embers.

brown-looking flour. Oorial steaks, he averred, were as good as mutton, and the carcass of the old ram we had shot would shortly be carried in to the camp. In time it was, and somewhere about ten o'clock the feast was prepared. There is "nothing like leather" says the old proverb, but we discovered that its synonym exists in oorial steaks.

I can remember, too, though it was a different season of the year, my wife, her sister and myself were once travelling in an unfrequented portion of Kashmir, and were in camp some 13,000 feet above sea-level, close to a very beautiful ice lake called Shisha Nag. We had been travelling in rather unexplored parts, and commissariat was running low. At that altitude there was a good deal of frozen snow lying about. A birthday of one of the ladies was drawing near, and we resolved to celebrate it with some "bubbly." To acquire the coveted wine it was necessary to send to a place called Pailgham, where one of the ubiquitous Parsis, a trading fraternity who have established shops and general stores all over India and in many places in Kashmir, had a summer emporium. We calculated that the messenger who was to bring the coveted fluid would arrive in the afternoon of the birthday. The approach to our camp and to the beautiful lake was uphill all the way, and from our eerie of advantage the line of approaching coolies could be discerned toiling along, an hour or two before their arrival. A natural wine cooler in one of the many blocks of snow that were scattered about was easily made, and seated round a big driftwood fire, I at least, whose

drink for some days had been the pure mountain stream, eagerly anticipated the cheering libation. In due time the coolies laid down their burdens at our feet and one of them handed a letter from the Parsi merchant. The letter deplored in Babu-English that the merchant's store of champagne had ran out, and that a further supply was not expected for some days; but in order that the sahib and memsahibs should not be disappointed he had very carefully wrapped up a bottle of curaçoa, which he understood to be quite as strong and rather more intoxicating. What cause or authority he had for believing that intoxication was the desired and ultimate condition of all who purchased his alcoholic wares I cannot imagine.

A good shekarri, as the man who engages to find and show you game is called all over India, is generally a very fine manly fellow. One does occasionally hear of one who fails at the critical moment, but as a rule they are staunch, stout-hearted sportsmen. I had an excellent man with me on this trip. Our journey to Shisha Nag had been up a rough sort of goat path that ran up a very steep mountain side with an appalling precipitous drop of some hundreds of feet to the right of the track. Kashmir ponies are, as a rule, extraordinarily sure-footed, and we had two or three of the little beasts for riding purposes. My wife was riding one of these little animals. I do not suppose they stood twelve hands high; immediately behind her was the shekarri and his assistant, another hill man. I was on my small steed a few paces behind. The so-called path was really a

series of steps from one boulder to another: while negotiating one of these I saw the hind legs of the pony on which my wife was riding suddenly slip, and the hind quarters of the animal with its precious burden hang over the precipice. As quick as lightning the shekarri and his assistant threw their arms around the little beast's legs and quarters, and aided no doubt by the extraordinary instinct and skill in climbing of the animal itself, seemed by superhuman strength to push it up on to the pathway. It was, of course, a nerve-racking experience for my wife, and about as nasty a thing to witness for the husband following behind as can be imagined. We performed the remainder of the ascent on foot.

A few days afterwards we left this scene of varied experiences, and I discovered a "radical cure" which I present to the medical fraternity free gratis. I had acquired what is called a "rider's sprain," a giving of the muscle which runs down the inner side of the thigh and enables the rider to grip the saddle. Once come by, it is a bad handicap for cross-country riding or polo, and is a difficult thing to get rid of. I expect most riding men have experienced it some time or other. To give the muscle a rest we had taken my leave to Kashmir, where walking and climbing or sedate riding on hill marches would, I hoped, cure the malady. The weather set in bad, storms and snow were frequent, and it was time to clear out of the high altitudes. The day we moved camp the rain was incessant, and we had to make a very long march of over twenty miles. The heavy

downfall had made riding impossible, as the ponies could with difficulty keep their legs, and when you are riding on narrow and precipitous hill paths a fall is more serious than on the 'ard 'igh road. Incidentally I may mention that my wife and her sister covered the whole distance on foot and in drenched garments, no mean performance when it is remembered that hardly a step of the way was on the level. When about half the journey was completed the track led up a rather steep conical shaped hill, and from its top a path of slippery and slimy mud led sharply down. We were resting on the narrow top of the hill, I had my left foot more or less secure, the right leg in which the injured muscle lay was a little way down the slope. Suddenly the right foot commenced to slip, the greasy character of the ground prevented my drawing back, and slowly and surely, with peculiarly uncomfortable sensations in the damaged muscle, I acquired a position which brought my feet at a distance from one another exactly double the inner measurement of one leg. That the slowly performed acrobatic evolution was sufficiently comical, the convulsed-with-laughter faces of the ladies who stood safely on the summit plainly showed. The medical term for a riding muscle sprain I do not know, but the cure is undoubtedly that of the complete "splits," for from that period, now many years ago, I have not felt the sprain. Of course, with increasing years my riding ventures have been more restrained, but I believe the cure is genuine for those who care to try it.

In ancient days the "Piffers" (Punjab Frontier

Force) were a cognate force. Now they are mixed up with other Indian regiments, stationed all over the Indian Peninsula, and under the new administration which has come into being since Mr. Montagu and other Jewish friends of Mr. Lloyd George have been given a free hand with our valuable Eastern possessions, have even to some extent been broken up, and as regards cavalry certainly, in some cases two regiments have been merged into one. The "Piffers" came out, I am glad and proud to say, in the most magnificent manner during the war. Those who have read Mr. Chandler's and other authors' accounts of the Messpot muddle must have been stirred with admiration at the gallant deeds performed by some of these splendid regiments. Their old officers, as of course is the case with all crack units, have been almost wiped out. In the days when I had the privilege of serving with them, their southernmost frontier station was a place called Rajanpur, on the Balooch border. Rajanpur, when I was stationed there (and I believe my regiment was the last regiment to be stationed there), was a rather hot and very desolate spot. In the summer you were almost completely cut off from civilization by the flooded Indus, and when you did strike the rail, the journey through Sukkur and the valley of the Indus to Karachi was an experience one was glad to leave behind one. During the luckless period of our stay there we experienced what one might almost call an epidemic of hydrophobia. Indian Cavalry regiments are not fortunate enough to carry on their cadres English

veterinary officers. They have a native *Salutri*, and very able and expert veterinary surgeons most of these men are. A British officer from the regiment is usually placed in charge of the Horse Hospital. I went through a short veterinary course during one of my furloughs in England, and for many years had charge of our Horse Hospital, which was a great interest and pleasure to me. The surroundings of the cavalry lines at Rajanpur were nothing more or less than pure jungle, which was infested with jackals, that made night hideous with their unearthly cries. It was discovered that the cause of the very large number of cases of hydrophobia we experienced (I think there were over twenty casualties amongst the horses and ponies alone, and six or seven amongst the men) were caused by the bites of one or more mad jackals. When something unusual occurs, the native is rather apt to attribute it to some supernatural cause: the report soon got about that some *bhoot* or devil incarnate, with eyes like flaming gig-lamps and of a ferocity unbelievable, haunted the horse-lines at night. In the hot weather Indians sleep out on the ground in the open air, with a cloth pulled over their faces. There were weird tales told by frightened men of the cloth being torn from their faces by some terrible demon, and of the unfortunate men who succumbed to the fell disease all were bitten in the face. The horses who were affected generally had slight punctures just below the hocks. I shall never forget the awful haunting sound in the neigh of a horse in whom hydrophobia has developed.

There is a peculiarly sad and puzzled tone about it that is altogether unmistakable. We used to isolate the animal cases in clean whitewashed loose boxes, and I remember the licking of the whitewash was one of the early symptoms. The moment the disease was in any way developed, the animal was of course at once shot and cremated. Every man attacked died a horrible death in hospital. In those days the only Pasteur Institute was in Paris. European soldiers of whom there was a suspicion of hydrophobia inoculation were in those days at once sent to that capital for treatment, but I do not think the privilege extended to the native trooper, and in any case, owing to the long and difficult journey due to the isolation of the cantonment, to have got the men to Paris in time would have been impossible. For some years a Pasteur Institute has been established at Kasauli, not very far from Simla, and no doubt the lives of many good soldiers have been saved at that institution. We eventually had in the cantonment quite a crowd of veterinary surgeons sent from different stations in India to study the fell disease, and good fellows and keen horsemen many of them were.

The difficulties of getting to and from the Frontier stations were very real indeed when I first joined. Most of the cantonments lay at great distances from the railheads, in fact when I first joined, during the Afghan War, the rail terminated at Rawal Pindi and the remaining distance had to be covered by riding or driving. The driving conveniences were few, uncomfortable and very

expensive. The mails were generally carried in tongas, two-wheeled carts drawn by a pair of ponies harnessed curricule fashion, and even if a seat could be obtained and funds ran to it, this was of little avail in the case of an officer journeying with his servants and baggage. An *ecka*, a country cart drawn by a single pony, could sometimes be obtained, but the *ecka* could not live with the tongas, which had changes of ponies every eight or ten miles, while the sorry beast in the *ecka* had to travel the whole distance, frequently over a hundred miles, and naturally took three or four days to perform the journey. Subalterns, at any rate, for the most part rode, their impedimenta loaded on mules and their servants supposed to march, but probably precariously balanced on the top of their master's loads. Along the frontier roads were various forts, guarding the passes into and from the hills, and in each were detachments of Frontier Force troops with a cavalry detachment. It was the custom in those days to permit the cavalry horses to be used by officers proceeding on leave or duty, a small fixed gratuity being paid to the trooper who owned the mount, and the pace of travelling was of course limited, to I think eight miles an hour, otherwise the animals would have been bucketed off their feet by reckless riders. Under these posting conditions, notice had to be sent on some days in advance, in order that a *dak* could be laid, i.e. horses posted every eight or ten miles or so. The Frontier line was generally in a disturbed state, and an armed escort required to accompany the rider and another escort to

proceed with his baggage from post to post. When proceeding on leave the usual custom was to send on your kit and servants several days before the leave commenced, and when the leave did commence, having arranged the necessary *dak*, to ride as far as you could each day. It was rather a sore and weight-reducing procedure, for the leave season was the hot-weather season, the troop horses were not always the smoothest of mounts, and when the direction was *to* instead of *from* duty, it was not regarded with much favour by anybody. Some regiments had carts of their own drawn by transport mules, and this was a more comfortable method. I was once travelling in one of these conveyances with my friend Vaughan, who was afterwards killed in Burmah. The cart was a deep-welled arrangement drawn by two mules, one harnessed outrigger fashion. For some reason, probably connected with one of the numerous small raids across the border that were common in those days, the part of the country through which we were passing was on that day picketed, so no escort was necessary with the cart, in which were only Vaughan and myself. We had come to the top of a hill, and as soon as we proceeded to go down the other side, the shaft mule, who had probably been trained on the flat and was not accustomed to the weight of a cart downhill, commenced to kick; he got one foot through the leather splash-board and could not withdraw it; the outrigger mule, now thoroughly frightened, commenced also to play up, and in a short time the trap was upside down, "The General," as

Vaughan was called, was pinned down with his head and shoulders outside the upturned vehicle, which was being dragged along at some pace. I was experiencing considerable abrasions in black darkness with the well of the cart over me. "The General" was a cheery man under most circumstances, and possibly kept a smiling countenance even under these adverse conditions; certainly when the trap was brought up against some large boulder, and some men from the nearest picket having run down to right the trap, we were freed to assess the damages, Vaughan's chief interest seemed to be an admiration for the dexterity of the shaft mule. "By Jove!" he said, "he's a wonder, with one leg caught up he had only three to come down the hill with, and yet he flew along like a centipede."

At the time I am penning these Reminiscences the papers are full of obituary notices of the late Earl of Shrewsbury and Talbot. He was a great sportsman, polo-player and whip, and many of the older inhabitants of London will remember with gratitude that he gave them a service of well turned out rubber-tyred hansoms. The S. and T. monogrammed vehicles were much sought after, and the idea of putting such luxurious public vehicles on the streets was taken up by many young men. When I was at the Staff College I invested in one myself, and I flattered myself I had as smart and comfortable a conveyance as any that were on the streets. The attractive part of the investment was that with very little manipulation a public service hansom could be

turned into a smart private one. The camouflage was probably an heinous offence in the eyes of the civil law, but I hope "lapse of limitation" befriends me if I now confess the crime. The public marks in those days were a yellow paint number on the back of the cab, a little white plate just inside the folding doors, and a large number plate attached to the back axle. One or two friends of mine had similar hansoms in those days, and put me up to the tricks of the trade. The yellow mark was easily washed out with turpentine, and certainly while my cab plied for public hire no astute policeman ever noticed that this small mark was missing, the small plate inside the doors required nothing more than a screw-driver for its removal and replaceal, and the large board on the axle could be as easily removed and replaced. I had as driver an excellent man called Savage, who had formerly been a coachman in our family, and who after marriage had taken to driving a four-wheeler. I do not remember exactly what I paid him a day, but his takings usually exceeded that sum. He was quite an honest man, and on the days he plied I always made a few shillings. When the cab was "private" he wore a very smart livery. The cab was furnished with a clock on the dash-board, flowers in vases, a "Blue book" fastened by a chain to the pocket (after losing one I found a chain a necessary precaution), and always carried the latest edition of the evening paper. In a little pocket at the rear were some printed pamphlets stating that the cab could be hired as a private hansom with a driver in livery,

and I several times let it out in this capacity during the season, for £10 per week, on one occasion to a very celebrated musical comedy artiste with whose cheque I had some trouble. I had good horses in the shafts, and Savage told me he had three or four very good "pitches" where he always picked up paying fares. One, I remember, was the Raleigh Club in Regent Street, a resort of some of the rapid ones of those days, but which has now been closed for some years. After my Staff College sojourn, when I was returning "stony broke" to the East, my Father bought the cab and horses off me for what they had cost me. To any young man contemplating any similar speculation in the hope of, and counting upon, such generous paternal assistance, I give Punch's marriage advice. The surprise I felt at such liberal aid is, I hope, equalled by the gratitude I still entertain when I recall the episode.

CHAPTER V

English versus Indian Hunting and Polo—Packs of Hounds in India—Harry Blewitt's Hunting and Polo Experiences.

I HAVE frequently been asked by some of those who are fortunate enough to follow hounds in the British Isles many questions about hunting in India, whether it can in any way compare with that at home, and have also been interrogated upon the respective merits of English and Indian polo. I do not think there are more than five or six packs of foxhounds in India. There are quite a number of amateur huntsmen who keep small "bobbery" packs. These impromptu collections are generally a heterogeneous lot, two or three small dogs amongst them, possibly two or three greyhounds, and probably several terriers. Their object being to kill the ubiquitous jackals, they generally hunt more by sight and by being halloaed from point to point than by the legitimate method, but they provide a wanted sport, and at any rate are an excuse for a gallop. I have had two or three such packs myself, and generally amongst them two or three pure-bred foxhounds, which are not very difficult to procure in India, as the majority of the packs in that country are broken up at the end of a hunting season, and drafts of hounds from home procured

when the new session opens. A few packs, however, kennel some of their best hounds in the hills.

There are quite good packs at Peshawar, Lahore, Bombay, Poona, Ootacamund, and there may be one or two more. My hunting experiences in India have been confined to Peshawar, Ootacamund, Lahore, and one or two gallops at Bombay. At these places, and indeed everywhere in India, the quarry is the jackal, and I have experienced some quite good and long runs. Hounds seem to take to the scent quite naturally.

Certainly the best hunting I have ever had in India has been in the Peshawar Vale. I was Field Master of the Lahore pack for two seasons, and in my younger days I had several good gallops over the downs at Ootacamund, where the going is similar to that on the Brighton downs with the slopes a bit steeper. But there is a somewhat English aspect about the Peshawar Vale which seems to especially appeal, and there is better going and certainly more "lepping" there than in any other part of India in which I have hunted. When all is said and done, it would of course be stupid to argue that hunting in India could favourably compare with that ideal sport in our own land, but still there is sport, and jolly good sport, to be had in the East.

To give my readers some small idea of hunting and polo in the bracing north of the Punjab, perhaps I cannot do better than insert a portion of an unpublished story that I wrote for some boy friends of mine about a certain mythical Indian Cavalry hero called Harry Blewitt.

As my young friends are sons of an Indian Cavalry Officer, my readers will, I am sure, recognize the necessity I felt of administering to the glories of that service and condone the slightly partisan drawing of Harry Blewitt's experiences. His hunting ones are typical of the real thing, and I think anyone who has hunted with the P.V.H. will allow they are not unduly exaggerated, while the account of the polo match that follows it is but little embroidered, and as regards the actual polo incidents a fair account of a hard-fought final of a polo tournament in my polo-playing days. Since then "offside" has been done away with, and with that acceleration of the pace of the game the tactics of a smart No. 1 are considerably changed.

Harry Blewitt is a fictional young gentleman who performs marvellous deeds of "derring-do." He belongs to Neill's Horse, and on his arrival at Peshawar has been asked to "whip-in" to the hounds.

* * * * *

What a joyous sound of canine melody reaches Harry's ears as he approaches the kennels. The hounds baying and leaping against the closed gates know sport is impending. Major Ward, the Master, has already arrived. Captain Holmes, the other whip, gallops up, the gates are thrown open. With waving sterna, frolicking, quarrelling and excited, the hounds stream out and gambol around the Master's horse. The whips circle the turbulent pack, cracking their thongs to head back stragglers. Composed of drafts from different home packs, it

has been none too easy to instil discipline amongst the unruly lot who are only too prone to run riot.

“Time to move off,” says the Master. “Pack in there, hounds,” and the cavalcade proceeds at the customary jog-trot along the dark, tree-lined road. Seven miles to Daodzai Tehsil, and one hour and a quarter to do it. The Master is in front, the two whips and the native kennelman, mounted on a strange-looking piebald quadruped, with a saddle hung about with couples, leashes, spare stirrup leathers and other gear, follow the pack.

As they jog along, they pass or are passed by various groups of equestrians and drivers proceeding to the meet. Daodzai is a famous fixture seldom drawn blank; the country watered by the Kabal river is grass with plenty of jumping.

The Master and whips in their pink coats, white breeches and white sun topees surrounded by the hounds, make a gay splash of colour under the trees outside the tehsil.

Old Sir James Flood, commanding the Northern Army, is there on his famous dun waler, that equine prodigy who has been through numerous campaigns, pulls a trap and carries a lady. The elderly owner, despite his white hairs and many years, will be as prominent at the death as he is at the meet.

Officers of all services, on all descriptions of mounts, a handful of gallant King's Lancers, who travelled with their horses from Rawal Pindi by the night train, and some fifty or sixty other sportsmen.

The early hour of the meet, the rat-catching costumes of the riders, suggest a cub-hunting meet at home; but cub-hunting has no counterpart in the East, there are few foxes in India, such as there are abide not in the woodlands. The nocturnal jackal is the object of pursuit.

Now a move is made. The hounds are thrown into a large sugar-cane plantation on the grassy banks of the river, the whips gallop to the two sides of the cover, the Field Master, Colonel Johnson, is busy marshalling a somewhat obstreperous field. Now comes a whimper growing to the certainty of a cry. Other hounds rush to the sound, the chorus grows. There is no doubt about their having found. The Field Master, taking his horse by the head, shouts, "This way, please," and leads the field to one side of the cover.

Harry has viewed the grey varmint stealing away, he remains motionless until the cunning creature is some two hundred yards from cover, he then raises his hat, the Master catching the signal gallops towards him sounding a toot-toot on his horn, the hounds race to the sound, the scent is a tearing one, and before Colonel Johnson has school-mastered his field round the cover, the pack is away and in full cry. "Catch them if you can," says the Colonel, glad to be free of his responsibility, and proceeds to choose a line of his own.

For the first few hundred yards the going was deep, an abysmal sinuous ditch which drained it stretched for an apparently illimitable distance before the field. Boggy at the sides, a trifle

blind where earth and water meet, it causes a perceptible hesitation amongst the galloping crowd. Harry chooses what appears to be a possible place, and with a terrible flounder gets across. On the far side the hounds are running nearly mute under the conventional tablecloth. Splash! plop! he hears behind him, as the field sample in various places the black muddy water. Firmer ground now, and no necessity to hustle for a place, the "Jack," evidently a hill one, is making his point for the hazy mountains seven or eight miles away. Peace in their hearts and joy in their breasts, the Master and Harry, each on one side of the pack, are sailing along.

In front stretched an immense grass plain, intersected at intervals by low shelving banks. As Harry at a rather rapid pace comes to the first one, he sees that instead of one there are four banks, each separated from its next by some six feet of water; his waler does his best to check himself, his first bound lands him on the second bank, he clears the third, kicking back too late to save himself, lands on his knees on the slope of the fourth, and the pair slip back into the water. What matter wet breeches and drenched tailskirts at moments like these! With no perceptible distance lost, Harry is again in the saddle, but with a new-born respect for the Peshawar "Gridiron." The waler has a good mouth and responsively checks as they near the next one, three large and orderly bounds and they are over. Again the stealing gallop over the smooth turf. Like clock-work they gallop on, but the pace is too fast to

last, the pack seem to be getting further away, each jump is a greater exertion to the honest hunter. As with a puffing groan from the nearly blown waler they drop from a high bank into a wet clover field, Harry begins to hope for a check.

The hills look perceptibly nearer, the country is taking a more broken character, the ground intersected with small ravines and deep nullahs. Ere long the hounds are brought to their noses and are busy casting and hunting. "Let them work it out for themselves," directs the Master; "keep back, please," he shouts to the field, the thrusters of whom in attenuated numbers are commencing to arrive.

The "breather" is of short duration.

"Hark to Chairman," the musical note of a young lemon-marked hound is heard, the note grows more confident, the others take it up, the line is picked up. Away go the pack, down a large broad nullah leading to the earth to which the tired fugitive has been pointing.

Not to-day, ravager of the hen-roost and disturber of dead men's bones, will you reach your wished-for haven, the hour of atonement for misdeeds has arrived. An excited villager, frantically waving a dirty cloth, has turned him. Harry, who has been following the upper bank of the nullah, now views him.

Shrill and piercing is his "View holloa!" the hounds scramble up the steep sides to the cry. Major Ward, turning his horse, puts him at a seemingly impossible perpendicular goat track that furrows the nullah bank and gets up somehow.

Hoic to him there! forrard! forrard! forrard along! The leading hounds view him now, and, yelping with excitement, strain every muscle to close. Terrible and Playboy, with bristling hackles, are racing alongside, the gallant Jack with ears back and snarling jaws turns to snap at the former, Playboy buries his teeth in the grey hide, and the pair roll over. The pack are on him, the cruel obsequies soon over.

The field straggles up. Panting steeds, hot faces, muddy coats testify to the severity of pace and country. Old Sir James is one of the first to arrive, closely attended by his daughter. Major Ward ties the grey brush to her saddle, and soon the pack move off to draw homewards.

Forty minutes without a check! Not such bad sport for the Shiny, as even our young Lancer thrusters by the night train allow, who born of the golden division have sampled the joys of Leicestershire and the Shires.

* * * * *

Neill's Horse have entered for the chief polo tournament of Northern India held at Lahore during the Christmas week. Playing through a polo tournament entails absolute fitness on the part of men and ponies. For the credit of the regiment and for their own satisfaction, the best youngsters nowadays pride themselves on keeping hard and fit.

It was then a highly trained quartette of men and a hard wiry lot of ponies that were ready to represent Neill's Horse at the tournament. To his

great joy Harry had been chosen to form one of the team, the other members were Captain Smith, young Percy Scott, known as the Brat, and Jemadar Hira Singh, a native officer.

Harry was number one, Hira Singh number two, the Brat number three, and Smith, the captain of the team, back.

Eighteen teams entered for the great prize, game by game Neill's Horse have fought their way up to the finals, where we find them opposed to the King's Lancers, a regiment who, since the earliest days of polo, have been conspicuous not only at Hurlingham but all over the British Empire. Not only good men, they possess the pick of India's ponies, mounts that cost their thousands of rupees, and will fetch similar sums on the rare occasions of their being allowed to leave the regiment.

The Lahore polo ground, a beautiful piece of green turf in the middle of the racecourse, is lined on all sides by thousands of spectators. On the side nearest the Stand the refreshment and other tents of "The Staff" who are "At Home" shine white in the bright sunshine, a quadruple line of chairs extending the length of the polo ground is filled with ladies with dainty frocks and coloured parasols. A military band plays the latest airs from the Gaiety. A Lieutenant-Governor, G.O.C.'s in scores, Maharajah Punjab Chiefs and other native potentates, civilians galore and the ubiquitous British Sub everywhere. All gathered to watch every movement of the white willow ball as it flies up and down the green turf, the come and go of the little twinkling hoofs ever circling

in pursuit. A critical gallery who will applaud each brilliant stroke and rightly appreciate each trick and device of the finest game in the world.

On the far side, in a space cleared and kept for them, stand the ponies of the respective teams, their grooms shampoo the legs of their charges up to the minute when the polo boots go on. Behind the ponies of Neill's Horse the native officers and men of the regiment are gathered in force, ready to yell themselves hoarse in encouragement of their team. On the other side ten or twelve deep, the front row sitting on the ground, is a conglomerate collection of soldiers white and coloured, in and out of uniform, and hosts of natives in holiday costumes of every hue of colour.

A trumpet sounds the "Mount." The umpires, their pockets filled with polo balls, canter on to the ground. The teams dance out on excited ponies who know this is no ordinary game. Smith, old in experience, has arranged that at short intervals round the ground are placed little groups of men with the polo sticks of each player, so that when a stick or polo head is broken, as assuredly some will be, the player will not have far to ride for a new one.

The teams line up, their ponies heads towards the umpire nearest the stand, the backs a little way behind facing up and down the ground. A "G" sounds, the umpire canters his pony and bowls a ball along the ground between the opposing lines. The match has commenced.

As the ball is thrown in Harry meets it with a lowered stick, stops it, and immediately gives it

a little tap to his right rear. The Brat, who, as soon as he saw Harry had stopped the ball, had pulled back, is ready, hits it up the centre of the ground with all his force, and in a moment is galloping his hardest after it, hampered every yard of the way by the Lancers' number two. Harry has made a straight line for the goal, in the hope of it being passed on to him. The Brat is ridden over the ball, Hira Singh and his opposing number three locked together are now on it, the next moment the Lancers' strong backhander sends the ball flying back again; round come the ponies, turning on the proverbial sixpence, and away they go thundering towards Neill's Horse goal. Captain Smith meets the attack with one of his famous drives; he sends the white sphere whizzing over the heads of the riders bearing down on him; again are the ponies whisked round and tearing full speed towards the Lancers' end. His next hit places the ball a bit to the right, Hira Singh galloping behind carries straight on; as Smith again reaches the ball he turns his pony half-right, and with a powerful backhander under his pony's tail sends the ball up to the watchful native officer. Harry sees the manœuvre, and is on to the Lancer's back like an arrow, riding him off for all he knows, and with meteor-like dash Hira Singh has possession of the ball, riding straight for the goal-posts.

Gallop as ye may, gallant Lancers, nothing will save you but a miss, and Hira Singh is not given to missing; the faster the pace the cleaner he hits, one more swinging drive and the ball is between

and far beyond the goal-posts. The goal-keeper's white flag is waving in the air. A shout of applause and deep guttural cries of *shabash* from the natives. One goal to Neill's Horse in the first few minutes' play.

Not so easy will they find it to score the next one. The Lancers are old hands at the "sport of Princes;" having reached the finals with fairly easy victories, possibly they underrated their opponents' skill; they are now on their mettle and the game is young.

Sides are changed, the umpire again bowls in the ball from the centre of the ground. Harry does not bring off his blocking stroke this time, his opposing Lancer has barged into him and has his pony over the ball; there is a bit of a *mêlée* before it is clear. It is the Lancers who get away this time. Vaughan, their number two, has his chance, but the ball bumping gives Smith an opportunity of saving, and the chukker ends with no further score.

Fresh ponies and all good ones. No team can work to the finals of an important tournament unless exceptionally mounted, but even amongst the best are degrees of difference. Neill's Horse find themselves rather overshadowed, the Lancers have just a shade more pace and weight. For the whole period they find themselves outpaced and, although hampering their opponents all they know, are unable to prevent the score being equalized before the chukker ended.

"It is no good trying to outride these chaps," said Smith to his team, "we must rely on combina-

tion and take a risk or two; pass to the forwards on every opportunity, and you, Harry, be ready to slip up near the goal when you see a pass commencing." For a period or two these tactics pay: the Brat, flying at a dingdong gallop down the ground with a tenacious opponent alongside, would, as soon as he felt his pony being outpaced, play a side-stroke to the watchful Hira Singh, who in his turn would leave his opponent before the latter realized the tactics, and hit it up to Harry, who at the same time left his opposing back, and with nothing between him and the flag hits first a clean goal, and the next time the tactics are tried a subsidiary. But in horseflesh, breeding and pace tell, the Lancers more than hold their own. Three goals and two subsidiaries Lancers to three goals and one subsidiary Neill's Horse is the score at the end of the sixth period.

Two more chukkers to play, the Lancers are out on a team of disgustingly fast and well-bred walers, Harry's side having only two fresh ponies amongst the four; the dull coats of the other two show where the sweat of a severe period has been scraped off. The chukker was a hard one, the hoofs drumming straight up and down the ground most of the time; the shouts of applause from the British troops denote the Lancers are getting the best of the game. They had kept their fastest mounts to the end, and nothing but a broken stick and the delay on a Lancer's part in getting a fresh one saved Neill's Horse from further loss. As it is, the Lancers have another subsidiary to their credit, and two or three good chances have been

missed. The Lancers three goals and three subsidiaries, Neill's Horse three goals and one subsidiary, reads the notice board.

No number of subsidiaries count against a true goal; if they can keep their adversaries from further scoring and hit one goal themselves, they may still snatch the victory.

For the final period Smith is on Bijli;¹ two chukkers already has the stout-hearted Arab played. He is the best pony in the team, and the desert spirit will respond to the call. Harry is on the Colonel's pony: he at least is the equal of anything the Lancers can produce; the Brat and Hira Singh are on their best.

Full of hope and pluck, they line up at the side-line, where the ball went out when the bugle sounded. "Four and a half minutes to play!" shouts the umpire. The ball comes in a bit swift, the forwards override it, and a lucky kick from a pony's hoof sends it sidling towards Smith; the ponies' heads are not wrenched away from the side-line before the ball is fifty yards up the ground, and Bijli, well named, is laying himself out as he has never stretched himself before; every pony is racing after him now, another clean resounding smack, perfectly timed, with the whole pace of the pony behind it, sends the ball flying true and swift for the flags. Smith is up to it five yards from the posts; as he lowers his stick to pat it through, his stick is just blocked by that of the Lancer behind, and in a mixed mob the ponies pour through the flags. The goal-markers fly in different directions

¹ Lightning.

The ball struck by a pony's hoof hits the goal post and trickles the wrong side! Up goes the red subsidiary flag.

Barely three minutes to play. "Hard lines indeed!" is heard from several voices, but the excitement is too intense for much noise.

The Lancers have to hit out. Strong and straight is their Captain's drive, but fifty yards from the goal one of Neill's stops the ball. One of those sticky scrimmages that occur even in the fastest games ensues. At last a hit from the Brat's stick clears the ball away from the scrimmage. Harry, who finds himself at the moment outside, gallops straight on its line and sees coming across him at full gallop the Lancers' back. "Hi!" he shouts. The back, a good sportsman who would not knowingly foul for the world, tries to swing his pony in the direction the ball is travelling. Fall or no fall, the goal must be hit, flashes through Harry's brain; by an infinitesimal fraction of time his stick hits the ball before the collision occurs. As Harry and his pony roll over the umpire blows his whistle, but the ball is through the posts, amidst excited yells and shouts of applause.

Harry and his pony picked themselves up, dazed but triumphant. "All that is necessary now is somehow to keep on to the ball," says Smith as they trot off to change sides; "barely a minute left, for Heaven's sake keep it hanging somehow." But, game to the finish, the Lancers have their views too. On the throw in they get possession, and are speeding at lightning pace to the flags. Smith, well back, receives it and sends it up the

ground again, only to be met by their number three, who with another clinking hit sends it up to his forwards; as they are racing with it to the goal out blares the "Halt." For one year the handsome cup will grace the mess-table of Neill's Horse.

CHAPTER VI

Amenities of Language—Murree—A Young Lady's Experiences—
A Spiritualistic Incident—Chiromancy—Big Jumps—The Grand
National—Steeplechase Riders—A Grand Horse—Lord William
Beresford—Starting an Office—A Chasing Incident—Modes of
Expression—P. & O. and Other Lines to India—A. P. & O.
Steward—Extravagance—Our Ancestors' Taciturnity—Hands
up—The Old Spirit.

WHEN you are in Rome do as the Romans do, when you are in India learn to speak something like the Indians do. It need not be very like, even as little resemblance as the Cockney's parley-voing is to Parisian French will be enough. In fact most sahibs get along with what is little more than "Tommy Atkins" Hindustani.

There is a very expressive phrase in common use in India, it may be the phrase is the bulwark of England's greatness in the East. "*Bundobust Karo*" are the cabalistic words, and they mean "Make the necessary arrangements." In India there are many willing workers, and the autocratic order *Bundobust Karo* will always produce some result—that it will be the result you anticipated I will not guarantee.

On one of my many voyages to India I made the acquaintance of a charming lady who was accompanying her husband, a retired gay Hussar, on a sporting trip, and I was much impressed by

her diligence on board ship in studying Forbes's Hindustani Manual, the Ollendorf of the East.

Some months after our voyage I met this lady in one of the little Frontier stations close to the Suliman range, in the wild fastnesses of which her husband was endeavouring to procure a specimen of that elusive goat, the straight-horned markhor. I inquired how the lingual studies had progressed, and she informed me that she had abandoned her studies, as a few days after her arrival she had found the above magical words met all her requirements. She had merely given their faithful body-slave the order *Bundobust Karo* Agra, Delhi, Peshawar, as the case might be, and lo! and behold, with a proportionate disbursement of rupees, the magic carpet had been spread, and they had arrived safely at each spot. At that time she was about to pronounce the last incantation, *Bundobust Karo* Europe. As a few years later I met them in the "little village," the spell seems to have remained powerful to the end. But not invariably do such simple methods prevail; there are, alas! in India many dialects, and many thick-headed and avaricious natives.

When my wife had been but a few days in India and was new to the language and the country, she was asked (it was winter time) to stay with some friends in Murree. Murree is a hill station and sanatorium in the Himalayas, about forty miles from Rawal Pindi, which is the Aldershot of the Punjab. Murree is situated about 7,500 feet above sea-level, and is reached by a graduated cart-road from Rawal Pindi, the same road, a

clever piece of engineering, being carried on through the mountains another 120 miles to Srinagar, the capital of Kashmir. In the summer the troops and visitors swell the population of Murree to some 10,000 souls, but in the winter this lovely and lonely spot is clothed in snow, and only a few depots of troops and the grumbling officers on duty remain. It was with the wife of one of these latter, a Gunner, that my wife was invited to stay.

It was before my Benedict days, and my future wife, then a young girl, had at that time, when so few people were travelling hillwards, and soldiers and civilians are kept busy at their cold-weather duties, been unable to obtain any escort. She accomplished the greater part of the journey without any adventure, merely sitting still in the "tonga," as the two-wheeled, deep-welled, back-to-back sort of apple-cart drawn by ponies is called. Owing to heavy snow, the ponies were not able to draw the "tonga" as far as the usual halting-place, and were stopped about a mile short of it. Imagine the feelings of a young girl, with no knowledge whatever of the language, finding herself on the slope of a snowclad hill, and surrounded by a crowd of wild, noisy, gesticulating hillmen, who swooped with seemingly fell intent upon the "tonga," its unhappy passenger and her belongings. She thought her last hour had come. Wild, fierce-looking men were fighting and quarrelling over each item of her luggage. Their numbers were far in excess of her needs—they were really only anxious to earn a few annas (coppers) for

carrying the packages up the hill, but to her terror-stricken gaze it appeared as if they were fighting to divide the loot. She murmured, "Captain Hutchinson Sahib, Murree," to unheeding ears, and sadly watched her belongings disappear up the hill paths, leading no doubt to the robbers' caves. And now more savages appeared carrying a long, low, canoe-shaped thing—an Eastern coffin no doubt! "Captain Hutchinson Sahib, Murree," again she murmured, hoping that the name of authority might bring hesitation and mercy to their lawless hearts. But no, into the coffin she was bundled, and again the savages struggled with one another for the honour of carrying the victim to the sacrificial *ghat*. She was seated on a hard wooden seat fixed across the centre of the open coffin, and swaying and jolting up the rough hillside went the noisy and excited procession, only to meet more bandits hastening downwards. But surely these are of a less savage type: a stately white-clad figure, as of one in authority, is doubtless the robber chief, and those in a nondescript livery his bodyguard. Alas! the same lawless passions animate the more respectably clad ones. With a sudden bound the dignified one sprang at four robbers who were quarrelling over a light hat box; blows, vituperation, curses, abuse followed. Three were thrown violently aside, and the agile chief attacked yet another struggling group. Not until each object of loot had but a single custodian did he cease his efforts. He then approached the terror-stricken victim, shivering in her funeral bier and waiting for the end, which

she prayed would be speedy, and said in English: "I Captain Hutchinson Sahib bearer—I going meeting Miss Sahib with coolie and dandi at Tonga ghat; plenty snow coming, now meeting Missie here." Another freshly painted white coffin now appeared, called a dandi, with rugs, cushions, and a hot-water bottle. The robber chief's bodyguard became trained and attentive carriers, the luggage is fittingly divided amongst a suitable number of porters, the unemployed, with Eastern apathy, slink quietly off, and the Miss Sahib shortly arrives to a warm welcome.

Nobody knows his luck, and to this day Abdul Rahim, good, faithful and humble servant, has no idea how near he was to a chaste salute and an embrace, when his pigeon-English first fell on the Miss Sahib's apprehensive ears.

The first steeplechase course I ever rode over was the Trichinopoly course in the Madras Presidency, Southern India, and one of the worst falls I ever had was with the first pony I ever owned in India on this course. Almost immediately upon my arrival in India I bought a chestnut country-bred pony from a native dealer. Considering how little I knew about horses in those days, I wonder I did not get a worse one. Perhaps the dealer from whom I bought it took pity on my innocence, and was content with charging me treble its value. The pony was at any rate fast, though he would never jump satisfactorily; and as my youthful ambition was centred upon "lep" races, many were the differences of opinion

we had on the sun-baked stretch of hard red earth and mud walls called the Steeplechase Course. When I had only owned the pony a short time, I was one evening trying to persuade him to have a mud wall on the course, and the pony was getting the best of it. It was nearly dusk, and I had taken the pony a long way back from the jump, hoping to surprise him into having it by arriving on it suddenly in the half-light. I can remember galloping up to the jump, and after that I remember nothing more for three or four days, when I woke to consciousness in my bedroom with a punkah flapping over me.

The racecourse at Trichinopoly was some three or four miles from cantonments, and was a favourite drive in the cool of the evening for the staid and steady, who found there such breezes as were to be found in that unholy locality. Someone saw a loose pony galloping about, further search revealed a senseless body lying on the far side of the jump. Some silly rumour got about that I had been killed, and a slow procession filed into cantonments, the supposed corpse in the leading carriage and the others following at a funeral pace.

A rather curious incident occurred in connection with this accident. My Mother took some little interest at this time in the cult of spiritualism, and on the day or the day after the accident was entertaining a so-called "medium" in her drawing-room. The medium passed into a state of trance and said, "Mrs. Western, I am sorry to say I have bad news for you: your son has had a fall from a horse, and is at this moment lying insensible with

something waving over his head." My Mother made a note of what was said, and some three weeks or so after the accident I received a letter asking me to let her know if I had suffered any accident through a fall from a horse at this period of time. The medium had never seen me, he knew nothing about me, it is extremely unlikely that he could have had any telegraphic communication of the accident, which caused no more stir than an accident to an unimportant subaltern would nowadays, and the knowledge seems to have been obtained by some supernormal or telepathic agency.

I can remember the fulfilment of another rather strange and unexplained premonition. I had a cousin who many years ago was much in request for the part of gipsy at "at homes" and social gatherings. She had studied in Paris Palmistry or Chiromancy or Cheirosophy, or whatever the art of reading character and fortune from the lines of the hand may be called, and was possibly a bit psychical as well. My Aunt had a house in Palmeira Square, Brighton, and when my cousin first returned from Paris some neighbours came in, and the young folk were chaffing her about her Sibylline studies. There was a young man of twenty-two or twenty-three in the party, and on looking at his hand my cousin unfortunately blurted out, "Why, you ought to be dead now." The young man died suddenly within a day or two, and this rather terrible fulfilment of her prediction no doubt made her very guarded in her future prophecies, which certainly were very wonderful. My

cousin's own death took place under rather peculiar circumstances. She always said that her death was clearly marked in her hand as due to take place at a certain age, and that it would be caused by the sea, and although very fond of travel had a great dread of being drowned. She was travelling abroad with my sister at about the predicted period, and on their return journey, when they arrived at Calais, the weather was bad and my cousin refused to cross. The weather continued bad for two or three days, but cleared up one evening, and they crossed by a night boat. It was very cold, and my cousin insisted on sitting on deck for the crossing. On arrival at Dover she felt so bad that she went to the Lord Warden, where she died from the effects of the chill. Her death was undoubtedly due to the sea, and took place at the predicted time.

I fancy we are all, more or less, a bit superstitious. It is quaint how superstition seems to run both ways. Some people think certain numbers unlucky, others think the same numbers bring them good luck. Some people always go round a ladder, generally saying they do so to avoid paint being dropped on their heads; others make a point of walking under every ladder they meet—I suppose they like paint. I had a friend, I hope I may say I have a friend, for he is still alive, though I have not seen him for years. In his early days he soldiered in Egypt, and was there able to do some kindness to an Arab. The man gave him a talisman which he declared would bring him good fortune. The charm began to act almost at once;

before the campaign was over my friend was noted for a brevet majority, he ran up the military tree quite quickly, for each campaign in which he served he gained some fresh honour and came out of each unscathed. When I knew him he carried the charm round his neck, and his "good luck" seems to have remained with him. At any rate, he is now full of honour, full of wealth, and I hope of health, is happily married, and enjoys an unexpected title. Merit no doubt contributed chiefly to the gallant and honourable gentleman's career, but there must be a feeling of satisfaction in the possession of a talisman that is your constant companion when fortune smiles.

Most of us who are interested in horses know of Chandler's thirty-nine-foot jump over a canal cutting, and I have heard many a discussion upon the wonderful distances occasionally covered by horses jumping big. I imagine that in most cases the distances are exaggerated. On the same Trichinopoly course, a few months after my spiritualistic accident, I was riding in a chase a black waler mare of mine called Black-eyed Susan. When we came to the water, which had been cut rather large, the mare misjudged her distance, and took off a whole stride short; she cleared the jump handsomely, and a brother officer who was standing by the water was so struck with her effort that he pegged out the hoof-marks there and then. To me it certainly felt an enormous jump, but the tape showed only twenty-seven feet, quite an ordinary jump, and one that must

be made many times over in the Grand National, where the water alone without its hedge is sixteen feet, I believe.

I have attended the Grand National a good many times, and a point that has always struck me, looking at the horses through the glasses, is the appreciable time they seem to dwell in the air, particularly over Becher's and Valentine's brook, quite different from the hop-over style shown on the ordinary steeplechase course. The Aintree Course is certainly a revelation to one whose experiences have chiefly lain amongst artificial courses in the East. The thickness, height and solidity of the hedges are alarming to look at, and allow of very little "chancing." I recommend anyone interested in such matters to walk round the course and study each fence, and their admiration for the horses that can carry from ten to twelve stone for four and a half miles at racing pace over these enormous obstacles will, I am sure, be unbounded. It is indeed, a grand exhibition both on the part of the horses and of the jockeys.

In the late seventies there was a famous steeplechase rider in the 14th Hussars, Captain Hickman. During this war I had the pleasure of serving with his brother, General Palliser Hickman, a very excellent Gunner Officer, who in his young days was, I believe, equally hard across country, though increasing years and the hard work that war-time entails caused more of my journeys with him to be made in a motor than on horseback. Hickman had a horse called Dick Turpin; he came out of the ranks, and I am afraid to say how

many chases he won in succession. I am sure it ran to well over two figures. I was going through a garrison class at Bangalore in the Madras Presidency when the Afghan War broke out, and I used to do a good deal of schooling on the Chase Course with Hickman in the early mornings. The 14th were ordered to the front while I was working there, and Hickman wrote to me offering the horse at what was quite a moderate figure, but, alas! beyond my subaltern purse. He told me he must have a definite reply by the next morning, and I can remember I paid several hurried visits to the various *sowcars* (native money-lenders) of the cantonment, but as I was a very young subaltern, and had not much security behind me, I was unable to raise the total sum required. Hickman, very rightly, would not let the horse go under the moderate figure he had named, and I missed what was then my chief ambition, a good many winning mounts between the flags. I remember he did sell me quite a nice grey horse called Whitethorn, with whom I won a few minor jump races, but my ambition to carry off the principal Chasing Cups with the unbeatable Dick Turpin had to stand down, and I rather think Hickman kept him and continued his winning career when the war was over.

An extraordinary good man across country in those days, who carried a spare neck in his pocket and did not care what venturesome riding feat he undertook, was Lord William Beresford. He was Military Secretary to successive Viceroys for many years, and I shall always have feelings of

gratitude towards his memory, as he procured for me my first appointment to the Punjab Cavalry. He was rather a pal of a first cousin of mine in the 2nd Life Guards, and at a big concentration that took place at Rawal Pindi a great many years ago, when it was touch and go whether there would not be another Afghan War and the assembled forces take the field, I went to call on him in the Viceroy's camp to thank him for my cavalry nomination, and incidentally with the hope of picking up a job with the force should the little war come off. The war did not come off, but I got my job all right, D.A.A.G. to one of the cavalry brigades, which was a lucky appointment, as I was only a subaltern. I shall never forget my introduction to the brigade. I had reported to the Brigadier, who told me to get out to the camp and start an office and get out orders, and he wrote to one of the British regiments, I think the Carabiniers, asking them to supply me with a clerk and a tent. Those who were at that concentration will remember the sheets of rain that fell on the Khana Plain. With some difficulty I found the locale of the different units, and after some inquiries was told where I should find a tent and a clerk. I found them both on the ground, the tent unpitched and the man in a drunken slumber. It was already afternoon, and the orders had to be got out for the next morning. Johnny Nixon, as he was known to his pals, was the friend in need. He was then Adjutant of the 18th Bengal Lancers, one of the regiments in the brigade, and found me a seat in his own office tent and

supplied me with a most excellent native clerk, so the office soon got into working order. I was afterwards associated with Johnny Nixon on the Staff of Sir George Luck, who was at one time Inspector-General of Cavalry in India. Sir John Nixon, as he now is, eventually blossomed into a famous cavalry leader, and during the war was much in the public eye.¹

When I was a youth at Sandhurst I went with a pal to Sandown one afternoon to see some chasing there, and we were standing by the water-jump to see the horses come over. I think it was Lord William Beresford's brother, Lord Marcus, who had a black horse called Chimney Sweep in that race, which he himself was riding. As the horses swept down to the fence, some woman, who was standing by the wings, suddenly opened her umbrella, almost in Chimney Sweep's face. I fancy it was a put-up plant. It caused the fall of the horse and rider, but in the rush of the other horses and the movement of the crowd towards the fallen horse and rider, the identity of the woman was lost, and I do not think she was either caught or punished, though we looked about for her and told a neighbouring policeman what we had seen.

For the greater part of my service I had the honour of belonging to the Punjab Frontier Force. Perhaps that sounds rather a stilted way of putting

¹ With much regret I have to add that since I wrote these lines this gallant and fine cavalry officer has joined the majority.

it. It recalls a little incident that came under my notice a few years ago.

In 1905, when His present Majesty, then Prince of Wales, made his first visit to India, at the termination of extended manœuvres between the Northern and Southern Armies, he held a very splendid review of over 30,000 troops on the Khana Plain near Rawal Pindi. Several young officers from different corps were told off on escort duty with various potentates, and one young officer from a distinguished Frontier Force regiment was happy in being detailed for duty with a very high personage indeed. During His Royal Highness's inspection this great lady followed along the line of troops in a carriage, and when the carriage was opposite our young friend's corps, he was heard by some of his brother officers to say to one of the Ladies-in-Waiting: "This is my regiment."

I had occasion to visit the mess tent of this hospitable corps that evening, and there I found our young gentleman busily at work with a pen and a copy-book under the attentive tutelage of his brother subalterns, and glancing at the copy-book I saw he was industriously copying in nice round hand the words: "The ——— is the regiment to which I have the honour to belong!"

Youngsters of the present day may still be trusted to encourage *esprit de corps* and a proper appreciation of expression in the English language. So I have, I hope, expressed myself in a seemly manner when I say with all pride that I had for

many years the honour to belong to the Punjab Frontier Force and to be a "Piffer."

A better school of training never existed—witness its results in "Bobs," Lockhart, Egerton, Gaselee, and many other famous soldiers.

We Piffers had a privilege we very much appreciated. Besides the honour of belonging to a *corps d'élite*, we were granted three months' privilege leave every year, as some compensation for the hardships incidental to a life of active service and the inaccessibility of the isolated Frontier stations. The ordinary Indian Army Officer in those days only got two months' privilege leave.

I don't know whether Indian service tends to longevity, I rather think it does; at any rate my Father spent many years in the Land of Regrets, the latter ones, during and immediately after the Indian Mutiny, being years of much anxiety and responsibility, yet he lived after these strenuous services to enjoy as many if not more years in England, dying at the age of ninety-two in 1904. So for many years of my service I was fortunate in having a home to welcome me in England, and I generally employed my privilege leave by a journey to England across the Kala Pani.¹

I have sampled most of the lines that run to the East, the old troopships, in one of which, the *Serapis*, King Edward, as Prince of Wales, made his voyage to India; the more modern transport, generally a converted P. & O. or British India

¹ Literally, Black Water, the Hindustani way of expressing the ocean.

boat, the Messageries Maritimes, the Rubattino, the City Line, and I have made over fifty voyages by P. & O.

Perhaps some day this excellent line will attend to such little amenities of travel as placing the electric bells and switches in a position from which they can be controlled from the bunks of seasick passengers: the want of this little attention has always been a grievance of mine, as notwithstanding my many voyages I am a bad sailor. But taking them all round, I have always found the P. & O. a good and obliging line, and the best of those that ply this voyage.

It is usual for officers on leave to travel by the P. & O., as no penalty occurs if leave is overstayed through the vessel arriving late, and as privilege leave carries with it full pay and allowances at Indian rates, this is a matter of importance to the usually impecunious Indian Army Officer.

I remember with much gratitude, that on the occasion of my fiftieth voyage by the P. & O. I wrote to the Directors and pointed out that I was making my jubilee passage. On that occasion I found myself with a two-berth cabin on the hurricane deck, my wife and her niece had the best three-berth cabin on board, my child and her nurse an almost equally good cabin, and for the lot I paid three-and-a-half first and one second-class fare. I call this a handsome recognition of the claims of an old client.

The stewards on board the P. & O. steamers are a very smart lot. They are a class by themselves. If sailors are handy men, these stewards

are equally so, but for all their smartness they are not always adapted to domestic service.

On one of my home voyages, the table at which I sat in the saloon was attended by a particularly obliging and smart-looking steward. A lady who sat at this table cast covetous eyes on the man, and before the voyage was over she informed me she had persuaded him to come to her as a footman, and she anticipated a smoothly run household with such a resourceful domestic.

I met the lady some months later, and inquired whether the paragon was still in her service. It transpired he was not. At the first luncheon party at which "James" officiated, a canary in a cage hanging in the window was suddenly inspired to burst into such joyous and noisy trills that his music overpowered the conversation and the guests could hardly hear themselves speak. "Bother the bird," said the hostess; "I wish he would be quiet." No sooner said than done. Over the heads of the astonished guests, across the room, whizzed a cork, which the handy man had deftly extracted from the claret; with unerring aim it hit the cage, and the twittering ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Needless to say the model servitor returned at an early date to the more congenial atmosphere of the P. & O. saloon.

I suppose we have all met a good many extravagant people in our lives, and perchance we have a sort of uncomfortable inner feeling that we are included in the category ourselves. I think when it comes to downright thoughtless extravagance

the ladies are greater sinners than the men. I remember a lady who certainly had the faculty of making her own and her husband's money disappear at rather a rapid rate, and frequently on very transitory pleasures. For a lady blessed or cursed with this habit I do not suppose the education of "seasons" in Simla with intervals of "good times" at home has a markedly restraining influence. On one occasion I was at home while this lady was on one of her periodical jaunts to the gay metropolis. She was gracious enough to frequently desire my attendance at various routs and assemblies. She was staying in rooms in Half Moon Street, and I was then living at Kensington with my parents. Hansoms were the usual vehicles of locomotion at that period, and almost every morning one of these was despatched with a note directing my attendance for some jaunt or jollity, and with instructions to the Jehu to *wait for an answer*. As the time of his arrival at our house seldom coincided with the hour I was indoors, the driver generally took up a position for the day in front of our steps—quite a lucrative job for him and easy on horseflesh. My Father was of an economical and careful turn of mind—at any rate he told his children he was—and a full-day contemplation of this rather wasteful method of correspondence used to cause him considerable wrath, and generally entailed for me on my return a scathing lecture on the inadvisability of concerting with those of extravagant habits and a reference to the fate of the earthen pitcher that sailed down-stream in company

with brass pots. In most of the Piffer stations it was in those days customary during the cold weather to have what was called a "Piffer Week," when the ladies, officers and men from neighbouring stations were invited to a week of hospitality and gaiety. Assaults-at-arms, races, polo matches, amateur theatricals, dances, etc., formed the programme of amusement. The hairdressing fraternity had at that period few representatives in India, and the few that were in existence were only to be found in the larger and more important towns. Calcutta was, I suppose, some fifteen hundred miles distant from any of the North-West Frontier stations, and at the end of the seventy-two hours' rail journey from that capital there was another day's journey by cart, camel, or horse. The station where the extravagant lady was then residing was holding one of these festivals, and it became necessary to dress my lady's hair for the night of the ball, as she had not brought out a lady's maid with her. What was to be done? As Caran d'Ache in one of his inimitable sketches shows, it is only necessary to *appeler* the *coiffeur* to the ladies *apartement*. So the *coiffeur* was duly summoned by wire from Calcutta, and there was only time (eight days), railway journey (some 3,000 miles), and wages (those of a high salaried artist) to pay. *C'est bien simple*.

I have met, and in the earlier part of my career soldiered with many Mutiny veterans, and I have always noticed a marked disinclination on their parts to speak of their adventures during those

troubled times. Whether our fathers and forefathers cultivated a more manly reticence, or whether the horrors of those days were regarded so seriously that they were disinclined to recall them, I cannot say. I have not noticed that the same taciturnity is observed with regard to our little frontier wars, to South Africa or to the Great World War, and surely some of the horrors of those four years exceed in intensity even the cruel bloodshed of the Mutiny.

Military matters and military discipline were undoubtedly regarded in a more serious light by the old school. Perhaps it is the hateful democracy and socialism that is creeping into the nation that leads individuals to think their own personalities are everything, and the more abstract virtues negligible.

I was invalided home during the early part of the South African War, and one day I had arranged with my Father to pay a visit to some relations. On our way there we looked in at my club, and in the telegrams on the notice board read of one of those regrettable "hands up" incidents, and found that the son of the people we were going to visit was a senior officer in the detachment that had been captured. I remember my Father, then a very old man, saying, "— will undoubtedly be tried by court-martial and shot; we had better not pay the visit."

As far as I am aware, for none of these regrettable incidents, of which a few took place in South Africa and a multitude in the Great War, was such punishment, or indeed any punishment,

awarded, and this shows what a different standard of view on such matters is now held from what obtained in the old days. My Father joined the Service in 1830, and although Military Law and the Articles of War are, I believe, unchanged from those days to these, the point of view is different, and what is now regarded as a legitimate saving of one's skin was in those days regarded as inexcusable and punishable with death.

Something of the old spirit still obtains in the sister Service, where a man losing his ship was formerly invariably and now usually tried. It is the democratic decadency of the present day to make excuses for what in the old days was not excused. That the old spirit is still latent I firmly believe. The youngster of the present day is just as dashing—more so, perhaps. The innumerable heroic incidents of the Great War, the lengthy roll of V.C.'s, the more lengthy unrecorded scroll of the brave deeds that deserved but failed to achieve that undying honour, shows that not only amongst professional soldiers but also amongst the splendid, patriotic cohort of youth who flocked to the national standard to uphold their country's honour, there is still the same keenness for risk and danger.

CHAPTER VII

The Old Days—"Off Reckonings"—Sir John McQueen—The Black Mountain Expedition—Sir Charles Egerton—Short Rations—General Gatacre—General "Bobs"—Sir Reginald Pole Carew—A Good Arab—A Climbing Alpenstock—Sir Edmond Elles—Assassinations—A Lucky Escape—Indian Shekarris—The Taj—Sport before Scenery—The Inconveniences of Too Much Flesh—Sir William Western—Sir Charles Monro—Nicknames—"The Queens"—General Burn Murdoch—General Broadwood—Sir Beauchamp Duff—Tact—Sir George Corrie Bird—Umbrella versus Horse—Corruption and Retribution—Cavalry to the Front—Sir Power Palmer—Sir William Lockhart—Do the Stars determine our Courses?—Sir Edmund Barrow—A Latin Tag—Sir Walter Kitchener—Sanitation and Health—General MacCall—General Collins—Sir Louis Dening—A Judgment of Solomon.

A PERIOD of service extending to nearly forty years both previous to and during the recent War has brought me in touch with a good many Generals. I have served on the Staff of several, and a considerable number of those who have come into prominence during the latter years of the Great War are contemporaries of mine.

The first General under whom I served had been in the same regiment as my Father, and when I joined my first regiment in the Madras Presidency I found this old gentleman of whom I had often heard in command of the district. The pagoda-tree days of Jan Kampani were past, and the European Nabobs immortalized by Thackeray no longer returned with yellow complexions, atro-

phied livers and gold Mohur riches to the land of their birth. On the contrary, the majority of the Indian Staff Corps Officers with whom I was associated were hale and healthy, and more burdened with debts than rupees. There were, however, a few amongst the older ones who were not so happily endowed, the talisman that kept them serving was a coveted emolument called "off reckonings." Any Staff Corps Officer could, if he served long enough, attain a place on the off-reckonings list, a position which carried with it the handsome pension of £1,100 per annum, which is £100 a year more than even in these depreciated times is considered a sufficient pension for the services of a "modern Major-General." With this desirable competency in front of them, some of the aged and decrepit displayed limpet-like qualities of hanging on, and in the early seventies, at any rate, "buggy" or "bath-chair" inspections were not entirely the product of the journalistic pen. *Nous avons changé tout cela* nowadays, and the ages of the boy Brigadiers of the late war afford a sharp contrast to the years of discretion of the Generals of those halcyon times.

One of the first Generals with whom I was intimately associated was General Sir John McQueen. The Frontier produced a hardy and more virile type of soldier than was usually associated with the benighted Presidency, and Sir John was a fine specimen of the fighting General. His chief ambition was to be where the bullets were flying, and to share with his troops any personal danger that the hardy Trans-Indus tribesman could hand

out to the columns that invaded his country. I was his A.D.C. during the Black Mountain Expedition of 1888, and a continual anxiety for his personal Staff was how to keep this intrepid gentleman in a position of safety when "the drums began to roll."

For Frontier fighting, there is no better maxim than that of the Confederate Cavalry General—I have forgotten his name—who never lost a fight because "I always got there first with the most men," and who remarked that although it may be correct to play the banjo with one finger, it is best in war to clutch with the whole hand. Sir John clutched with the whole hand, and saw that his subordinates did likewise, and this little expedition, which was the first Frontier expedition in which supreme political as well as military control was vested in the Commander, was brought by him to a rapid as well as a successful conclusion.

Even a youngster in a subordinate position is made to *think* more if he be on the Staff than in a regimental capacity. I first crossed the Frontier in the Afghan War, again a little later in a Waziristan expedition, but I find my recollections are more vivid of my first Staff job than of the two former campaigns. Not that the glamour of going on service for the first time does not make a very special appeal. I was at Bangalore, in the Madras Presidency, going through a garrison class—a sort of school of instruction for young officers—when on the last day of the final examination I received a telegram ordering me to join a Frontier Force regiment at Cabal. It turned my head all right.

I remember I immediately scribbled across my papers—"Index No. (whatever it was) has the honour to report he is off to Cabal, and unable to finish the examination"—handed the paper in, and dashed off to make my preparations for an immediate start. I fancy a kind-hearted examiner gave me an average on my other work, for when the result was published I found I had managed to obtain first place, and I have never to this day discovered whether a mistake had been made or a praiseworthy, soldierly sympathy extended to me.

My fighting luck has never been very good. When I arrived at Jamrud I was attached to another unit short of officers. This unit had amongst its enlistments a considerable number of Afridis; many of these deserted, and after some convoy duties in the Khyber, the regiment was withdrawn and I with it.

Several officers who have become famous in the world were on Sir John McQueen's Staff.

Honour to the highest rank. Our late Indian Army Field-Marshal, Sir Charles Egerton, was A.A.G. of the expedition. It would be presumptuous for me to sing the praises of this splendid officer. Alas! since I commenced these lines the gallant officer has been "called West."

The direct path to honour and glory, should your profession be that of a soldier, is to be employed on *popular* campaigns. By popular I mean politically popular, if any war can be so. A white man's war is the only class of campaign likely to receive enthusiastic and national support. Until *the* War took place the lot of the Indian

Army Officer generally debarred him from participation in such conflicts. The admirable, soldiering characteristics of Sir Charles did not get many opportunities of developing on such campaigns, yet a glance at an old Army List shows by the many honourable suffixes to his name the enviable distinction his marked abilities procured for him in less fertile fields. I knew him when he was a young Captain in the Third Punjab Cavalry, and he was as popular in his pre-fame days as he has always been. I remember that on this show we were very short of food, and the daily tightening of our belts was producing or reducing our waists to the wasp-like proportions that the fashion plates of a few years ago portrayed as a desideratum for the female form divine. "Charles," I said (we were in those days both many years younger), "I have never been so hungry in my life. I must eat, or die." "Charles" said nothing, but he went to his pine-branch bivouac and appeared again with a pipe and a green tin of "Three Castles" tobacco. "Put that in this pipe and smoke it," he said, placing the treasures in my hand, "and you will not feel so peckish." We were just as short of smoking stores as we were of other commodities, and the sympathetic unselfishness shown on that occasion is typical of many kindnesses shown to his brother officers during a very distinguished career. In those days I had never cared for smoking, but the introduction to the fragrant weed in famine time produced the usual appetite, and I have smoked regularly ever since.

Another food incident of about that period. We were associated at one time with an Indian gentleman, the best shot, tent-pegger and all-round man-at-arms I have ever known, of the Mohammedan persuasion. Owing to stress of circumstances into which I need not enter, we were on that occasion also very short of food. We were on a hillside, and our only comestible was a Bologna sausage in the haversack of one of the two of us. Our native gentleman was minus any form of sustenance, and when the acute pangs of hunger forbade further abstinence, the sausage was produced, and we were proceeding to share it. Our coloured friend's eyes watered, an uncontrollable longing appeared in his aristocratic features. "Is there anything 'forbidden' in that food?" he asked. Sir Charles's left eye closed in a portentous wink to me, and he cut off a generous portion of the tabooed comestible and handed it to our hungry Aryan brother, who without further protest wolfed it.

General Gatacre, then a Lieutenant-Colonel, was another of the Staff. "Backacher" the Tommies called him, and if he made *their* backs ache, he certainly had no undue consideration for his own. Physically about as hard a man as I have met, I remember he made quite a backaching journey from one column to another divided from it by one or two mountain ranges. I do not remember what the particular important object of his journey was, it was probably to bring about some desirable, tactical co-operation, but I do remember that it was done in record time with a small escort of Hillmen,

incompatible with safety, considering the very disturbed state of the enemy country he had to traverse, and that he turned up smiling and fresh—a contrast to his exhausted following—many hours before his return was thought in any way possible. I am not sure the journey was not performed in something near aeroplane time.

During the expedition, and while we were across the Frontier, we had a secret visit from General "Bobs," who was then Commander-in-Chief in India, and some of his Staff, amongst whom was Pole Carew. "Polly Carey," as he was known to his intimates, was a singularly handsome man, who later married an equally beautiful woman. They own a beautiful place on the Cornwall side of the Hamoaze, near Plymouth, and whilst General Staff Officer during the war at that popular seaport I have had opportunities at social gatherings of verifying the common statement that they were "the show pair" of England. I had a rather exceptional chestnut Arab charger in those days which I called "The Prince." I had bought him as a five-year-old from a Bengal Cavalry Officer, who was a noted judge of Bedouin steeds; his looks and manners were perfect. It will be remembered that "Bobs'" favourite mounts were Arabs. The dapper, little, soldierly, slight figure, beloved of every soldier, English or native, with his easy seat on the grey Arab he rode in Queen Victoria's Jubilee Procession, was well known to nearly every Britisher of those days, and it is quite possible "The Prince" might have figured in that historical procession had I not been so devoted to

him that I had determined he should never be parted from the galloping hoofs of the cavalry he loved so well.

Pole Carew approached me *re* the sale of the Arab to Lord "Bobs." I had just passed for the Staff College at Camberley, and was under orders to proceed home as soon as the expedition was over, and the opportunity, had the mount been any other than he was, would have been unique. The little horse, however, spent all his days with my old regiment, and at the age of twenty-four joined the majority. During that campaign, and on many other occasions when shooting in the hills, I have found a hill climb easy by simply holding on to his tail and letting him pick the way. To the stout and breathless I give the tip for what it is worth: any *friend* of man—and what Arab is not?—can be easily trained to be your climbing alpenstock.

Sir Edmond Elles, famous to the world in the Kitchener-Curzon controversy, but far more famous to soldiers as a sound and talented General, was another of the Staff on that little campaign. In later years I served as his A.A.G. at Peshawar. Assassinations were rather rife in that premier Frontier station about that period. Sir Edmond and myself had a narrow escape. We retained in our employ a strange old Shekarri called "Hakabak," he no doubt had some other equally unpronounceable name, but as Hakabak he was known to the European sportsmen of those parts. It was during the cold-weather season when snipe and duck were fairly plentiful, and the General and

myself had arranged for a trial of skill with the elusive long-bills. In the cold of these northern regions snipe are as quick and tricky on the wing as they are in a European climate, very different from the same bird when found on the warmer paddy fields of Southern India, where they get up like a quail, make a short and none too erratic flight, and where it is easy to make big bags. For some reason, a military one no doubt, our shoot was put off, and Hakabak came to me to know if we would lend his services to a civilian called Gunter and a Sapper, I think called Green. He arranged to take these two officers to a place called Shabkadr, about ten or fifteen miles from Peshawar, where the General and myself had intended to shoot. I remember how on coming away from evening service on the following Sunday I was shocked to receive a message giving the information that these two gentlemen had been killed by a Ghazi that afternoon. They had had some shooting and were walking back to the Fort, having unfortunately handed their guns to Hakabak and his assistants to carry for them. These latter had fallen some hundred yards or so behind, and Gunter and Green were just approaching the Shabkadr Bazaar when a Ghazi suddenly dashed out; he mortally stabbed the two unfortunate officers, who, unarmed, were taken by surprise, almost before anyone had realized what had happened. The Shekarris behind fired at the man, but were too far off for the small snipe-shot cartridges to do any damage. The man was caught and executed, and it transpired that he had heard

that the General Sahib was to shoot there, and had laid his plans accordingly.

Shortly after this I was married at Peshawar, and we combined a honeymoon and a sporting trip. In India, a land of long-distance travel, one can hire comfortable railway travelling carriages with cooking accommodation, compartment for servants, sitting, dining and sleeping rooms; the complete vehicle is attached to a train, and cut off or coupled up again as required. On this occasion we toured in the neighbourhood of Agra and Delhi, a district abounding in sport and historical interest. With us we took old Hakabak. We were at the Taj one day and Hakabak had accompanied us. My wife, new to the country, and with a trust in the virtue of its inhabitants, which was probably modified before she quitted it, observed the old sportsman gazing with peculiar interest at the dome of the most beautiful tomb in the world. She nudged me and whispered, "Look at old Hakabak, natives do sometimes admire lovely things. See how absorbed he is in looking at this exquisite place." After a short time Hakabak sidled up, and breaking into the conversation with a conciliatory grin, said, "Sahib, there is a pigeon on the building, *and it is within range.*"

There was a famous Frontier Force General, who at the time of the Afghan War was in command of his regiment. In this unit was a corpulent officer—a first-class fellow really—whose rotund figure had earned him the sobriquet of "Fatty." To his exceedingly keen Commanding Officer

Fatty — was a source of continual irritation. The martinet Commanding Officer could not visualize the obese one leading his company in a hilly country with the dash and daring for which his famous corps was renowned. On receiving his orders to take his regiment to the front, the Commanding Officer promptly sent a wire asking whether his complete unit was required for service. On receiving a hasty and somewhat curt reply that the order sent was clear, and that Colonel —'s wire was not understood, the diplomatic C.O. stated that if the Fatty one accompanied the regiment, the regiment could not proceed on service as a complete unit, as at least half a company would be required as escort to Captain —, who was physically incapable of proceeding at the usual marching rate. The sympathy desired from Headquarters was not extended, and when the gallant unit entered on its first engagement, Captain —, whose heart was as big as his girth, was in the firing line all right with his men. A check occurred, and cover was taken amongst the boulders of a mountain pass. The rotund proportions of our stout friend did not easily accommodate themselves to the somewhat hard lying, and that portion of his frame which the Rev. R. Barham designates as "equally indecorous to present to a friend as to an enemy" bulged boldly above the surrounding landscape. The Afghan bullet found its billet, and to the relief of his C.O., the glory of the bulky hero, and the sorrow of the stretcher-bearers, Fatty — was carried off the scene of action, relegated to the Base, and

now, I believe, supports his honourable scars on a no doubt insufficient pension in the land of his birth.

I had several brother students at the Staff College in 1889-90 who are more recent claimants to distinction and honour. The late Commander-in-Chief in India, Sir Charles Monro, was one of my pals there, and a more special pal of my cousin, now Sir William Western, who was there at the same time. Charles Monro was as full of fun as he was of military zeal. A good sportsman, he was captain of the cricket, and his cheery laugh rang at all times and places where fun, of which there was plenty in those days, was in the ascendant. Cricket was never my best game, but Charles would have us all out to test our respective merits and in the hopes possibly of detecting a dark horse. I can remember on one occasion when, having misjudged a real skyer, a peculiarly hard cricket ball took me in "the bread basket," Charles' hilarity burst upon my ears with a glad note that I should have more fully appreciated had some other "flannelled oaf" been the victim.

The Staff College curriculum of those days embraced modern languages, and at the commencement of the first term we were, like a lot of schoolboys, seated at a row of desks with copies of Macaulay's Essays in front of us, and, in order to enable the Professor to arrive at some degree of knowledge of our fluency or otherwise in the French tongue, were directed to translate the same at sight. Thirty or forty new students from all parts of the globe naturally included many who were strangers to one another, and the College

being but a public school of old boys, all were on the look-out for suitable patronymics for one another. To my turn of translation came a phrase about "Omichund the subtle Bengalee." Fresh from India, my Bengal Cavalry uniform was about the only clue to my "new chum" identity, and the phrase appealed at once. I think it was the popular Charles who promptly christened me "Omi," by which appellation I was generally known during my studies at the College. Charles Monro's regiment was that unbeatable one, "The Queen's," and after the course was over, and during the time of attachment to other arms which is part of the College training, his good offices got me attached to his battalion at Aldershot, and never shall I forget the friendly and intensely hospitable way I was received, and the unostentatious manner in which we attached officers were instructed in all that is best in the interior economy of a really good, reliable infantry unit.

Burn Murdoch of the Royals and Broadwood of the 12th Lancers were at the Staff College at this time; each hunted the drag-hounds in successive seasons, and better horsemen it would be difficult to find. The death of the latter when a Lieutenant-General, and towards the end of the Great War, was a sad loss to the cavalry branch, and indeed to the Army generally. Broadwood was a very good man between the flags, and his undeniable nerve, good hands, knowledge of pace and suitable weight, procured him a good many winning mounts at soldiers' and other chase meetings.

Duff, afterwards Sir Beauchamp Duff and Commander-in-Chief of India at the commencement of the war, was another Staff College graduate of the senior term to mine. Pains-taking, clever, and with abundance of tact, that very essential characteristic to the Staff Officer, he carved himself with, I fancy, little if any interest a successful career. I remember he once told me that he looked upon the expenses connected with the Staff College, which in those days were considerable, as a speculation which he hoped would repay him in later years, and as the emoluments of the Indian Commander-in-Chief are considerable—though no doubt considerably diluted by the many entertainments involved—I hope his investment brought him in satisfactory dividends. He was D.A.A.G. of a Frontier show I was once on. With a little raiding party, I had during a re-distribution of troops in the enemy country managed to bring in a posse of prisoners, cattle, etc. The General, a hot-tempered individual, had, quite wrongly as subsequent events proved, considered that I had crossed his front and captured friendly instead of enemy personnel, and during the somewhat volcanic period that elapsed before the Politicals had rightly assigned the prisoners and booty to their respective enemy tribes, I had opportunities of judging of the prudent manner in which “Plum Duff,” as we then called him, balanced the scales.

Sir George Corrie Bird, when I first knew him, was Colonel of the 1st Punjab Cavalry; he was one of the old Mutiny school, and had lost his left arm at that period. When I first joined that

regiment, Nature had so adapted his right arm to the duties of both that there were few sports in which he could not hold his own. He used to shoot with a light 16-bore, and was as quick and deadly as most men with both arms. He could handle a cricket bat with one hand, bowl a swift and straight ball, and was thoroughly at home on horseback. Under his sporting influence the men were much encouraged in horsemanship and trick-riding, in which the native trooper naturally excels, and I have several times led the regimental tent-pegging team to victory in assaults-at-arms competitions. In the riding-school he often used to take us youngsters on, the Colonel armed with a small *umbrella*, and we with a dummy spear. I am not aware that we ever tried a blind horse on him, but I have not yet met the ordinary sighted horse that would close on to a suddenly opened umbrella which with a finger on the catch he used as a weapon to meet our lance attacks.

In those days the Frontier roads were under the control of the senior Frontier Force Cavalry Officer of the district, and a contract for road repairs was much sought after by the avaricious. I remember on one occasion, when I was Adjutant of the regiment, one of these money-seeking contractors came to see him and sued for a road contract. After some palaver the Colonel agreed to consider the application, and the man took his leave; on the table a large canvas bag of rupees remained behind. The Colonel called after him, "Hi, you careless idiot!" or words to that effect, "you have forgotten your money." The man

salaamed and murmured some Eastern phraseology about his possessions being those of his father and mother. The Colonel did not at once tumble to the insult, and again said something about carelessness. The avaricious one then mumbled some phrase which threw a clearer light upon the transaction, and suddenly intuition came. Bird in those days was an active man on his legs; with a sudden spring he had his one hand on the neck of the astonished native, and a few powerful and well-directed kicks sent the repentant experimenter through the doorway on to his nose on the Frontier road he was so anxious to repair. The episode throws a light upon the civil administration of those days. The man had come from somewhere down country, and had former experience not led him to believe that some Englishmen, at any rate, were corrupt, he would hardly have dared to believe all were tarred with the same brush and made the egregious error he consummated. I remember the weighty bag of rupees was violently hurled at the prostrate figure on the road, and no doubt the discomfited cadger received an assistance from the servants and other bystanders which rendered his task of carrying away the sack a light one. Sir George afterwards commanded the Lucknow Division, and obtained his knighthood during the Frontier disturbances of 1897.

The proportion of cavalry to other arms is probably not more than one to ten, and solving the problem of how many cavalry officers have come out on top in this last and in previous wars would be an interesting reckoning. French, Haig,

Byng, Allenby, Gough, Chetwode, and many others are all top-notchers. As a cavalry officer myself it is not for me to work out the controversial problem, perhaps the scientific branches produce an equally high proportion.

A very able Indian Commander-in-Chief, though he did not hold the appointment as long as his abilities warranted, being replaced by Lord Kit-chener when the Indian Army reorganization took place, was another Cavalry Officer, Sir Power Palmer. "Long" Palmer he was generally called.

A handsome, fine and big man and exceptionally popular. No man in a high position had less side, and he was equally at home when he sat in state in Council or when he spread his long legs under a hospitable mess-table and joined in cheery, rollicking song after the wine had circulated. At his own entertainments he made the youngest subaltern feel he was as much an honoured guest as the most important bigwig.

Sir William Lockhart was another splendid Chief. At one period of his career he commanded the Punjab Frontier Force. I was, when but a Captain, playing in a polo tournament at Abbottabad, the Frontier Force Headquarter Station, many years ago, and Sir William sent for me one day and asked me if I would like to be A.A.G. of the Frontier Force. There are very few men who have been A.A.G. of that fighting Force who have not risen to the highest distinction. I was absolutely taken aback and gasped out, "I suppose you mean the D.A.A.G.-ship, Sir?" "No, I don't," said Sir William, "I shall be very glad

if you will be my A.A.G." There is a certain small paragraph in that bewildering compendium, King's Regulations (Queen's Regulations they were in those days), that lays down that no one under the rank of Field Officer may hold the appointment of Assistant-Adjutant-General, and I to this day hold a most charming letter from Sir William regretting the arbitrary rule that kept me out of the coveted job. The man who obtained it is now a Field-Marshal, and has been a Lieutenant-General and a K.C.B. for many years. How do the stars determine our courses? I was born during the troublous times of the Indian Mutiny in the centre of disturbances, and surely Mars should have been in the ascendant in my horoscope, yet I have never managed to fluke into a really big fight, although Sir William Lockhart, who by that time had become Commander-in-Chief, with his characteristic kindness gave me the appointment of A.A.G. at Peshawar shortly after I had attained the necessary rank, and I had altogether some seven years' service at Peshawar, the cock-pit of Indian turbulence. They were, I suppose, the only seven years during which no important expedition took place.

Sir Edmund Barrow was my General there for a longish period, an exceptionally able and clever man. Part of the duties of a Commander of that, the first Indian Division, was to arrange for the Chitral reliefs, when, owing to the extensive and rather unsettled Frontier territory through which the reliefs had to march, cipher wires announcing the progress of the operation were required daily.

There had been some little anxiety, and a good many wires had been despatched. Matters had quieted down, and on a Saturday a customary cipher wire was due. I took the draft to Sir Edmund, and he said, "Don't bother to put it all into cipher, send them 'Montes parturiunt nascitur ridiculus mus,'" and the Latin tag was duly sent off. One of the recipients of these wires was the Punjab Command, and a brother A.A.G. of mine, Keir of the Gunners, now Sir John Keir, a most sporting soldier, who obtained considerable distinction in the Great War, was then on the Staff of that Command. His confidential clerk took the wire, and thought to save his officer time and labour by trying to unravel it. Keir told me that the following day the man came to him pale and tired, and said, "This cipher wire came from Peshawar last night, Sir. I think it must be important, as it is so difficult to decipher. I have been up all night trying to solve it, and none of the words will answer to any of the ciphers we hold." Whether Keir translated the mystic words to him, or whether he merely dealt with it himself, I know not.

I was a Sub-Lieutenant at Sandhurst in 1876 with the late Walter Kitchener (brother of Lord Kitchener), who for some years commanded the Lahore Division, of which I was A.A.G. during the last period of my service in India. At this time the plains Headquarters of the division was at a wicked spot called Mian Mir, a name that stank in the nostrils of many a fever-soddened officer and Tommy. The health statistics at this

poisonous spot were about as bad as could be found anywhere on foreign service. General Sir Walter Kitchener, a sympathetic friend of the soldier, determined to have a high bid to try and ameliorate the insanitary conditions. It is now old history that the *Anopheles* mosquito is a distributor of the malarial germ, but at the period of which I am writing this knowledge was not so universal. The compound or garden of nearly every bungalow in Mian Mir was bordered by a ditch and mud wall, and the ditches were full of dirty, probably polluted water, and were prolific breeding-grounds for the poison-carrying insects. Sir Walter discovered a fresh water supply some few miles away, sank Artesian wells, laid a pipe line to cantonments, and diplomatically delayed the submission of estimates of cost until the work was in full swing and could not easily be stopped by a parsimonious Government. Fatigue parties of men were employed in razing walls and filling up ditches and borrow-pits and treating them with kerosene. At this lapse of time I cannot recollect figures, but I can remember that the percentage of malaria and illness sank from an appallingly high percentage to a figure rather under than above that of an ordinary healthy Indian cantonment. Government changed its name of ill-repute to that of Lahore Cantonments, and I believe its comparatively healthy character is still retained.

Lahore, like Peshawar, boasted its pack of hounds, of which I was Field Master, and we had many good early morning gallops after the

ubiquitous "Jack," and Sir Walter was an ardent follower of the pack, and always there or thereabouts at the finish.

To talk of a jackal is not a respectful manner in which to introduce a General, but quite one of the best under whom I served was generally known, owing no doubt to the similarity of the syllables, by that nomenclature. General MacCall, a sporting officer of that sporting unit, the 60th, succeeded Sir Edmond Elles in command of Peshawar, and in addition to energetically upholding the military training which the strategic position of that station demanded for its garrison, was an ardent supporter of every form of sport. When I first wrote this chapter he was living in the seaport at which I pen these lines, a little older perhaps in years than when I first had the pleasure of serving under him, but as young as ever in spirit, and the same charming companion as he was in those more strenuous times. Now, alas! he has joined the majority. He was a great supporter of racing and sport of all kinds, kept some good horses, and was quite successful on the Indian turf. His helpmeet is as charming as he was, and as good across country as the best of us. General MacCall was succeeded at Peshawar by General Collins, an ascetic, hard man of extraordinary energy. He met his death in a most unfortunate manner, in circumstances somewhat similar to those which led to the death of Sir Stanley Maude in Mesopotamia. In a search for a successful manœuvre area he put up in some small, rough native village. His soldierly tenets, which I have

often heard him enforce, that what is good enough for the man is good enough for the officer, no doubt precluded him from bringing with his party a lavish commissariat, and the food or water produced by the villagers was cholera-tainted and brought about a short and fatal illness.

I served in the more southern part of the North-West Frontier for a short period on the Staff of General Dening, later Sir Louis Dening. He, like so many of our famous soldiers, was also a good sportsman, and at one time hunted the Peshawar pack. I kept a bobbery pack myself in those days, and he procured me several useful hounds, and often accompanied me on little hunting rides, when he imparted much hound craft and kennel wisdom. There were few subjects on which he was not quick to see the humorous side. At one period of his career, in a division of which he was in command, one of the districts had temporarily lost the services of a permanent Brigadier. The wife of the absent General had remained at the Headquarter cantonment, and regarded it as her privilege to retain the flagstaff in her own compound. The wife of the temporary Brigadier was anxious that the dignity of her husband should also be properly upheld, coveted the emblem of authority, and on a dark night it was secretly removed and re-erected in her husband's domain. A succeeding dark night brought about its re-removal to its original stance, and eventually both ladies sued the Divisional Commander that their social dignity should be publicly demonstrated by an order from

higher authority *re* the permanent location of the flagstaff. General Dening, with a characteristic twinkle in his eye, told me that after some cogitation he caused the rival claimants to be informed that he thought their claims were so nearly equal that whichever lady was the *elder* of the two should retain the staff of honour. As neither lady was anxious to lay claim to this distinction, the flagstaff was, I believe, finally erected at the District Office.

CHAPTER VIII

Idiosyncrasies in Dress—The Revenge of the Marquis—The Duke's Sixpence—Grinding His Teeth—The Hospitable Major—The Deaf Hostess—The Modest Youth and the Cuckoo—A Different Type—The Chi-chi Language—The Resourceful Officer and the Young Lady—A Starving Officer—The Effects of Drink—A Famous Doctor—The Writer's Vanity—Ministry Methods—General Clery—Broadwood and Minor Tactics—Assassinations—Missfires—Sir Harold Deane—Holding the Reins—Policy for Irish Gunmen—The Audacious Horse-Stealers—Blackmail—Indian Telegrams—Anæsthetics for Dumb Friends—The Delhi Durbar—Lord Kitchener on the Frontier—Frontier Sores—Efficiency Tests.

WHY do some of the most distinguished members of our aristocracy affect a dress and bearing that is likely to cause a misconception of their identity? The custom appears to have found favour with certain misguided blue-blooded ones for many years. Thackeray's portrayal of Sir Pitt Crawley was not altogether a fictional conception, though the gin-drinking, parsimonious habits of that old reprobate may have been grossly exaggerated. I can remember another baronet whose habitual appearance was one that one would more readily associate with a crossing-sweep than with the proprietor of many acres and a big rent-roll. In my young days I have often seen this old gentleman arrayed in the quaintest of rags and looking far less respectable than the majority of his employees. I believe he has lately, at an advanced

age, joined the majority, but I saw him shortly before the war clothed in equally undignified attire.

I remember a story of a famous Marquis who also adopted the *infra dig.* clothing habit. This patrician, whose demeanour and bearing was as humble as the sartorial vestments which he affected, had thrown one of his beautiful properties open to the public. He was one day sitting in one of his own summer-houses when enter Mr. A. with a party of ladies. Mr. A., seeing what he took for an out-of-work tramp in possession of the summer-house, requested him, rather authoritatively, to make room for the ladies. Without a word or remark the noble Marquis complied, but the next morning the gates of his demesne were closed to the public, and I daresay some of them wonder to this day why their former privileges were so suddenly withdrawn. Which further reminds me of a certain Duke who, fortified by less sensitive feelings, proudly displays to his friends a handsomely mounted sixpence, and is fond of relating how he earned it by two minutes' labour. He also, garbed in nondescript motley, was one day during a severe frost shivering by the side of one of his ice-covered pieces of water when an unauthorized party of young men and maidens arrived with their skates. "Here, my man," shouted one of the trespassers, "you come and put on my young woman's skates and I'll tip you a tizzy." The Duke obediently knelt down, fixed the steel blades to the damsel's feet (he avers she had a very pretty ankle), and pocketed the tip.

I do not know why one remembers small incidents connected with "somebodies" better than small incidents connected with "nobodies." Perhaps because the "somebodies" are really few in the world, and although a prodigal distribution of honours seems to have been one of the characteristics of the last two Governments—some rather unworthily bestowed, witness the rather searching questions asked in Parliament—still, the percentage of those with titles to those without does not, I suppose, reach one per thousand, and it is the unusual and the deeds of the unusual that are remembered. I was lunching once at the United Services Club with a cousin of mine, a fellow member, when a rather peculiar and unusual noise got on our nerves. We were both glancing about, looking for some cause for the grating noise we heard, and each asked the other, "What on earth is that extraordinary sound?" A waiter was standing near, and he leant down and whispered confidentially, "Beg pardon, Sir, it's only Lord M—— K—— grinding his teeth."

After the completion of the Staff College course, officers who have passed through the College are attached for short periods to arms other than their own. One of the Field Batteries to which I was attached at Aldershot was commanded by a Major who had at one time been on the Staff of a certain Duke, when he was Governor of one of our principal dependencies, and had married one of his daughters. The Major was a sporting little chap who had brought his battery to a high pitch of efficiency, and at this time was keen upon

training it to work quickly to signals. He would order the battery to be drawn up in some secluded spot, and be ready for action at some stated time. Punctual to the moment the gallant Major would suddenly appear at full gallop from some concealed cover or over the brow of a hill, up would go his hand in some complicated signal, and in a moment the battery was in activity. The little Major was as hospitable as he was gallant, and frequently used to ask his officers and his friends to his comfortable home in the neighbourhood of Aldershot. During the time I was attached, a shy young officer was appointed to his battery, and he was promptly bidden to his Commanding Officer's hospitable board. The young gentleman was modest, rather awkward, and evidently very timid in the presence of ladies. Lady M——, the Major's wife, was very deaf indeed, but probably by watching the motion of the speaker's lips was always able to reply to an ordinary remark. The newly fledged Sub. was placed opposite Lady M—— at lunch, and she addressed him several times with her usual charming manner, and succeeded in putting him somewhat at his ease. So much so, in fact, that, to his own surprise, he found himself addressing a remark to his hostess. The moment he chose was unpropitious. It was early summer, and the note of the cuckoo came dulcet and clear through the open window. The unfortunate youth's essay at conversation had consisted of the query, "Do you not like listening to the cuckoo?" The remark was so unusual that the hostess was nonplussed and unable to guess its purport. With

a kind smile she intimated she had not understood. The already crimson youth repeated it in a louder tone. An ominous silence commenced to gather round the table, and an amused smile appeared on the faces of the guests, who realized that Lady M—— had not been able to listen to the cuckoo for many years. As the silence of the other guests became more intense the voice of the unhappy interrogator grew louder, until at last he had to give up the question and hide his confusion under the roar of irrepressible laughter which could be no longer smothered.

The Commanding Officer of the Horse Battery to which I was next attached was of another calibre. This gentleman, like my friend at Mussoori, who knew no man in his company except the unfortunate Baxter, was more renowned for his skill at amateur theatricals and for obtaining leave than for devotion to his military duties. I had been attached to the battery for some days before I saw its Commander on duty. I don't suppose there has ever been a Royal Horse Artillery Battery that was not smart, but there is a difference between smart and smartest. This battery was smart. On the occasion that Major —— made his first appearance to our eyes we attached officers were standing in our places in the rear of the battery. After the parade had been going on a short time the versatile Major shouted out, "Too much talking there in the rear. I won't mention any names," and a very audible *sotto voce* came from one of the N.C.O.'s who was standing near me, "No, because 'e dunno any of our —— names."

All those who have sojourned in the East must be aware of a peculiar intonation and form of expression of words that is often picked up by those who, surrounded by native servants, are educated in India. Almost every Eurasian has this peculiar *chi chi* accent, and to a somewhat less extent many pure-bred Europeans whose childhood days have been spent with their parents in that land. Accordingly, most parents engaging European governesses or nurses out there are on the alert to guard against the slightest suspicion of this rather pretty though despised accent. A friend of mine who at one time commanded the Viceroy's bodyguard had his children with him in India and required a governess. Some correspondence had ensued between the would-be imparter of knowledge, manners and decorum and the parents, and it had been arranged that the prospective governess should be interviewed at some railway station through which the bodyguard train would pass and at which a short halt would be made. The young lady was waiting expectantly on the platform, and was at once engaged in conversation by my friend's wife. The colloquy caused a suspicion as to the purity of the lady's lingo. The mother promptly went to her husband and confided her fears. My friend was a resourceful man. He said, "I will soon make sure," and to the intense surprise of the young lady a conversation somewhat as follows ensued:

Resourceful Officer: "I say, Miss ——, I wonder if you would mind saying 'My papa has got a nice polo pony'?"

Young Lady: "Oo-ah! How funnee. My poppa has got a nice po-lo po-nee."

Resourceful Officer: "Oh, thank you so much. I am so sorry, but I am afraid we shall not be able to engage you. Our train is just leaving, so I must ask you to excuse us."

And the bewildered young person was left disconsolate on the platform.

Many years ago, when I was a subaltern stationed in Burmah, there was an officer in my regiment who had been looking upon the wine while it was red with undue persistence. A prolonged abstinence from parades and other duties led the Commanding Officer of the battalion to the reluctant conclusion that the confirmed toper must be put under arrest. I was acting Adjutant at the time, and as a certain punctiliousness was observed in such matters in those days, I was directed to proceed to his bungalow and ask the officer for his sword. When I arrived the officer was in rather an excited state, and expressed his determination to put the sword through my body rather than render it up. Fortunately, however, deep potations cause rapidly varying moods in those who sacrifice at the shrine of Bacchus, and a little later the gentleman was in a maudlin condition of tears, and the object of my visit was easily carried out. A court-martial with the usual results followed. Her Majesty was pleased to dispense with the services of Major ——. In course of time the matter passed from my memory. It must have been some six or seven years later

that in that little dark passage that runs from the Continental arrival platform at Charing Cross past the booking-office somebody touched my arm and said, "It's Western, is it not? For God's sake, give me something! I am starving!" It was the same unfortunate officer whom I had been directed to put under arrest some years before. It was quite a harrowing sight to see him unshaven, shady and disreputable-looking, all trace of the smart officer he had once been vanished. I assisted him as far as I was able to do at the moment, and he was very grateful and insisted that he must repay me. I foolishly gave him my club address, and the next day he was there with a fresh story of difficulties. I soon saw that the starving was for drink and not for food. The unfortunate man became a perfect bugbear to me. The hall porter would say, "That—er—gentleman—he *calls* himself Major ——, has been here again." And finally I had to tell the porter to always say that I was out. Life became quite uncomfortable. I was afraid to go to the club for fear of running into him. This was no doubt a weak trait in my character, as I ought to have interviewed him and hard-heartedly told him that his drunken habits merited no further assistance; but when you have been associated daily with an officer for some years, it seems wellnigh impossible to adopt such stern methods. In course of time the fruitless visits ceased, and I have never heard of the unfortunate man from that day to this.

Most people who take on a strenuous job at an advanced age suffer for it. I was a good deal

nearer sixty than fifty when I volunteered for service when the war broke out, and a continuous strain for four years or so brought on a breakdown of heart and eye. For the former I was recommended to go to a very famous heart specialist, a Scotchman. As I had experienced a severe attack of angina pectoris a short time previous to my visit, my wife thought it better to accompany me. When we entered the great man's consulting-room my wife commenced some little explanation why she had accompanied me. "Sit down there, Mrs. Western," the doctor pointed to a sofa, "and don't speak until I have finished with your husband," was the rather astonishing reply which she received, and then the great man took me in hand. I was put through a searching cross-examination, every remark that was the least bit off the mark was cut short with a startling abruptness that was most disconcerting, and before the Æsculapius had arrived at some diagnosis of my case I felt as if I was a criminal deserter being told off in an orderly-room. When the doctor had concluded, he suddenly said, "Do you know what's the matter with you?" I was feeling a bit sore and irritated, and intimated that to find out was the reason I had visited him. He said, "Well, I will tell you what is the matter with you. *Vanity*—that is what is the matter with you." I stared in bewilderment, and then he explained. He said, "You think you can do at sixty what you can only do at forty, that's vanity, and that is what is the matter with you and many other men of your standing." Notwithstanding

the rather dictatorial tone of the interview, I speedily learnt from his subsequent treatment of my case that he had in the most thorough way exactly diagnosed my ailment, which, alas for the frailty of human flesh, is never likely to leave me. I have since learnt that under the rather gruff exterior Scotch manner is concealed a warm and generous heart, and this learned gentleman, having retired from his enormous practice, gives his skill and energies to the direction of a great medical school of inquiry.

As an illustration of the methods of some of these new Government departments for which the nation is now paying so heavily, I may here mention that the eye disability from which I suffer and which the Ministry of Pensions allow to be due to service, is that of glaucoma, an incurable malady that may get worse, but cannot get better. I have entirely lost the sight of one eye, and that of the other is affected. The first time I appeared before a Medical Board my heart affection only was considered, and for that I received a certain rate of disability pension. The next time I appeared before a Medical Board it was for both disabilities, heart and eye. After a considerable delay I was informed that my *two* disabilities of angina pectoris and glaucoma had been considered by the Medical Advisers to the Ministry, and that I was now granted—exactly the same rate of disability pension as I had received for *one*! I naturally protested. After further correspondence I received the following letter :

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 20th instant, I am directed to acquaint you that the rate of your temporary retired pay is based upon the present degree of your disablement as certified by the medical authorities of this Department, after careful consideration of the reports of your various Medical Boards.

If you so desire, your case can be referred to a Medical Appeal Board, *whose assessment* of the degree of your disablement *must be regarded as final.*

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

For Director-General of Awards.

It will be perceived that in the last paragraph of the letter a sort of veiled threat can be read. I do not say the threat was meant, but a construction that might be put on it is, "Your degree of disablement and consequently of pension may be made less if you dare to question Ministry dictums." As it is so apparent that two disabilities cannot rank in degree in the same terms as one, I did desire that my case should be referred to an Appeal Board, from whom I received a fair consideration of my case and an increased disability rate. But is it worthy of a high Government Department that officers should have to fight like this for their just dues?

When I was at the Staff College the Commandant was a General Clerly. In the earlier days of my soldiering he had written a book called *Minor Tactics*, which was the textbook on military matters when I was at Sandhurst, and I do not suppose there was a soldier of that period who was not well acquainted with the title, if he was not con-

versant with the short and rather pithy sentences which composed the work. General Clery was a sporting General who did a lot of hunting, and encouraged the officers under his command to do the same. He was seldom seen without his top-hat, which was a more common article of wear in those days than now, and after he had retired from the College Command was generally to be seen at luncheon-time with the topper on his head at one of the windows in the dining-room of the United Services Club which look on to the steps of the Athenæum. I remember at one of the meets of Garth's hounds somewhere in the neighbourhood of the Staff College there was a bit of a squash at a gate on the edge of a wood, the gate being in the centre of a very forbidding-looking boundary fence. The hounds were getting away into the country with their fox. The General was not a man who was content with the rear at such a moment, and amongst the field was that celebrated thruster, Broadwood of the 12th Lancers. General Clery, in his anxiety to become one of the first at the gate, was endeavouring to persuade the crowd that a short cut to open country lay down one of the rides of the wood. "None of your minor tactics here, Sir," was the reply he got as Broadwood, coming up at a scattering hand-gallop through the crowd, sailed in style *over* the gate the others were hastening to open and slipped the field.

Peshawar is the premier Frontier station in India. It guards the entrance to the historic

Khyber Pass, and for many years has been the jumping-off place for various Afghan and Frontier expeditions. It is also unfortunately a favourite lurking haunt for the assassin ; shots at the various unfortunate sentries posted round and about the cantonment were in my days nearly a nightly occurrence. I am informed by a friend at present stationed there that every bungalow is now surrounded by a barbed-wire zariba, and as, notwithstanding these defences, this officer's domain has lately been looted and his uniform, saddlery and other household goods removed to Pathan sanctuary amongst the hills, I conclude the conditions are not any more peaceful. In another chapter I have told of the assassination of Messrs. Gunter and Green, and it was about this period that the Commanding Officer of the Hampshires was assassinated in broad daylight at an assault-at-arms. There was a crowd watching a tug-of-war, the murderer mingled with the spectators, moved up alongside the unfortunate officer, put his pistol to his back and pulled the trigger. What is more, in the turmoil caused by the disaster the man escaped, at any rate for the moment, though I believe he was afterwards given up by his tribe to the Politicals and paid the death penalty.

I had at Peshawar a collection of rather noisy, yapping, excited little terriers, Hustle, Bustle and Rustle were three of their names. When our daughter reported her arrival, my wife was anxious whether these excitable little creatures might not be a source of danger or fright to the baby, so we advertised we would give them away to a

good home. Amongst the many replies received was one from an officer in the Sappers who I knew. I wrote and told him he could have them, and he arranged to arrive at Peshawar by train early one morning to take them away. I, with the noisy pack, came rather late to the railway station, and it was apparent that something unusual had occurred. I found my friend looking rather pale. He had been walking up and down the platform awaiting my arrival when a trans-border assassin moved alongside, quickly placed a pistol against the officer's head and pulled the trigger. By the grace of God it was a missfire. As soon as he had recovered from his astonishment the officer knocked his assailant down, and the man was speedily captured by the military police on duty. I do not think many men have such fortunate escapes; these assassinating ruffians generally see to their weapons before they start on their mission. I wonder what are the odds against a missfire under such circumstances? I can remember a cousin of mine telling me when he was aiming at his first stag in Scotland with a Holland and Holland rifle he had first a missfire with his right and then another with his left barrel; the cartridges were by a good maker, the rifle had always fired true previously to and after the mischance, so the odds against the double event must have been enormous.

For a portion of the time that I was stationed at Peshawar Sir Harold Deane, who was formerly in the 1st Punjab Cavalry with me, was Commissioner of the North-West Frontier Province. An

able and a strong man, as hospitable as he was charming in personality, he had a supporting Staff of strong men, amongst whom was the present Sir Michael O'Dwyer, the late Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab. Sir Harold's intimate knowledge of the tribes of this lawless Frontier enabled him to hold them in a firm and just grasp, and there was a considerable diminution of the usual Frontier unrest during the period he held the reins of Government. By the by, he was not the only member of his family who could hold the "reins" rather artistically. His daughter, now Mrs. F. Humphris, could "tool a team" in a very workmanlike manner, and I have several times enjoyed a ride on the box-seat while this lady steered her waler team in a manner that would have been appreciated by connoisseurs at a coaching meet at the Magazine.

It is a generally accepted idea that these Frontier assassins are Ghazis (fanatics), who hope to obtain a comfortable home in Paradise by the destruction of the Feringhi; but though religious enthusiasm may to some extent tempt them to crime, I think the desire for notoriety is also a governing factor. I was told that Sir Harold Deane recognized this and organized a policy that might with advantage be followed with the contemptible Irish gunmen. When an assassin was caught in Peshawar it was decreed that he should be put away in the cells and no information whatever as to his trial or execution be given. The crowds of the murderer's tribe who would flock into cantonments all agog to hear the develop-

ments of the case and to show sympathy with the murderer would thus have reluctantly to disperse unsatisfied, or were told that the murderer was regarded as such an insignificant person that no time could be fixed either for his trial or his execution, neither would any notice of his death be promulgated. Should the Irish gunman be similarly deprived of all notoriety, I think the tale of cold-blooded murders would decrease.

The ingenuity and audacity displayed by some of these Frontier thieves is really almost to be admired. On one occasion my wife and myself were woken up by a clatter of musketry and the sound of a galloping horse. I was on the Staff at the time and had a mounted guard, as urgent night messages had occasionally to be despatched. Stables in India are generally just little mud huts with no doors, only an arched opening through which the horse is led in or out. When the horse is at home the opening is closed by two parallel poles, the top ones are about four feet above ground level, and the two are generally fastened to one another with rope. On this occasion the guard had stalled their horses and were sleeping on string beds drawn across the opening. The thief got unperceived into one of the stables, leaped the horse out over the bars and over the bed of the man sleeping in front and disappeared at full gallop into the dark, followed by the bullets of the awakened troopers. I have often pondered over this extraordinary episode, and conclude the man must have marked down a horse that he knew could and would leap; but what

nerve! Suppose the horse had not leapt or had fallen?

In that cantonment it was customary, I suppose, for all officers to sleep with a revolver handy. At any rate, I always had one and an electric torch under my pillow, and I entertained the fond hope that should the unpleasant circumstance arise of finding one of these thieves by the bedside, the glare of the torch in his eyes would sufficiently blind him to enable me to fire the revolver into his body before he could use his weapon. However, the circumstance never did arise; but one night, previous to retiring, I went into my bedroom and placed my loaded revolver on the table by my bed. I then went back into the drawing-room to do or say something, and returning within a minute or two found that the revolver had been stolen. Pretty sharp work, and pointing to connivance on the part of the Chowkidar (a sort of "blackmail watchman"), who, unless you desired a sure and rapid looting of your establishment, it was necessary to maintain. In this case the civil authorities in course of time recovered the weapon, and the Chowkidar suffered a fitting incarceration.

The system of telegrams in India is different to that at home. In India there are no less than four species of telegrams. "Deferred," which, when I was there, were generally not delivered until the next morning—(in a vast continent, some fifteen hundred miles in length and as much in breadth, where mail trains do not put up any

extreme speed, these were naturally far quicker for distant places than the post); "Ordinary" telegrams, which were twice as expensive as deferred ones, and took about the same time to be delivered as messages sent during the busy hours at home; "Urgent" telegrams, which cost four times the rate of deferred telegrams, were supposed to take precedence of the above-mentioned two, and had a special light yellow envelope of their own; while "Clear the Line" wires, delivered in the same attractive envelope, cost the sender nothing, but could only be despatched by those in high places. Dire penalties were attached to any infringement or misuse of this privilege, and they were supposed to be only used in cases of very grave necessity. Perhaps they were only used on such occasions; nobody can judge of the urgency of the situation except those concerned. I was once saying good-bye on board a P. & O. steamer to a young and beautiful lady, when a telegraph messenger arrived hotfooted and handed the lady a yellow envelope. She opened it, smiled, and handed me the message to read. It came from a very high official at Simla, who shall be nameless, and the important document consisted of two French words, "*Bon voyage.*" The steamer was certainly due to sail in a few minutes, and no doubt the "Clear the Line" frank was necessary to ensure the lady receiving it in time.

I hope that with the advance of veterinary science more humane treatment of our dumb friends has also come into being. When I first

joined the Service a morning in the operation ward of a horse hospital was a harrowing experience. Horses bought for native cavalry at the fairs in India comprised and still comprise many entire horses. The native is rather fond of noisy, screaming stallions, and very few young horses are altered before they are brought to the market. With the pure-bred Arab the proceeding is in most cases unnecessary; many Arab stallions are as gentle as the mares, but the price of a pure-bred Arab is outside the troop-horse figure, and these animals are only found amongst the officers' chargers. I take some little credit to myself for being one of the first to introduce into native cavalry horse hospitals the use of chloroform in painful operations. When I first had charge of the horse hospital in the early eighties, the regiment was commanded by Colonel Corrie Bird, a humane and kind-hearted man from whom, when I first approached him with a suggestion that anæsthetics should be used, I received sympathetic co-operation. In fact, for some period of time this gallant officer defrayed all expenses for anæsthetics out of his own pocket. We speedily discovered that the light outlay (I think in those days the average cost of chloroforming a horse for a gelding operation was about three or four rupees) was more than compensated for by the immunity from death casualties and the more speedy convalescence of the animals operated upon, and when this was certain, the cost was regarded as a fair charge against horse funds. I believe there are now very few units in whose horse hos-

pitals an anæsthetic is not given for any painful operation. Quite early in our experiments in this direction a veterinary officer who came on a visit told me that to walk the animal on whom the operation had been performed for two or three minutes, immediately he had recovered from the effects of the chloroform, and also every morning whilst the horse was still in the sick lines, prevented much swelling, and insured a more speedy healing of the wounds. It was new to me, but I daresay it is well known to all vets. During the time I was in charge I do not remember ever losing a horse who had undergone this operation under chloroform. I am rather surprised that in these humanitarian days Parliament has not legislated for the administration of an anæsthetic in all cases in which dumb animals have to undergo this very painful experience.

When Lord Kitchener first came out as Commander-in-Chief to India it was understood that he would at once proceed to the Punjab Frontier, and his tour was planned to start from Dera Ismail Khan. That historic and gorgeous display, the Durbar of 1902, however, kept him at Delhi until its conclusion. I was holding the appointment of A.A.G. of the Derajat District at the time. I had been promised a Cavalry Brigade at the Durbar, and was looking forward to being a spectator and participant in one of the most gorgeous displays ever put on the Eastern stage, but as His Excellency declared his intention of starting on the tour the moment the Durbar was over and did

so, I had to relinquish the coveted job and stay at Dera Ismail Khan to help in making the necessary arrangements. My wife was one of the lucky people who saw the whole show through, and she has often told me that two memories that will never fade were the magnificent State Ball given in the Hall of Audience and the sadly pathetic march around the arena of the old and broken Mutiny veterans to the massed band strains of "See the Conquering Heroes Come." When Lord Kitchener reached the Frontier, accompanied by Sir Charles Egerton, who was then commanding the Punjab Frontier Force, his first visit was to a fort, a gunner command on the outskirts of the cantonment. Lord Kitchener was rather taciturn that morning. I did not see or hear him make any remark to anybody, in fact, I believe I am right in saying that the first remark he made that morning was a query in a rather curt tone, "Why does not that gunner officer obey the King's Regulations?" All eyes were directed at the unfortunate young man, who became very red and looked uncomfortable and mystified. Equally mystified were the Staff. The unhappy Commandant had suffered from a very common complaint on the Frontier, what is called "frontier sores." They may start from the slightest scratch or cut, and generally attack those who are in a fever-worn, run-down condition. They are simply small sores that seem to defy all ordinary treatment, and generally have to be burnt with carbolic acid. This officer had suffered from one on his upper lip, and had shaved off his moustache

to admit of its easier treatment, and it was the want of the hirsute adornment and the consequently somewhat naval appearance of the officer that had caught the new Chief's eye. The next morning Lord Kitchener started on his Frontier tour, and Sir Charles Egerton, who accompanied him, told me that after they had been driving for some hours, he said, "I thought I gave orders for all heights to be picqueted. I have not seen a single man in position." The remark might be construed as a sort of reprimand; it really was a compliment to the remarkably efficient hill training of the Frontier Force troops. Sir Charles by a whistle and a few signals was able to demonstrate that as far as the eye could reach the hills were admirably picqueted, though all had remained below the sky-line until summoned to appear.

The comparative efficiency or otherwise of certain units is a controversial subject that it is best to avoid, and, after all, what is the good of comparison in such cases? Everybody thinks his own corps is the best, which is a fortunate and happy state of affairs. Lord Kitchener, however, was determined to test efficiency in certain directions, and during the first years of his rather autocratic administration instituted what was called "The Kitchener Test." It was a severe trial of the efficiency of infantry units. It comprised tests in musketry, parade work, field work, marching, march discipline, and all the ordinary attributes which should be instilled into the soldier. The best unit found in a brigade had to compete with

the best units from other brigades for selection as the best unit of the division ; these again competed in another locality for selection as the best unit in the command, and the latter in yet another locality for the best unit in the Army. As the test had to be completed during the few cold weather months of the year, it will be seen that it was a sort of progressive toil, and that the better the unit the more heavy its task. The unit that came out on top had to sustain a continuous and strenuous trial, and could not have had much leisure to devote to sport or amusement. Yet the regiment that did come out on top also won that year the British Infantry Polo Tournament. No regiment can win a polo tournament without considerable training and practice. When a unit can work and play up to that high pitch, it must indeed be something rather tiptop, and that is what the Queen's Royal West Surrey Regiment proved themselves whilst stationed at Peshawar.

I recall that when I was on the Staff of Lord Kitchener's brother, Sir Walter Kitchener, he initiated what I believe to be a sound method of training for war. His theory was that a regiment learns but little if war training is carried out under peace conditions. Instead of big camps of exercise with brigades, divisions, and large Staffs employed, he would detail small forces to act against one another under real service conditions. These little forces would be sent away to fend for themselves. War was on from the moment they started until they returned, day and night, no respite, no truce for dinner-hour or to give

the weary soldier refreshing sleep. For the four or five days that the little show lasted there was no peace interlude, officers and men had to trust to their own resources and to experience to the full the weariness of continual vigilance. He rightly argued that units should understand what is meant by the *strain* of war conditions, and that the time for brigade or divisional work did not arrive until that experience was understood.

CHAPTER IX

Luck in Numbers—Thirteen—Sam Lewis—My Number Eighteen—Tent-pegging Experiences—Horsemanship and Trick-Riding—Naked Horses—How Pegs should be driven—Pig-sticking—Jodhpur Hospitality—Indian Gentleman Experts—Sir Pertab Singh—Itinerary of a Sporting Day—Size of Arab Horses—Riding Pig with Bamboo Cudgels—A Cruel Sport—The *Coup de grâce*—Dhokal Singh Polo-Player *par excellence*—Jodhpur Training—In Polo Youth must be served—Pony the Chief Factor—An Ordinary Officer—Confidential Reports—Dera Ghastly and Dreary Dismal—A Spear through the Instep—Snake under the Bed—Prepare for Cavalry—Poor Dog—Pace behind Cut—Black Buck-Coursing—Kellow Chesney—The Greater Bustard—Riding Birds—Hawking on Frontier—An Unusual Form of Yachting—Shark!

THERE is something rather strange about the luck of numbers. I had a Gunner brother—now, alas! joined the majority—who was born on the 13th of June, and he always averred that thirteen, or a multiple of thirteen, occurred in nearly every event of his life. It certainly occurred in many, and was not confined to the disastrous. At one time he used to frequently spend the winter in the Riviera, and at Monte Carlo, more from interest than from a gambling proclivity, he worked a system based on some variation or combination of this mystic number. He has told me that he generally paid his expenses thereby, and in case some reckless reader, desirous of increasing a fluctuating income by a similar flutter should

determine to philander at the tables with the same number, I hasten to add that my brother was a very cautious adventurer on the green cloth, and religiously and strictly closed the day's gamble the moment he had lost some small fixed sum; whether the limit fixed was also thirteen of our now very scarce gold coins I am not sure. My own fortune at the board of green cloth has neither been guided by a sound system nor favoured by any good luck, and on the few occasions I have visited Monte Carlo I have invariably left the fascinating Principality a poorer man than I entered it. I remember one year that I was there that rather famous money-lender, Sam Lewis, was freely speculating on the hazard of the rolling ball, and I watched his ventures for some little time; his favourite number was seventeen, and on the principle I suppose that "To those that hath shall be given," or should it be "To those that have taken from others shall be given"? he always seemed to carry away a very comfortable sum, and whether *en plein* or *carré*, or in some combination on seventeen, he nearly always seemed to secure a winning stake.

My pet superstition is that number eighteen represents the outside turning-point of any good luck that may ever accrue to me. Once when I was quite young, before I went to India, I shot on my Uncle's Essex property eighteen partridges with eighteen cartridges, but broke down at the nineteenth. Later on in India I achieved the same feat, the difference only lying in the *genus* of the bird, which on this occasion were black

partridges (*francolin*); more than once at the clay-pigeon traps I have been thrown out at the nineteenth bird. When I passed for the Army I secured the eighteenth place on the list. At the Staff College I practised for tent-pegging at the old Naval and Military Tournament, and previous to the day of the officers' competition I had carried in practice sixteen consecutive pegs; in the Tournament itself I carried the first two, and the third split open on being struck, consequently not counting as a carry. When I came in for such little patrimony as youngest of younger sons inherit, the number eighteen again governed the maximum.

Tent-pegging is essentially an Eastern sport, and most troopers of the native cavalry are exceptionally good at it; but my experience has been that it upsets and unsteadies the ordinary troop-horse to a very marked degree. The Indian country-bred horse, although probably now carrying more English than indigenous blood, is generally rendered very wild by this hell-for-leather sport.

When I was practising at home, not being desirous of ruining any of the few hunters I was with difficulty able to keep, I hired a horse from a well-known riding school in the north of London. I told the proprietor exactly for what purpose I wanted a horse, and that my experience had been that tent-pegging considerably deteriorated from the merits of the horse as a hack. The man supplied me with quite a nice brown horse, which he told me he frequently hired out as a charger to Volunteer officers, and he seemed to feel confident that any amount of short bucketings would

neither upset the horse's equilibrium nor injure his legs. His confidence was justified, a nicer tent-pegger I never rode; he'd go as fast as you liked on the run, could be stopped with the snaffle, and would walk sedately up to the starting-point for a fresh venture. Of course, I never rode him more than three or four runs in one day, and I have always entertained a hope that no aged, insecure-in-the-saddle Volunteer Major, suddenly called upon to give a point of direction, has been carried out of sight of his regiment at excessive speed or spilled on the green sward owing to the tent-pegging remembrances of this excellent animal. In those days, at the Agricultural Hall, one entered on the run from underneath a rather low archway, and I must say the sudden entry from a dim light into the vast, crowded, noisy hall seemed to rather astonish my equine friend, who for the first few strides yawed about a bit, but with his usual good-tempered equanimity he quickly settled down to his task.

I have in another chapter referred to the feats of horsemanship and trick-riding effects in which so many of the Indian Cavalry *personnel* excel. Amongst them is one of tent-pegging on an absolutely naked horse, with neither saddle nor numnah on his back nor bridle on his head. Good tent-pegging horses once on the track run a perfectly true and level line, and if a horse is led up by his forelock to the track and then let go he steers himself, and there is no particular difficulty in the feat, which looks a better performance than it is.

At a big assemblage in Delhi—I have forgotten

what the particular occasion was—there was a tent-pegging and feat-of-arms show going on, and amongst the many cavalry units assembled was that tiptop regiment, the 18th Bengal Lancers. A few of the native troopers of different units had been going down barebacked as described, and “Sally Swanston” of the 18th (a very fine sporting officer, who was unfortunately killed in France early in the War, and who would undoubtedly have risen to the highest distinction), came up to me and said, “Let us both have a run at this.” I said I had no suitable horse at hand, but one of the native officers of the 18th said he would produce two animals who he could warrant to run true. They did run true, and we got our pegs; but Swanston’s animal stopped at the end of the track and mine did not, and there was I in a crowded camp, on a galloping horse over which I had no proper control, proceeding at a pace that would have horrified our blue-coated custodians of the Row, to the imminent danger of myself, the horse and the multitude. By tapping his head with the spear I was able to roughly guide the animal down the principal roads between the tents, and in a short time found myself out of the camp and proceeding across country. Fortunately, a party of troopers were riding across the plain from the opposite direction; they quickly tumbled to the situation, and by heading and turning the horse eventually brought him to a standstill.

In England, at any rate, I have not been very fortunate in tent-pegging at any public show. I

entered once for an officers' competition at Aldershot, at a time when I was in quite good practice, and the first peg at which I ran had been driven into the ground with a reverse slant. The peg should be driven with a very slight slant away from the direction in which the horse is coming; a peg driven in upright can be carried, but is apt to split; but a peg driven in with a slight slant towards the tent-pegger is, if struck, only driven against the earth, and the result is generally, as it was in my case, a badly sprained wrist for the performer and a spear left quivering in the tent-peg, because the peg cannot come away, and to withdraw the spear with an injured arm is difficult.

Such a pitch of accuracy is reached by some of the expert tent-peggers in India that a competition is seldom decided until the pegs have been placed sideways, when the surface to be struck is probably under an inch in width; but under these adverse circumstances I have seen two or three sideways pegs carried in succession. But when all is said and done, the horse remains the important factor, the faster he goes the steadier the action and the easier the aim.

Pig-sticking, another sport with the spear, has, of course, its native home in India. I have not been fortunate enough to find my lines cast in the best pig-sticking districts, and have enjoyed less of this sport than I have of most riding diversions. The best pig-sticking I have had has been in the Jodhpur District. I do not suppose there is a more loyal subject of His Majesty than Sir Pertab Singh. This fine hereditary warrior, who,

when well over seventy years of age, led his own Rajput Horse to France in the hopes of a death ride in the services of the Emperor he so faithfully served, was at the time of which I am writing Regent of the Jodhpur kingdom. In the name of the young Maharajah he used to entertain a collection of sportsmen for polo, pig-sticking, shooting, and almost any form of sport, the riding ones being predominant. An invitation to a Jodhpur week is an invitation for which one is grateful and thankful, and I, together with my pal Byngo Baynes, of the Central India Horse, were one year fortunate enough to obtain this privilege. The guests were lavishly and hospitably entertained and housed, sport was provided from early morn to dusky eve, and even the night could be profitably utilized, as the Maharajah had a polo ground lit up in the dark hours by electric light. The usual programme was pig-sticking, commencing in the very early morning, returning to a *déjeuner* when the sun became powerful, then shooting or a siesta according to the taste of the sportsman, and the afternoons devoted to polo or gymkhanas. I suppose the pig were very carefully preserved, anyhow they abounded and were found quite close to the palace, many fighting boars amongst them. Jodhpur was always prepared to suitably mount his guests, but most of us brought our favourite animals with us. Personally, I prefer a pony to a horse for this sport, and a well-broken, high-couraged Arab pony is the prince of mounts. A pony is in most cases handier than a horse, and you are nearer your pig and more likely to obtain

a satisfactory spear; but I remember that the Maharajah of Patiala, who was one of the guests on this occasion, always rode Arab horses of full size. Very few true-bred Arabs, however, stand much over fifteen hands, which, after all, is about the real size of many polo ponies played at home, whatever their official measurements may be.

It is wonderful how close a horse may be taken to a boar without being cut, the cut, I think, only takes place after the pig is under the horse by an upward throw of his tusks. One of the Jodhpur entertainments is riding pig with a heavy, short cudgel instead of a spear. The stick is generally a male bamboo one, which is almost unbreakable, and just a little longer than a walking-stick. It is rather a cruel form of sport, though interesting and exciting. The scheme is to ride your pig so close that he is nearly under your stirrup-iron, and then before he can jink under your mount or away, to hit him on the head with the heavy cudgel. The blow half stupefies the unfortunate animal, and seems to prevent him gashing the horse. Three or four such blows stuns the animal, who falls over. One of the Jodhpur lot would then gallop up, jump off his animal, seize the boar by the hind legs, raise them and turn him over on his side, left side up. The heavy conformation of the shoulder and neck of a pig is such that thus placed he seems to have no power to struggle to regain his legs, and a sharp plunge of a long-bladed hunting-knife just behind the shoulder gives him his quietus. On the day we practised this rather cruel sport, although there

were a good many boar killed, only one or two horses were slightly cut, and no one, except the unfortunate porkers, injured.

The Jodhpur reigning family are to a man exceptional riders and all keen on polo. Some years ago before the war, when Sir Pertab Singh was on one of his visits to England, those who played, or frequented Hurlingham and Ranelagh to watch polo, will remember Dhokal Singh; I think he is a nephew of Sir Pertab. I remember Dhokal Singh once told me that the first thing they looked for in a polo pony was pace. The pony was galloped on a course, and if he developed pace above the ordinary, then and then only would he be considered for polo. I suggested that this galloping along a straight course in a snaffle was apt to make ponies pull. He replied that once they had learnt to gallop and had real speed, the next step was to tie their heads down with a standing martingale and put a really powerful bit in the mouth—I fancy one of those native atrocities with spikes. The pony was then let out at full speed and given a sudden jerk in the mouth; the pain probably caused him to stop at once, and a few severe lessons of this sort taught him to obey the slightest inclination of the bit, when a lighter one could be substituted. If the pony did not respond to this drastic treatment, he was cast. Of course, it is not our way of training a polo pony, and I only give it for what it is worth.

I think Dhokal Singh is about the best polo player I have ever seen. On that visit I do not think he brought any ponies with him, but was

mounted on lent ponies, not always, I suppose, the very best. I often used to see him play, and he was generally the shining light on the ground, and that means a lot. You cannot play polo for thirty years on end without picking up some knowledge of the game, and such experience has made me observe how big a factor is the pony, even with a brilliant player. Take any ordinary good player you like, and if he is on a sticky pony he will play a sticky game; but let him be on *the flicker*—and I suppose we have all at some time or other owned him—"the very best pony, my dear fellow, I ever owned in my life"—and the same ordinary player suddenly scintillates into a rather brilliant exponent.

Using the word "ordinary" reminds me that I was once on the Staff of a certain General who developed a sudden predilection for the use of this adjective. It was my duty to deal with the confidential reports on officers. On all officers above a certain rank the confidential opinion of the G.O.C. was required. On going through a batch I found quite a number had been marked by him "an ordinary officer." Now, this phrase seemed to me, and it still seems to me, one conveying average merit only. It applied all right in many cases, but in the case of one officer commanding a distinguished British unit which had undoubtedly come on both in efficiency and discipline under the regime of this C.O., it seemed a very unsatisfactory recognition of the officer's good work. So I took it to my General and suggested as tactfully as I could that the merits of

the officer did not seem to be fairly summed up. "Why not?" said the General. So I pointed out how the unit had come on since he had taken command, and that this improvement could only take place under a good Commanding Officer. "Quite so," said my rather opinionated General; "that's just what I *have* said. Of course he is a good officer—all ordinary officers are," and nothing I could say would make him alter his opinion. But Brigadiers are subordinate to Divisional Commanders, and they in their turn to Army Commanders, and it so happened that the qualities of my friend the C.O. were known to higher authority than that of the Brigadier, and these Olympians had their eye on him for advancement. As a matter of fact he blossomed into quite a distinguished leader. The final result was an edict—I do not know whether it was also promulgated at home—that confidential reports were not to consist of the words "good, fair, bad, indifferent, ordinary," etc., but must give some clue to the officer's characteristics. Confidential reports are, in my humble opinion, a mistake and rather un-English. Authority does lay down that any unfavourable report must be communicated to the officer concerned, but I think myself every report upon an officer should be communicated to him. I have furnished a good many myself, and, good or indifferent, have invariably handed it to the officer; if indifferent, it gives opportunity for a full explanation of where the fault seems to lie, and if good, can only encourage him to still better endeavour.

However, we have rather digressed from our sport. There was very little pig-sticking to be obtained on the Punjab Frontier, not on account of the dearth of pigs, but chiefly due to the impossibility of beating them out of the cover in which they lived. At Dera Ghazi, to which place I have made former reference, it was common to come across sounders of pig while shooting in the *cachi* of the River Indus. The *cachi* is that portion of land which is submerged when the river, owing to the melting of the snow in the hills, comes down in flood in the hot weather, and which becomes covered with a thick undergrowth in the dry season. Another officer of my regiment, Dick (now Sir Arthur Dick; he was a King's messenger during the war and knighted for his services), was once shooting when a sounder consisting of a sow and a number of small pig came crashing through the undergrowth, and running I suppose between his legs upset him. The sow, probably on account of her young, was particularly savage, and mauled him badly while he lay on the ground, and he for many years suffered from the effects. I hope he does not now; I have not seen him since I crossed over to France with him early in the war.

At Dera Ismail Khan—these Frontier names lend themselves to an easy word-play on their merits, and we have both a Ghastly and a Dismal Khan—I organized a big beat for pig. We put up a good many, but the ground was most impossible, and as it had been necessary to also enlist the assistance of various landowners, most of

whom came out on screaming wild stallions, there was an unholy crush, spears being waved about in a confined space in all directions, and the result was that my friend, Hyde Baker, who was staying with me, got a spear through his instep. While laid up in bed in my bungalow his experiences were unpleasantly added to by a *karait*, one of the most poisonous snakes in India, being found and killed under his bed. I remember that once at Rajanpur, which was the most southern of our Frontier stations, and has now been abandoned, we had a General Court-Martial on a native officer, and a good many officers arrived at the station to sit or be waiting members of the Court, so we tried to organize some amusement for their spare hours. Such pig as were to be found in the neighbourhood did not inhabit rideable ground, so a boar that had been netted was carted out to a neighbouring plain. I do not remember exactly what arrangements were being made to ride him, but before they were completed the boar was by some error loosed. He promptly charged the nearest man to him, a Captain Leeds, who fortunately had a spear in his hand. He received him in the correct "prepare for Cavalry" position, and the wretched animal spitted himself on the spear point. I suppose the impetus even of a man's run on to a spear-point would send it through him. I remember that one of my clerks had a rather fierce bulldog, and one day at a little hill station called Sheikh Budin, on the Suliman Range, this animal suddenly rushed at some small terriers accompanying a lady with whom I was walking.

We had been hill-climbing, and I carried an iron-shod alpenstock, the point of which was considerably blunted by the rough stony ground. I swung the stick round, meaning really to ward the dog off, but he caught the point in his rush, and it went through the length of his body and killed him at once. I suppose it is the same thing as the pace of a horse behind a sword-cut. I remember an officer of my regiment telling me that at a charge at Patkao Shana in Afghanistan, although the first Afghan at whom he cut was wearing a poshteen coat, a sheepskin really, he nearly halved him; the man stumbled forward as the horse reached him, and the forward cut took him in the hind quarters and carried up to the shoulder.

The little hill station of Sheikh Budin is situated about midway between the cantonments of Edwardesabad, generally called Bunnoo and Dera Ismail Khan, and could be reached from either cantonment in a few hours. It boasted a small residential club, which was generally fully occupied during the summer months. Life on the Frontier was a bit strenuous in those days, and no doubt the maxim *Dum vivimus vivamus* was thought applicable to the stern life; but a rhyming synonym which some roystering philanderer had painted above the portals of the club, *Dum bibimus bibamus*, however heartening it may have been to the visitors, was not quite as suitable for continued application.

To the young and adventurous I can recommend one or two other forms of riding sport which

are not quite as common as hunting, polo and pig-sticking. Should pleasure or duty lead our itinerant young Englishman to the plains of Rajputana, or indeed to any of the rideable plains of India, where antelope are found, I can recommend a trial of a form of sport I indulged in myself in my younger days. In these Rajputana plains there are a good many black buck. The agriculturists fence their fields of grain by big, heaped up thorn fences. These portions of country are generally rideable, and exciting gallops with two or three greyhounds after wounded buck may be enjoyed. It is no good attempting to ride down an unwounded buck, at any rate I have never found it so. He gets out of sight of the greyhounds almost at once. The chief fun of the sport lies with the big fly fences, which can be taken at full speed. Once a horse has been into or through one—they are seldom strong enough to throw him—and experienced the pricks of the long, very sharp thorns of which the fences are composed, he throws a surprising high leap and chances nothing.

I remember on one occasion in those parts I had a very prolonged stalk after the larger bustard. This three-toed biped is a rare and coveted bird that is occasionally but not often found in those parts, though I believe they are fairly common in some parts of the Deccan. I was camping with a true sportsman, Kellow Chesney, of the 18th Bengal Lancers, another victim of the terrible war. We had been coursing a wounded black buck with his greyhounds, and as we were flying

one of these thorn fences side by side we saw a large bird—it looked as large as a Norfolk turkey—get up, and after a flapping flight of two or three hundred yards, settle. We guessed it to be the greater bustard. Our guns were a long way behind, but a syce (groom) on a spare horse shortly came up, and we sent the rather thick-headed individual back to camp to fetch a small rifle one of us had, and with our horses led in hand we proceeded to try and get to close quarters with the coveted trophy. We were rather tyros, and I believe followed the wrong tactics, for I have since learnt that had we used our mounts we might have in a few flights galloped the rather slow flying bird to a state of final collapse, as I have more than once done with partridges on the plains near Rajanpur. Anyhow, we tried the stalking method, and every time we got within about two hundred yards distance the great bird flapped off, each time with a longer flight, and we, anxious not to lose sight, pulled our unwilling steeds along and followed. The day wore on, and we were some ten or twelve miles from camp when the missing groom turned up on a camel, armed with a .450 Express. The explosive bullet, had it hit a bone, would have blown our desired poultry to a mass of indistinguishable feathers; so I essayed the wellnigh impossible feat of trying to hit the bird in the head, which in the declining light and at that distance looked a very miniature and ill-defined target. Needless to say, I neither attained the impossible nor obtained the bird, and I have never since seen a wild specimen of

Eupodotis Edwardsi, as I believe this specimen is scientifically called.

Hawking is another riding sport where you *can* go—indeed if you wish to see the kill you *must* go—*ventre à terre*. You are, too, quite likely to come *à terre*, as it is a sport in which your eyes are more on the hawk than on the ground, and you trust a good deal to your steed to bring you through. Most sportsmen who took any interest in this sport knew or heard of Biddulph and Phillott, two Indian cavalry officers, both of whom had made a study of this old British pastime, who trained their own hawks and provided good sport for any who liked to accompany them. The flights were not at herons, as in our ancestors' days, but generally at *houbara*, a small species of bustard. The Guides, I believe, used to get considerable sport with flights at ravine deer, but I have never participated, and I think it had nearly died out before I came on the Punjab Frontier. We had a sporting Scotsman, Lorn Campbell, generally called Scotchy Campbell, one of the best game shots I have ever met, who organized some good hawking meets in the neighbourhood of the Frontier station of Kohat. The *houbara*, I remember, were generally flushed in mustard fields, and in the winter, in the cold bracing weather enjoyed on the Frontier, I know no pleasanter way of passing the bright crisp days that constitute the cold weather. The *houbara* appears to have a slow flight, but an Arab may be extended to his very best pace and still hardly live with the birds in a long flight. The mad gallop over rather

rough ground, with your eyes in the air, and only occasional glimpses at the ground your horse is so cleverly negotiating, is quite exciting.

In the very early eighties there was an officer named Conway Gordon stationed in Madras. He was an enthusiast on sailing, and introduced me to what I am sure is an uncommon, and is certainly a very wet, form of yachting. On the Coromandel coast, certainly in the neighbourhood of the town of Madras, the surf breaks with considerable violence on the shore, and in those days such pier as there was did not run far enough to sea to reach beyond the second line of surf; steamers of any draught were unable to come alongside, and passengers had to be landed in unpleasantly buoyant surf-boats. The native fishermen plied their trade from floating logs, called catamarans, which they used to somehow paddle through the surf, and on which they went quite a long way out to sea. Conway Gordon fastened two of these catamarans together, but with a space of some three feet between them, had a leaden keel fitted to one of them, which gave some sea-stability, and had cutter-rigged sails erected on the whole contrivance. With a favourable wind he could make quite good time, and I have had some enjoyable sails with him in the warm weather and on the smooth seas that were generally found outside the surf. The kit we wore was not quite the same as that displayed at Cowes and Ryde, and consisted of a pair of shorts and a large sun topee. As the catamarans only floated

a few inches above sea-level, we were awash with water all the time, so boathooks, paddles, and such impedimenta as were carried had to be lashed. The first time we went to sea, Conway Gordon said, "Look out for any sea-snakes, some of them, the yellow ones especially, are very poisonous." Conway Gordon took up his position lying on one catamaran, where he could control the steering and sailing arrangements, and I took up a prone position on the other one. Sure enough, before long, we made the acquaintance of a yellow snake. I suddenly heard Conway Gordon shout out, "Push that yellow snake off your catamaran," and there, not very far from my bare feet, was a nasty yellow-coloured creature, like a big thick worm, about a yard long and the same thickness all its length. It appeared to be slowly moving along the log towards my unclad person. To push it off was easier said than done, the only boathook near me was lashed down with two fastenings, one at either end, and one end seemed very near the snake. This is the sort of occasion on which all one's fingers become thumbs. I think the nasty creature was really lying there quite still, but each time I glanced at it, as I struggled with the fastenings, it seemed appreciably nearer. The boathook was eventually undone and the animal returned to its watery element, but on other occasions when I sailed with my friend I took good care to have a stick or pole loose in my hand.

I was supposed to be studying the language at this time, and shared a bungalow with some five or six other subalterns at St. Thomé, a suburb

of Madras. We were warned not to bathe in the surf, as there were supposed to be ground-sharks in those waters, but all being young with youth's usual attribute of disobedience, we regularly had our morning and evening dips in the forbidden waters. With the knowledge that these unpleasant creatures are about, anything more disturbing and jumpy than to suddenly feel your leg or foot seized under water it is difficult to imagine. Few resisted the temptation of thus scoring off their fellow students, and the ducking-matches and noise that ensued doubtless scared off the sharks, if there were any, from the locality. I am rather doubtful whether a shark is not, like almost every other wild creature, inclined to be quite frightened of man and man's movements, and unless very strongly impelled by hunger or the taste of blood, more prone to move away from him than to attack him. On one occasion, when stony broke after a furlough at home, I engaged a very cheap passage in a sort of cargo boat proceeding from Liverpool to Bombay. There were four of us on board, Manifold of the Gunners, Johnny Nixon, since distinguished and much in the public eye when in command of the Cavalry Force in Mesopotamia, Chota Payne of the Queen's, and myself. We certainly had a very pleasant time, the chief objection from my point of view being that my berth was the covering of the only bath on board ship. The accommodation and food were quite good, but the journey lasted rather an undue time, and we broke down in the Red Sea. That, at any rate, is a shark locality, and while we lay

immobile for some days in the terrific heat, a good many fins were seen cruising around the vessel. So one day we determined to fish for a shark. The water was very clear, and we lowered the piece of pork, or whatever it was we used as bait, on a steel hook into the water, and could clearly see it several feet below the surface. A few sharks did come to it, but the slightest movement of the line or hook would cause them to dart away, and we had to keep as still as death without any movement of the line. It was interesting to watch the pilot fish; they were marked with blue and chocolate stripes exactly like the colours of Prince's Club, which was flourishing in those days. These little creatures used to swim round the bait, smell it, and go away again, I suppose to inform their carnivorous masters. We did eventually catch a shark, a fairly big one. We were fishing from the stern of the vessel, where there was a wheel-house, and the gangway between the shed and the taffrail was not more than two or three feet wide. When with all four of us hauling on the rope we had got the beast—and an awful weight it was—within a foot or so of the top, we began to think how we would fare with a large and fierce shark and ourselves all in a narrow gangway, so after a heated discussion, during which our arms got more and more tired, the monster was lowered into the water again and towed round the side of the vessel, where some of the crew helped us to get it aboard. I have always remembered the extraordinary timidity of these supposed-to-be fierce fish, and should any

reader ever chance to be overboard in a shark-infested locality, I hope he may take comfort in the thought that he has at any rate some chance of keeping the creatures off if he makes sufficient splashing and kicking with his arms and legs.

CHAPTER X

Tact—Troopships of the Old Days—Malta to Syracuse—A Trip through Italy—Indian Customs unsuited to Italians—Pompeii and getting even—Linguistic Talents—Staff College Examinations—The Colonel's Language—Estimated Life Values—A Warm Man—Coaches and Trains—Bread and Beer Fallacy—The Omnipotent Flapper—Drink defeated by Athletics—Polo Tournaments and Expenses—Polo Clubs and Polo Ponies—The Physical Factor—Height of Polo Ponies—Officers' Prestige—Roddy Owen—Cold Meat Trains—A Train-Stopping Device.

THERE was once quite a celebrated General with whom I was acquainted who was renowned for his military prowess and skill in the field, and equally famous for an unfortunate knack of saying the wrong thing in the wrong place. Of this latter characteristic he was himself ignorant, and believed that Providence had, in addition to his many splendid attributes, also endowed him with the useful virtue of tact. This gentleman, after he had risen to high rank, became engaged to be married, and previous to leading his bride to the hymeneal altar, obtained a high command on active service. Improvident is the soldier who does not know how to spell the mystic word "Opportunity," and the brother of the bride-to-be, spelt. Our General had, however, settled on his personal Staff; the delicate situation required delicate handling, and later on, discussing the matter with such

of his Staff as had arrived, he said with airy persiflage: "I am afraid I can't have him. I'll just give him a tactful answer, and there the matter ends." The aspiring medal-hunter did not join the campaign, and somebody commenting upon it one day, the General said: "Oh, that's all right, I arranged that; I just sent him a tactful wire." "What did you say, General?" inquired somebody. "Oh, I just said, 'So sorry can't have you, must have a *really good man*.'" I suppose every youngster, bubbling over with life and spirits, occasionally requires suppression. I understand that when the spirits of this disappointed subaltern had risen to a pitch that required restraint, the slightest reference to "a good man" was sufficient to bring about the required humble demeanour.

On one occasion when coming home from India by troopship I obtained permission to leave the vessel at Malta. Should any misguided sea-enthusiast be anxious to test the limits of endurance of the human stomach, I recommend him a voyage in one of the small passenger steamers that ply between Malta and Syracuse when a Mediterranean Levanter is blowing.

I experienced this misery in company with a young Gunner Officer many years ago, and when in an ill-found hotel at Syracuse we had somewhat recovered from the buffeting, we made an interesting journey through Sicily, crossed the lovely straits of Reggio, and travelled through Italy. When we arrived at Naples there was some trouble with luggage and cabs, and my young companion,

fresh from a sojourn in the East, where somewhat abusive words may be hurled at the working classes without much fear of offence or retaliation, lost his temper, and not realizing that European inhabitants are not so tolerant of strong measures, used abusive language and a few blows. A pretty turmoil ensued, knives were being drawn, and had it not been for the good offices of a guide, who bundled us into a cab and made the driver whip up his horse, we might not have escaped with whole skins. I was very angry, and assured my friend that if I had a chance I would get even with him before our tour was over. The opportunity came quite soon. We were visiting the excavations at Pompeii; here there is a certain room where unpleasant relics and pictures recovered from the excavations are shown. The Italian authorities, with a delicacy which I have not observed to be always demonstrated at their public entertainments, had erected a notice that the room might only be visited by adults over eighteen years of age, and made a corresponding price of admission. The sight was not an edifying one, but curiosity, like hope, seems to spring eternal in the human breast, and our youthful gunner said he would enter. I said in chaff, "See the notice, youths under eighteen not admitted." He replied, "Do not talk rot," or something of that sort, and commenced to fumble for his money. In a flash inspiration of how to get my own back came. In very stumbling Italian I managed to explain to the custodian that I was in charge of the young gentleman,

that he was under eighteen, and that I did not wish him admitted. The seeker after forbidden sights was very young-looking, with a rather blushing countenance, and entirely devoid of all hirsute ornament. I left him very red in the face and very angry, endeavouring, with no knowledge whatever of the Italian tongue, to explain that he was an officer of His Majesty's Army and of full age. A small crowd soon collected; he was ashamed to persist in his desire to view a non-delectable exhibition, and had to stroll away with what nonchalance he could assume. I felt a portion of the Naples incident was wiped out.

Talking of knowledge or want of knowledge of languages, it is strange how sparsely the linguistic talent seems to be distributed amongst the English people. Of course the war and the close associations of the English and French nations brought about a superficial knowledge of French amongst those who crossed the Channel, but although officers and men of our forces were drawn from every class in life, the percentage of capable linguists amongst the English was very low indeed. I think the talent is to some extent hereditary. I had two cousins in the Army, one now dead; their mother spoke with fluency many languages, and both these officers, one a Gunner and the other an infantry officer, seemed to have no difficulty whatever in mastering any tongue or dialect. Certain symbolical letters in the Army list after their names showed them interpreters in divers tongues, but in my own branch of the family

this *flair* never developed. When I went up for the Staff College in 1887 a fairly high standard of knowledge of one modern language was obligatory, and officers of the Indian Army were allowed to take up Hindustani as a qualifying language. I worked for the examination in India, and I discovered that a good many of the exercises set for translation from English into Hindustani were taken from a book called, I think, *Dowson's Exercises*. Adalat Khan was then the Government Examiner, and the Munshi of best repute in India. I perceived that the selections left in *Dowson's Exercises* of about the required length were quite few, so I sent them to Adalat Khan, and procured from him high-class translations of these pieces which I thoroughly mastered. To my great relief, when the examination papers were opened by the Board of Officers who presided over the examination, I saw the piece set for translation from English into Hindustani was one of these pieces. The rest of the paper was easy, and after the whole examination was over I sent a copy of my efforts to Adalat Khan in Calcutta. He replied that he was quite certain I should get over 90 per cent. The results of Staff College examinations were in those days, and probably are now, sent to all officers who compete, and to my astonishment, although I passed all right, I found I had only qualified in Hindustani by a very few marks. I afterwards heard that the examiner was a Professor of Eastern Languages at one of the Universities, and it shows what different views of knowledge of language

may prevail between equally qualified and competent men.

There are occasions when a too intimate knowledge of appropriate phrases for the moments of wrath are apt to recoil upon the head of the producer. During the early part of the War, when I was G.S.O. at Plymouth, a part of my duties was to explore the wild fastnesses of Dartmoor. I always had a very charming companion in this rather pleasant duty. Mr. W. Chappel, of Starcross, was a gentleman who, rather too old for a commission, full of patriotism and zeal, put himself and his very excellent motor, which he always drove himself, at the disposal of Government, and good fortune had it that he and his "old bus," as he affectionately termed his Straker-Squire, were told off to me. On one occasion we were driving along a lonely road that led to Tavistock in a heavy wet drizzle that prevented one seeing far in front. We had fortunately slowed down at a cross-road, so our pace at the moment of the accident was not fast. Suddenly we both saw about five yards ahead of us something stretched across the road. Chappel jammed on all the brakes, and with a terrific strain on the motor and tyres the machine was brought to a halt in a few yards, but not before the glass wind-screen was smashed in our faces and part of the hood carried away. Some wood-cutters had been cutting down a tree by the wayside, and a steel hawser running from a lorry on a patch of grass on one side of the road to the tree had been left taut across the road at what appeared to be the

carefully considered height to break any motorist's neck who happened to be driving along the road, Indeed, when the car came to a standstill, the wire hawser was a few inches from our chins. The crash brought forth the wood-cutting party from beneath the lorry, where they were sheltering from the rain and enjoying their lunch. The language used fitted the crime. Chappel was insured against motor risks. The insurance company sued the contractor, and as we had appealed to the police, Chappel and I were summoned before the Bench to give evidence. The tree-cutting contractor, whose position was quite indefensible, instead of paying up and looking pleasant, employed some solicitor in his defence, and the man of law, knowing, I suppose, the hopelessness of the case, employed his ingenuity in attempting to present to the Bench the exact nature of the language used by "the Colonel." "The Colonel," however, refused to repeat his exact words, and the Bench were fortunately contented with the explanation that it was suitable to the occasion. I may add that the Bench fined the defendant two pounds, so at any rate we had the satisfaction of knowing the estimated value in wartime of an independent gentleman and a General Staff Officer. One golden sovereign per head, for at that early period of the war I do not think Bradburys had been introduced.

Divers views about riches seem to obtain amongst the different classes. My Father told me once that he had been dining at some City dinner, and was placed between two merchant plutocrats.

Said one to the other, "I see poor old D—— has passed away." "Yes," said the other, "poor old chap! but I always thought he was a warm man." "So did I," said the other. "Yet his will was only proved for a beggarly hundred thousand." To many of us in these hard-up post-war days this miserable pittance would be sufficient to bring a few of the comforts most of us now lack.

Languages, riches, whatever the theme may be, *tot homines quot sententiæ*, and as our lives change so do our opinions. My Father was a wise and shrewd man. He was after his retirement chairman and director of two large companies, and although soldierly attributes are generally rather discounted in the City, was looked upon as a capable business man. Yet he told me that the first time he came home from India on furlough in the early half of the last century he was very nearly induced to squander such small fortune as he possessed in an enterprise that would nowadays be looked upon as madness and folly. Driving and sailing were his what I suppose would be called recreations in those books of reference such as *Who's Who*, *The Court Guide*, etc., which reveal to the public details of personal life which the more seemly reticence of our ancestors reserved for family information only. Those few who are fortunate enough to have relatives still living who were in touch with the spacious days of the Georges are aware that in those pre-railway days most of the families in England had their own posting-houses, who provided the necessary

animals for the old family carriages that carried their owners on their lawful journeys, which were few, compared with present-day travel. On his first return visit to this country, probably early in the 1830's, my father met in London the proprietor of the posting-house with which our family had always dealt. After, I suppose, the usual lament over the decline of business, the proprietor announced he had a real money-making scheme in contemplation. He related that there was a new-fangled absurd plan to run some uncomfortable open cars by steam from London to Brighton at a rate of about ten miles an hour, that he proposed to put on a line of good coaches, horsed by real fliers, which with quick-change artist grooms at each stage would enable the journey to be made at over twelve miles an hour, and would quickly stifle the rail competition. "I only want a few more thousands," said the man. "And if you come in you can do as much driving as you like, and make your pile too." Perhaps the handling of the ribbons appealed very specially, but my Father has told me he felt very tempted indeed to throw up his Eastern career, and it was only the advice of his relations at home, who probably more shrewdly estimated the possibilities of the iron horse than a man fresh from India, that deterred him from joining in the project.

Who, indeed, can prophecy the changes that the present rapid evolution of the man race will bring about? As we have had to abandon the preconceived opinions of our forefathers, so I suppose, and much more rapidly, the rising generation will

see the fallacies of ours. In my young days the possession of English land was looked upon as a solid foundation for prosperity and comfort. If agricultural land, so much the better. The Western properties (belying the name) lay in the Eastern Counties, and as a child I often heard it remarked that people must eat bread and drink beer, and with land that grew wheat and an interest in beer (one of my ancestors, Sir Harry Calvert, had founded a brewery, now a big concern, and flourishing under the name of the City of London Brewery), it was thought, and the thought no doubt brought a feeling of complacency to the owners, that such property would at any rate keep its possessors from the workhouse. Yet ere I had reached years of discretion the importation of foreign wheat had ruined the majority of the farmers of agricultural districts, and for the greater part of my life a number of farms that I knew as prosperous and thriving concerns as a boy have lain derelict. During my furloughs at home I usually hunted with the Essex Union or East Essex, and it was sad to see how much derelict land lay in the country of these hunts. Matters improved somewhat with the war, but the recent failure of Government to make good to the farmer their war-time promises *re* price of wheat seems likely to lead again to the former depression. To-day's democratic ideas must, I suppose, ring the knell of agricultural prosperity. Education does not appear to have fostered an appreciation of the values of *meum and tuum*; what is thine *should* be mine appears to be the dishonest maxim

of the present-day democrat, and the possession or even farming of land in large blocks by a single individual is likely to be disputed by unscrupulous agitators.

But if the evolution of the masses entails in its burgeoning characteristics that fail to please, the growth of civilization shows the more pleasing aspect of considerable reform in the drinking habit amongst the upper classes. Our parents' generation contained many who remembered the three-bottle men and their inglorious removal by stalwart footmen to a drunken slumber. Such *lapsæ vini* were regarded with a tolerant eye by our lady antecedents. I am afraid the omnipotent flapper of the present day does not show many pleasing qualities when compared with the more fastidious, reserved, and modest demeanour of the young Victorian Miss, but this flapperdom is, it is to be hoped, only a phase that will pass. What Maisie or Daisy, or whatever the name of the pert young woman may be, does not know is not worth knowing, yet it is incontestable that the refined young woman of the early nineteenth century did know of, and was by force of custom, class, and habit compelled to stifle her natural disgust for the unedifying example of her superior sex in a state of noisy inebriation. Although the natural instinct of the gentleman probably caused him to keep away from her at such moments, the placid acceptance that such weakness was unavoidable shows that a true estimation of the vice of drunkenness and its present detestation was not then held.

My own pet idea is that it is the splendid growth of the athletic movement during the last century that has brought about this desirable decrease in drink. In a moderate degree I have observed it myself during my spell of life in the Service. When I first joined the Army, over forty-five years ago, the consumption of wine or spirits in a mess was treble and quadruple what it now is. Competitions and tournaments have largely helped to check the drinking spirit. The manly youngster of the present day almost invariably has some special sporting hobby: polo, cricket, football, hockey, all have their enthusiastic votaries. Tournaments and matches demand the utmost physical fitness on the part of the players, and the result is abstinence from strong drink. In many units it has for some years been the custom to send round a decanter of mildly mixed whiskey and soda with the after-dinner wine, and abstemiousness is now certainly a characteristic of the officers' mess. I raised two battalions during the War; of course, both officers and men were drawn from every class, and under such circumstances a few toppers were bound to be found, but the percentage even under those conditions was very small.

During the latter portion of my Indian career I heard many complaints *re* the expenses of polo tournaments. To a civilian team wishing to compete, no doubt the expense would be heavy to each individual, for before I left India a good tournament-form pony would fetch from Rs. 2,000 upwards, and I hear prices are now higher. At

least four playing ponies would be required for each man, and to meet casualties another pony each should be in hand. Casualties amongst polo ponies are not only probable, they are certain to occur, and I think the lowest estimate of the number of ponies required by a team for a polo tournament would be twenty, and I doubt if that would not be an under-estimate. Ten thousand rupees, one man's share, is a good deal of money for the ordinary young man sojourning in the Land of Regrets to find, and this is probably the reason so few civilian or cosmopolitan teams are entered. But for the officer serving with his regiment it is a less expensive matter. I suppose every regiment keen on polo now has its own polo fund, and with continual donations and subscriptions coming in, the call upon the individual officer's pocket is not very heavy. Different units have adopted different methods to swell the fund. In some the ponies belong to the club, and are lent or rented out to the regimental representatives; in other units the fund lends the required money to the prospective purchaser, who pays it back in easy instalments with some small interest. With a capable committee, I think the former system is the best, as by judicious purchases and sales of promising ponies considerable profits may be made. In my younger days "the Durhams," with De Lisle at their head, were the champion polo team in India, and seldom sustained defeat. They were, I believe, one of the earliest regiments to start a polo club, and demonstrated that prestige and success in "the game of Princes" could be

obtained without an undue levy on the purse of the officer. Mounted units undoubtedly have a pull in this matter. There is no better school for making a polo pony than the riding school, and there is no better training for a horseman than making a pony in the riding school. In my own regiment picked rough-riders daily joined proficient officers in schooling ponies, and both ranks assuredly became more expert riders with the practice. My personal opinion is that the best second charger a young officer can have is a well-trained weight-carrying polo pony. If of class, his pace would be quite sufficient to enable him to live in front of the squadron; and if it comes to a scrimmage, the officer is more likely to come through all right on the supple, handy, well-trained big pony than on the ordinary troop horse. For our Indian Cavalry a big, weight-carrying, well-bred polo pony is the ideal charger. I always encouraged my officers to have as second chargers this type of animal, and the possession of such, while it means your officers are well and suitably mounted, also means a number of ponies for the cavalry game. Anyone attending a first-class tournament nowadays can see for himself that the majority of the beautiful, well-bred, intensively trained animals he will see in the field are big enough and handsome enough for the charger rôle.

I fear, however, that the soaring prices of hunters and polo ponies, the wages of grooms, and the price of forage goes far to stifle the sporting ambitions of many a youngster of the present day. Of the three, I think it is the middle diffi-

culty that hits hardest. A stroke of good fortune may enable our young friend to make the necessary purchases, careful stable management may enable him to reduce keep to reasonable proportions, but the payment of a stipend of at least three Bradburys a week to each probably inefficient groom is a steady and continual drain on the attenuated income of the non-war-profiteer.

I see that there is at the time I am writing these lines a paper controversy going on *re* height of polo ponies. The real criterion of an animal's suitability for polo is his handiness. If a pony is a bad puller, whether he be small or big, he is of no value for a really fast game, where the important factor is getting your pony to the required spot, which may be in front, behind, or either side of him, in the quickest time—not necessarily to the ball. It may in some cases be more important to get somewhere else; but in all these height discussions a point that I seldom see mentioned, yet a physical point which is all important, is the length and weight of the polo stick. There may be a few men who play with one length of stick, whatever the height of the pony, but I doubt it; the longer the stick, the heavier it is. It is the arm and wrist that control the stick, and the physical strength and power of the wrist is the determining factor. I have seen at what is called a *poggol*-gymkhana (*poggol* being the Hindustani term for foolish), a race for players to drive a polo ball mounted on camels, but in this somewhat comical display the style of hitting with a long heavy ungovernable stick is very different from

the quick wrist-play demanded in the real game, and I think the weight and length of the stick must always be a necessary limit. Individual style of play, of course, has much to do with its length and consequent weight, but when the pony gets really big, in fact becomes the handy horse, the length and weight of the stick becomes more than can be efficiently handled by the ordinary player. Probably 14'2 to 14'3 is about the most convenient height for the polo pony.

The strength and power of the wrist can be very considerably increased by the simple expedient of clenching the fist and turning the hand round and round on the wrist socket in alternate directions for a few minutes at a time. In my polo-playing days I used to carry out this exercise at a great many different periods during each day, and there is no doubt that strength and suppleness of the wrist is immensely increased thereby. I give the tip for what it is worth; I suppose most players know it.

I have heard it deplored that owing to the influence of the "temporary gentleman" who swelled our list of officers during the war, the prestige attaching to the latter cognomen has somewhat diminished, but I can look back a long vista of years and recall a remark that showed some suspicion of the honesty of the pre-war officer. There used to be a train that left Waterloo early after dinner on Sundays and landed officers studying at the Staff College or Cadets of the Royal Military College who had been fortunate

enough to obtain a week-end *exeat* at Camberley at an hour that enabled them to obtain an entrance to their respective colleges before the doors closed. The usual crowd used to collect around the doors of the carriages smoking and chatting, and one evening one of the budding soldiers dropped half a crown on the platform. One of his fellow-cadets perceiving it, rapped out, "Pick it up at once, old chap, or one of those d——d Staff College fellows will pinch it!"

Sometimes an unduly long train journey is the surest method of reaching your desired end. Many of my contemporaries will remember that famous gentleman-jock, Roddy Owen. In the early nineties I was going through an Artillery Course at Okehampton, and at this time Roddy Owen was A.D.C. at Aldershot, with, I think, Sir Evelyn Wood. Undoubted performer over a country, as the prowess in the hunting field shown by this gallant General officer to an advanced age proved him to be, his mind at that period was apparently not kindly inclined towards encouraging his personal Staff in the racing line. Roddy Owen, very fully equipped for the Moors with jam-boots, alpenstocks, etc., turned up cheery and smiling one day. It was the pleasant month of June, and the Ascot meeting was about to commence. "What on earth brings you here?" asked one of his many friends. The accomplished horseman replied, "Well, you see, I have been offered rather a good mount at Ascot, and the old man won't hear of my having leave to ride, so I thought of C—— (the officer commanding

the camp), who is a good 'un for leave, and mean to run up and ride from here." A glance at the respective positions of Aldershot, Ascot, and Okehampton on any map will show that, though this may have been the safest route, it was hardly the shortest.

To the foreseeing and astute, yet another convenience is afforded by the elastic regulations of railway companies. The "cold meat" train, that rather dismal conveyance which in those days transported corpses to Woking Cemetery, started somewhere about the midnight hours, and was usually considered the latest train that would convey young bloods from the gay and giddy night haunts of the Metropolis to the neighbourhood of their soldierly activities on the Monday morn. But a certain exuberant cousin of mine in the Household Cavalry made the happy discovery that another train starting some two or three hours later passed through Windsor in the early morning hours. An appealing epistle to the railway authorities elicited the hard-hearted reply that for no consideration could express trains scheduled to stop at certain stations only, be stopped at other stations to suit the convenience of individual passengers, and the unfeeling epistle ended with a pompous reference to the bye-laws of the company. This official pomposity proved the solution of the problem. The study by two or three Life Guard subalterns of the minatory bye-laws discovered the fact that the pulling of the alarm-cord would in all cases bring the train to a halt—penalty for improper usage, £5. To the young and adventurous

of the gold-spoon division, what was a five-sovereigns penalty compared with the delights of a few extra hours in Town? "The pace of cavalry is that of the slowest horse, and velocity is the measure of its momentum," quoted one of the young *sabreurs*, whose approaching examination for promotion had caused a reluctant study of Clery's *Minor Tactics*; "a calculation of pace and distance is a desirable attribute for all officers of the *arme blanche*." And after a few trials the momentum of the train came to be so exactly estimated that the alarm cord was mathematically tweaked at the crucial moment that—no doubt with the sympathetic collaboration of the engine-drivers, who soon tumbled to the ramp—would cause the train to pull up comfortably at the Windsor platform.

CHAPTER XI

My Best Hunter—An Irish "Customer"—The Penalty for Boasting—The Biggest Liar in the Army—Horse Copers—The Grey who did not like Hunting—The Horse with the Weak Heart who did—Humiliation in the "Row"—A "Review Order" Casualty—How to keep the Dust down—A Gallop for Water—An Afghan Boundary Commission—The Commissioners—Eastern versus European Diplomacy—A Record Head—An Appreciation of a "Topping" Regiment—Oorial—Snakes—Inaccessible Frontier Stations—A Score off the Staff—Turtle-Turning and an Appreciation of Beer.

I HAVE lived with and loved horses most of my life, but my lot has been more cast with them in the East than at home. My connection with these noble friends of man in England has since my boyhood days been during the three years that my Staff College Course and its subsequent attachment to other arms kept me at home, the occasional furloughs I have been able to screw out of the rather flinty-hearted Indian authorities, and since my retirement for the short periods I have been able to afford such luxuries. Needless to say, none such periods since the war. During these brief periods I have on the whole been rather fortunate in owning what to me at any rate were valued animals. The best hunter I ever owned in England was a little brown Irish horse which I bought from Donovan, then a well-known dealer near Reading. The horse was not really little,

probably stood over 15'2, but he was one of those compact horses that, owing to their well-proportioned anatomy, look smaller than they really are, and was always called "the little horse." My experience is that horses and ponies that appear smaller than they really are are generally good ones. Donovan had a riding-boy in those days, whose name has slipped my memory, he was a "real customer," and I have often wondered what salary Donovan paid him for an existence which certainly included risking his neck a dozen times a day, for a more dare-devil and venturesome rider I have never met. The Staff College kept a pack of drag-hounds, and the line chosen generally included a few real stiff fences. When Donovan had a nice performer for sale, he used to ask permission for this lad to show him with the drag, and the spots the young man chose to display the prowess of his horses were invariably where the fences were biggest, blindest, and most trappy. On the occasion I bought my little brown horse this lad had ridden him over a few fences, and we were returning to Donovan's house, the boy still mounted, when he exclaimed, "Sure he'd make nothing of a drop into the road." Before Donovan could express what I am sure was his opinion, viz. that whether the little horse would make nothing of it or not, the fence would probably cause injury to the horse, this madman had pulled his cap over his ears and was sending the animal full gallop towards the fence. The fence consisted of ash palings about five feet high, on a bank that probably stood quite as much above the

road beneath it, the road being a slippery metalled one. The clatter as the horse landed on the hard surface might have been heard a mile off and it was with some misgiving as to the chance of laminitis being set up in his feet that I finally purchased the horse. I rode him very hard for two seasons, and he only once gave me a fall, that was with the Essex Union over a very blind fence.

At the end of each Staff College drag season we used to have a point-to-point for horses that had been regularly ridden with the drag. A since distinguished Gunner Officer, known to his intimates as Peter Granet, was without a mount on one of these occasions. I was riding a thoroughbred of mine, and the little brown horse was standing down, so I offered Granet the mount, and I remember saying to him, "He is, I think, not fast enough to win, but he is a nice ride, and I am quite sure he won't put you down." The boast entailed the usual penalty, and the horse had one of the only two falls I have ever known him sustain. I sold him when I left to a brother student, Talbot, in the Sappers, now Major-General the Honble. R. Talbot, and I know the horse did him very well.

When you know a thing is true, and nobody will believe you, what are you to do? "Grin and bear it," or "Don't tell the episode," I suppose. Well, I *am* going to tell the episode now, and it *is* true, but I don't think anybody has ever believed it when I have told them that

on one occasion, when hunting in Essex with the same horse, I landed over a fence clean *into* a harrow lying on the ground, and the horse did not come down. He certainly scrambled badly, but fall he did not.

Perhaps this is not the most apposite moment to tell a story about "the biggest liar in the Army." My Gunner brother had at his house in Essex an uncommonly nice gramophone. We were staying there at a time when my daughter was at that very juvenile age when children have the comforting belief that the attributes of their parents exceed those of the remaining world population. The illusion, I fear, does not last many years. At luncheon time my brother had switched on the gramophone, and for the amusement of the young ones it was giving out some patter song about Captain Dash of the Heavies. This heroic Captain was discanting on his dubious virtues, and proudly announced he was the biggest liar in the Army. A small treble voice indignantly squeaked out, "He isn't; Daddy is!" and perhaps the harrow incident will induce others to think so too.

Taking it all round, I have been fairly fortunate in avoiding the horse coper. I am rather doubtful whether they exist in such numbers as fiction likes to portray, at any rate, if you know something about horses yourself, you are not so likely to fall into their clutches. I can, however, recall two or three incidents in which I was "had" a bit, though I think the luck might have happened to almost anybody. I bought

an exceptionally nice-looking grey horse from another dealer in the vicinity of Reading, and acquired the horse for what was in those days a moderate price, one that would be considered "given away" in these days. The dealer assured me he knew nothing against the horse. He said he bought it cheap from an M.F.H., and though he himself rather expected something wrong with a sound good-looking hunter at such a low figure, he had never been able to discover any fault. The dealer was liberal enough in his terms, offering me the horse for a month on trial. I had him for two or three months previous to the commencement of the hunting season, and found him a most pleasant horse to ride, and he in no way objected to schooling over fences. The first time I rode him to meet hounds was for a day with a pack on the Cambridge border, I think the Newmarket and Thurlow. I was in hunting-kit, and rode off to the meet which was a few miles away. Suddenly on the road the horse stopped, and no power on my part could get him forward. I tried leading him, coaxing him, spurring him, getting a lead from others passing by, all of no avail. Nothing would make him go a step further in the direction of the meet. He showed no vice in the way of rearing or kicking, was just obstinate that he would go no further. When I had to give up he trotted home quite contentedly. Next time I rode him in hunting-kit the same performance took place. I then tried him in a rat-catching costume, and nearly got to the meet, but I met

the hounds, and he at once again jibbed. Perhaps I ought, in the interests of the ways of horses, to have prosecuted inquiries from former owners, but I never did. I sent him to Tattersalls, where his looks procured a shade over the price I paid for him.

On one of my furloughs home I bought a nice-looking horse from the son of one of my Uncle's tenants in Essex. The first day I rode the horse was with the Essex Union, and we had two exceptional runs; he was right in front through the first one, never put a foot wrong, and was going equally well in the second run, when he suddenly faltered and fell at the edge of a field of young wheat, and in a few seconds was dead. It was just at the end of my furlough, and also at the end of the season, and I remember that in addition to my loss of the price of the horse I had to pay three pounds compensation to the farmer who owned the wheat field, which he claimed had been damaged to that extent by the removal of the carcass. I discovered that the seller had gone as a boy to America, where he had practised as a veterinary surgeon, and as I had little doubt in my own mind that he was aware that the horse which he sold me as sound had a weak heart, I put the matter in my lawyer's hands, but without avail, as I was advised to withdraw the prosecution; so I proceeded to the East again a poorer, if not a wiser, man.

Of course, if you buy "a pig in a poke" you expect trouble. I was attending a sale at Rugby

once, hoping to pick up a polo pony. I saw there as nice a looking horse as you could find anywhere. I had visions of his smart appearance in front of a squadron on parade if I took him to India. The horse was for sale without any warranty, but I got a vet. to run over him, and he pronounced him sound. The horse was sold cheap to my bid, and I railed him to town. The next morning, with a certain amount of nervousness, I had him saddled for a ride in the Park. He went quite quietly along the Bayswater Road, and I took him on to the tan by the north gate. By the time he had trotted and cantered amicably as far as Hyde Park Corner I began to think that I was in luck, and had a nice one. There the illusion ended, for he conceived a sudden aversion to the more frequented part of Rotten Row, and refused to turn on to it. He quickly got on to the carriage road in front of the gates, chiefly on his hind legs, and a policeman came up and requested me to move the horse as I was obstructing the traffic. I irritably replied that to move the horse in the direction I wished to go was my chief desire, but unfortunately my views and those of the horse did not coincide, and the brute was the stronger animal. The final result was his being ignominiously led back to the tan, and with his head towards his newly acquired stable he proceeded quietly enough. My groom, with that extraordinary perspicacity that these men seem to possess for tracing the life history of their charges, shortly had a blood-curdling story of the animal having been the death of several

human beings, and announced his unwillingness to groom or exercise the animal. So the possible murderer was also speedily led to Tattersalls' Sale Yard.

It was close to this spot, Hyde Park Corner, and about this period that Hardinge, of the Scots Fusiliers, who was at the Staff College with me, and one of the whips to the drag, was killed, by his horse slipping up on the hard road. An exceptionally fine and daring rider, it was a poor way for a man of his calibre and opportunities to end life.

I fancy that with horses as with men a weak or diseased heart is often the cause of sudden death. I suppose most of us associated with horses can recall a few cases of unexplained and sudden demise amongst our equine comrades. When our present Majesty came out to India as Prince of Wales, in, I think, 1905, after the manœuvres between the Northern and Southern Armies were finished, a very fine spectacular parade was held on the Khana Plain, near Rawal Pindi, in the Punjab. My brother-in-law was then Adjutant of his regiment, and during the gallop-past his charger, without any warning or ostensible reason, suddenly fell dead in his stride. There was nothing punishing in the manœuvre, and no doubt heart must have been the cause. This show was rather a brave sight, Review Order, of course, and although there were no "Guards" to lend splendour and panoply to the display, the fine show put up by the Highland and other

British regiments, the many different and usually gorgeous uniforms of the Indian Cavalry, the serried masses of native troops and other arms, the massed bands, and the enormous concourse of brightly clad native sightseers, made the display one that remains in the memory, different in character to our more sober soldier shows at home. The cavalry regiments galloped past in line with an interval of two minutes between each unit, and those spectators who have stifled in the dust at similar shows in the Long Valley at Aldershot must have been surprised to see during each interval the ground very efficiently watered by armies of *bhisties* (native water-carriers), each with a goatskin bag of water, who scuttled on to and off the parade ground during each interval.

The large, often uncultivated, plains of India lend themselves very suitably to cavalry manœuvres on a large scale. The chief difficulty is watering arrangements for the large number of animals involved. By the employment of scientific troops improving the natural supply sometime previous to the manœuvres the difficulties can generally be overcome, though the watering-places are often considerable distances apart.

At one time I had the instructive pleasure of serving on the Staff of the late General Sir George Luck, who was Inspector-General of Cavalry in India, and at a large cavalry camp under this celebrated officer a long day's proceedings terminated several miles from the

nearest watering-place. After the usual pow-wow, the I.G. departed, and troops were left to find their own way to their respective camps. Water for the horses was, of course, the first consideration. When a watering-place is limited in size, it takes a brigade some time to carry through the operation, and the one that arrives last has naturally to wait until its predecessor has finished. There were two brigades working on this occasion, neither was anxious to arrive last. The weather was hot, the horses were already fagged with a long day's manoeuvring. Each brigade moved off at a walk about the same time for the same water on parallel lines. The walk became a trot, the trot a gallop. The maxim that the pace of cavalry is determined by that of the slowest horse was hardly exemplified. On this, which I afterwards heard called deplorable, occasion four horses fell and died, and I do not think the casualties could have been rightly attributed to "heart." A rather celebrated General once said to me, "For a soldier, it is often more important to learn what *not* to do than how to do it."

In the East water becomes a governing factor in a way that is seldom realized at home. In a country where months of drought are an unalterable characteristic of the climate, irrigation is the only way of producing crops, and I expect that on that field of turbulence, the Indian Frontier, as many murders are due to quarrels over water as over women. At the end of one of the many Frontier expeditions on which

I have served the presence of troops at an advanced post was taken advantage of to form an escort for civilians to demarcate a portion of the Afghan boundary. I was Staff Officer to the force which was placed under the command of Colonel Thomson, of the 3rd Sikhs, generally known as "Old Man T.," a most popular able officer. We moved to the Afghan Frontier through a rather disturbed territory, and had to march under service conditions. It was part of my multifarious duties to choose the camping-grounds, and water was generally the chief problem. The civilian element had to be relied upon for any information about the unknown country, and was the only intelligence branch we had. On one occasion they informed me that they had discovered there was water at such-and-such a place, and I rode ahead with a small escort to choose a camp. On arrival I saw at once that the very small trickle of water at the so-called spring would be insufficient for the needs of the force. I think it was about three regiments, with a goodly number of transport animals. I cast about looking for any inhabitants who could give further information, but the place seemed more or less deserted. After a time I came upon two rather dignified looking natives with a small following, so I galloped up to them, and with such limited Persian and Pushto phrases as were at my command I inquired where a better water supply could be found. The dignified ones appeared to rather resent such abrupt inquiries, but knowing that a thirsty body of troops would

shortly arrive, and that there was an altogether insufficiency of even drinking water, I was perhaps what is called in that country a bit *zubberdust*, i.e. "inclined to obtain by force." To make a long story short the water supply was only such as it appeared, and it was only by considerable digging and damming that we were able to obtain a very limited quantity of drinking water, none whatever for ablutionary purposes. But alas! the dignified ones turned out to be the Afghan Commissioners, regarding which potentates very minatory instructions had been received concerning the penalties to be exacted from any officers who did not treat them with marked courtesy. As a matter of fact they were first-class fellows really, and when I explained through a qualified interpreter that I had mistaken them for inhabitants of the country, and it was only my anxiety to procure the necessary water for the troops that had led to my rather insistent attitude, they were quite complaisant, in fact rather pleased, and remarked that the occupiers of the soil were of a caste which required "severe treatment."

A rather typical contrast in the Eastern and the European methods of diplomacy, demonstrating the "severe treatment," was exemplified during the journeyings of this Boundary Commission. Proper precautions were always taken on the march, and the hills crowned before the force moved on, and on one occasion there was a little firing. The force was halted while the Politicals inquired into the situation, and after some little time Colonel Thomson was informed that the

tribesmen had sent word that if the force moved on there would be *tukrari*, which means trouble, and which the civil authorities read as opposition. It was suggested that the escort should fall back to its last camp, while wires were sent to Simla, the instructions from that Elysium being that the Commission was to be as peaceably conducted as possible. Everybody who has served on the Frontier knows that any form of retirement is asking for trouble.

Fortunately, Colonel Thomson was a sound and strong man, who rightly argued that to proceed would be a less hazardous operation than to retreat, and announced his intention of doing the former. As a matter of fact I do not think the force suffered any casualties.

Some time later, when the actual boundary-question was being considered, there was a gathering of head tribesmen for a discussion of the matter. Some mention was casually made of the threatened opposition. Our civilians appeared to be all for the *suaviter in modo* without much of the *fortiter in re*, but my Afghan friends took quite a different view. The head man in question was abused by the Afghans with a thoroughness that would have done credit to the London cabby, and the discussion ended with the turban of the offending chief being knocked off his head (a mark of extreme humiliation) by the stalwart arm of one of the Afghan Commissioners. As to which of the two policies is the more suitable with a treacherous, uncertain border man, I will express no opinion, but, thank Heaven! even in this Lloyd-George-humiliated

country we are still allowed to think as we choose.

This little experience was for the most part in rather high altitudes, and the camps, which, with the soldiers at any rate, were little more than bivouacs, were pretty icy cold. On our return journey we were one morning trudging along in rather deep snow in quite beautiful country. I was walking with Colonel Thomson, and it was almost too cold for conversation. As we moved along he pointed to something sticking out of the ground. I saw it was the point of a horn, and in my turn pointed it out to someone behind. Some less-paralysed-with-the-cold individual took the trouble to dig it out, and it turned out to be what is, I believe, the record corial of the world, and I think it now graces that very hospitable mess of that very smart regiment the 3rd Sikhs (Frontier Force). It was only the other day that I was at a seaside resort and came across an officer of the Border Regiment who had been with the Wana Field Force, from which the demarcation escort was formed. Talking over the old days, he said, "Do you remember that topping regiment the 3rd Sikhs? They were the smartest Indian regiment I have ever seen, and it was an absolute pleasure to watch their guard-mounting parades." I have had the honour of being on friendly terms with this fine unit for many years, and the unsolicited tribute to their smartness, and the implied compliment to the Frontier Force to which they belong, was rather pleasing to the ears of an old "Piffer."

I myself once got what I thought was rather a fine oorial head, but its horns were shorter by many inches than the one to which I refer above. I gave it to the Staff College Mess, and previously took it to Rowland Ward to be set up, and he quickly undeceived me as to it being anything in the record line. I got it under conditions almost as easy as the picked-up one. I was on detachment with two squadrons covering the construction of what was intended to be a strategic road, the Rukhni-Kingri Road, which in the days when Russia was a menace might have been useful, as it opened up an alternative route to Loralai and Quetta. It was a perfectly beastly part of the world, we had detachments in various fortified posts along the route. If troops had not been at hand the inhabitants might have molested or robbed road-making parties; as it was they were deplorably peaceful and uninteresting, and the country was as unpleasant as its inhabitants. The whole valley was full of snakes, chiefly a poisonous viper called *Echis*. Two Europeans died from their bites while I was there: one was climbing up a rock and put his hand above his head on to one of these beasts which was lying on a flat place in the sun. As I am told is the habit with many poisonous snakes, they are so sluggish they will hardly take the trouble to get out of the way. On one occasion I was sleeping in the fort at Rukhni. It was very hot, and my bed had been put out in the open. I had to be up very early in the morning, and was called almost before it was light. Half asleep, I slipped my feet into

canvas shoes, and walked across the yard. I stepped on something soft, and to my half-awake brain the first consciousness was that I had trod on a piece of indiarubber, at the same instant came the flash, perhaps it's a snake, and I gave a great bound away. It was a snake all right, an *Echis*, and my weight had fortunately broken its back. I must have trodden on it so close to its head that it could not turn up to bite my bare ankle, or no doubt my number, too, would have been up. In the same fort my bearer, letting down a chick, which is a blind made of strips of reed, received one of these unpleasant creatures round his neck; luckily the beast fell off without biting him.

One year, when my wife and myself were traveling in Kashmir, we arrived one evening, worn and weary after a long double march, at an attractive camping-ground, trees with abundant shade and a grassy slope extending to the banks of a clear stream. Here was a pleasant abiding place. The baggage animals and coolies gladly shed their loads, a refreshing tea was enjoyed under the trees while the camp was being pitched, and as soon as the tents were up my wife went to lay down while I strolled round with a gun. No sooner were her eyes closed in refreshing slumber than she was awakened by a rustling noise in the tent, punctuated with sharp hisses. An enormous water-snake had glided through the tent door opening, and brought up against the opposite canvas side was expressing its dissatisfaction in a threatening and startling manner. It was a

very large snake indeed, some nine or ten feet long, and thicker than one's wrist, not poisonous, but quite large enough to give a nasty bite. The native servants despatched this unpleasant visitor with axes and thick sticks, it was a gory and unpleasant proceeding. While the massacre was in progress I'm hanged if its mate of equally forbidding aspect and size did not arrive. It may or may not have been the last snake in the vicinity, figuratively, it was the final straw that weighed in the balance. Tired and weary as all were, camp was again struck, loads adjusted, and another weary march embarked upon.

But I have got away from my oorial. There is no particular story about it. I was riding along the very dreary road when I heard a clattering of stones above me, and saw a fine old white-bearded oorial scuttling away. One of my escort, a man whom I often took shooting with me, suggested that the animal's course would take him along a nullah running under a neighbouring hill, to the top of which we could climb. It turned out as predicted, and I shot him with a Service carbine. The men swore it was a monster; it was a good one, but no record.

Those who have not served on the Punjab Frontier in the old days can have little idea of the isolation of and difficulty of access to and from the Frontier stations. The railheads, even when they reach any proximity to these "Piffer" strongholds, were all Cis-Indus, and the stations themselves were some miles Trans-Indus. At the commencement of the hot weather, when the

snows in the mountains commence to melt, the Indus comes down in flood. In some places the water is as much as fifteen to twenty miles across, with isolated small islands in the floodway. In those days the only vehicular transport were tongas, two-wheeled carts drawn by a pair of ponies yoked curricule fashion, or eckas, single-pony two-wheeled carts, an uncomfortable means of progression at the best, with frequent changes at the different water passages. It was, I think, at the commencement of the hot weather, after my Rukhni-Kingri experiences, that I can remember a little incident which we at the time regarded as a rather satisfactory small score of regiment over Staff. I have served many years on the Staff myself, but I think every soldier rather appreciates any little opportunity of marking one up against Staff authority. Indian Cavalry regiments deal with very large funds. Under what is called the Sillidar system, which I regret to hear is now foolishly being done away with, each individual trooper only receives from Government his carbine and his pay; his horse, all his uniform, and the whole of his equipment being the property of the man. In Mutiny and pre-Mutiny days native officers and men actually brought horse and equipment with them, but as units became regularized sums of money in lieu were required of them, and these sums are credited to regimental funds. The unit itself buys and supplies the man with horse and full equipment; when the man takes his discharge he is refunded its value. It will thus be understood that there were very large

sums of money in the regimental coffers, and the whole was administered, without let or hindrance, by the Commanding Officer. It was a good system, and undoubtedly produced best value for money. Into the minds of the Simla Nosey-Parkers suddenly came base suspicion. They discovered the humiliating fact that they were ignorant of the detail of administration of these huge sums. I do not believe that amongst the forty odd Sillidar Cavalry regiments of the Indian Army there had ever been, or has ever been, any case of the slightest defalcation in these accounts. Whether offended dignity, or an unworthy Paul-prying spirit prevailed, the fiat went forth that surprise investigations into these accounts were to be made, and certain officers of the Pay Department were despatched on secret missions. With their usual disregard for the comfort of their employees, the period chosen by Headquarters for the first investigation was the commencement of the hot weather. My regiment was then commanded by Colonel Cuninghame, a most efficient and able cavalry officer. On his arrival at our Frontier station Captain Dash, the investigator, first ran up against me, and told me his mission. I went hotfoot to my Colonel, and indignantly told him of the contemplated insult. Colonel David Stanley Cuninghame was not often at a loss. He suggested I should bring the Paul-prying gentleman, who I fancy himself little relished his unpleasant duty, to the mess and introduce him. This I did; we entertained the officer, and after a meal the Colonel saw him in the orderly-room. Credentials

to the effect that Captain Dash is to be afforded full opportunity to investigate the accounts of the 1st Punjab Cavalry were produced. After a little parley the pay official asked when it would be convenient for him to see the books. Colonel Cuninghame replied very politely that he was afraid it would not be convenient for the officer to see the books. "But," spluttered the astonished official, "I am armed with full authority." "I don't see it," said the Colonel. "I see authority for Captain Dash to inspect my books, but I do not know that *you* are Captain Dash, and until I do you certainly cannot see my accounts." As I have said, these Frontier stations are isolated and cut off, the officer's identity could not be proved by either protestation or wire, and the crestfallen one had to retire. In due time a fulmination from H.Q. was received that the bearer of Official Letter No. So-and-so, dated So-and-so, and worded So-and-so, was to be immediately permitted to inspect the Regimental Accounts. He did so—every thing, of course, being found in perfect order.

A form of sport, if it can be called sport, that I think is probably not much known is turtle-turning. If it is not sport, it is for most people at any rate, an uncommon diversion, and it can be quite hard work. A great many years ago I was studying at Karachi, and I had secured a bungalow at a little suburb of the place on a sandy seashore called Clifton. I had a cousin in the Gunners stationed at Karachi, and talking to one

of his non-commissioned officers one day, the man said, "I suppose you see a good many turtle at Clifton." I replied I had never seen one. The man said that at that time of the year they came on shore at night to lay their eggs, and that he thought we could easily capture one or two when the next full moon was on. So we arranged for the attempt. My cousin, his wife, the N.C.O., myself, and my Hindoo bearer formed the party, and our appurtenances were a stout tent-pole and some rope. The N.C.O. enjoined complete silence, and in the full moonlight it was rather pleasant strolling along the sands at the edge of the surf, looking out for dark objects scuttling towards the sea. Sure enough, after a time the keen-sighted N.C.O. pointed to something black that was moving at quite a quick pace seawards. We raced along the sand to intercept it, and on catching it up it proved to be quite a big turtle. The N.C.O. put his hands underneath the edge of its shell, gave a heave, and in a second the animal was helpless on its back, with its flippers beating on its horny belly in a rataplan that would have caused envy to the most experienced drummer. The animal—by the by, what is a turtle, fish, flesh, or what? It is certainly flesh; turtle steaks are very excellent. My dictionary describes it as an edible sea tortoise, which brings us to the railway porter, who, called upon to consign a land tortoise to a certain destination, is reported to have said, "Cats is dogs and 'ares 'is rabbits, but this 'ere animile is a blessed inseck." Well, anyhow, the blessed "inseck" was safely on its

back and drumming loud enough to wake the dead. We followed the tracks landward, and in a hole in the sand found a number of warm white eggs, about the size of a racquet ball, and soft shelled. We left the turtle flapping, and continued our walk; we had three or four profitless sprints—it is wonderful the pace at which these ungainly creatures can move to their sea sanctuary—and secured one more good-sized turtle. Now came the hard work. We slung the second animal to the tent-pole, and found carrying it back to the first one in the soft sand in the warm climate quite sufficient exertion, and there was No. 1 still to be picked up. She also was strung up back to back with the other turtle, and with double load we commenced again to plod our weary way. Turtles have a horny beak like a parrot, and are capable of giving a very unpleasant bite. My cousin and I were shouldering the pole in front, my bearer and the N.C.O. behind, and we exuded considerably. Suddenly a wild yell rent the stillness of the night, the tent-pole was violently agitated, and the next second we found ourselves prostrate on the sand, with the tent-pole and the snapping turtles on top of us. My unfortunate bearer had been under the pole next the hindmost turtle, he was clad in the peculiarly thin muslin garments affected by his class, and I suppose some inequality of the ground brought his body in close proximity to the animal's beak. At any rate, it made a vicious snap at him, actually scratching the flesh and tearing his garment. When the journey was resumed I noticed that

the bearer selected the rearmost position. Some thirty odd years have elapsed since our turtle-turning picnic, but I can still remember the peculiarly gratifying properties of some iced Pilsener beer which on our arrival at my bungalow awaited us in the verandah.

CHAPTER XII

Tiger-Shooting—Early Disappointments—A Lost Collection—The Neilgherry Hills—Major Cust—The Neck Shot—Central India Horse Shoot—The Chambal Valley and Gwalior—A Group of Tigers—Profitable Snookers—The Married Man—Spence, Pinney and “Byngo” Baynes—The Gipsy “Patteran”—Leopards—A Lesson learnt—A Trap Incident—Some Foolish Incidents—Unparalleled Luck—The Pendulum swings.

My first experience of tiger-shooting was two months with the Central India Horse in the summer of 1896.

In my earlier days in India I had two other opportunities, but they both fell through. My first was in 1876, when I had only just arrived in India. My Uncle, Major-General Maclean, who was a great shekarri, was then Commissioner of the Central Provinces, and had arranged his last shoot previous to retirement, in the neighbourhood of Raipur, and asked me to join him. I was still at Adjutant's drill, and my Commanding Officer, who had very strict ideas of discipline, would not hear of my having any leave until I had passed from the hands of the Adjutant. It was a great opportunity lost, as the bag was thirteen tigers, besides much other game, and my feelings towards the bonds of discipline were naturally of rather a rebellious nature. My Uncle was very unfortunate in losing most of his trophies. He

had kept nearly all his collection, an exceptionally fine one, with him in India, and previous to leaving the country himself he despatched the whole collection from Madras by a sailing-vessel that was never heard of again.

A year or two later I started after tiger from Ootacamund, in the Nilgherry Hills, in the Madras Presidency, with Major Cust of the 2nd Queens. This officer had the reputation of being a marvellous big-game shot, and on these occasions he never carried anything but a single-barrel rifle, I think a .500 Express. He was so sure of himself and his shooting that he considered this weapon ample defence against even the most dangerous beasts. I never saw him use it, as before we arrived at our destination he got such a very bad attack of malarial fever that I had great difficulty in getting him back to Ootacamund. He told me he always aimed at the neck, and found that an Express bullet in that portion of a wild beast's anatomy effectually settled all disputes.

I left the Madras Presidency for the Punjab shortly after this date, and had no further chances at tiger-shooting for nearly twenty years, when I was invited to join the Central India Horse shoot. This celebrated corps used in those days to have a yearly expedition after big game at the commencement of the hot weather.

Amongst the native troopers of the regiment were many most excellent shekarries, men whose knowledge of the ways and haunts of tiger far

exceeded those of the local men. On the occasion when I was lucky enough to join the shoot, the head shekarri was one Nihal Singh, a Sikh non-commissioned officer, who had the honour of accompanying on a tiger-shooting trip the late King Edward, when, as Prince of Wales, he paid his historical visit to India.

The locale of our trip was the valley of the Chambal River, some forty or fifty miles west of Goona, where the Central India Horse were then stationed.

For some of us, at any rate, things are more or less equalized in this funny world. I have noticed that I have seldom enjoyed any very good luck without a corresponding proportion of bad luck, and I daresay most of us think the balance inclines in the wrong direction. At any rate, on this occasion I had the best of good luck in shooting, and then went to bed for eleven months with a bad go of enteric fever, followed by frequent relapses, the original fever being caused by drinking milk from dirty vessels. I could not take up my bed and walk, but my bed was taken up for me and moved from Simla to Calcutta, from Calcutta to Colombo, from Colombo to Cannes in the Riveira, and from there to my home in London. If I were to calculate the total expenses of travelling, doctors, nurses, hotels, etc., I fancy I should find my five tigers cost a sum per head that is not exceeded even in these plutocratic days, when cinematograph apparati, armies of coolies, and Press reporters seem part of the usual equipment for a big-game shoot.

As a rule the Indian tiger is solitary and unsociable, but occasionally as many as six or seven tigers are seen together.

There was a very well-known character in Southern India when I first went there, a Colonel "Bungay" S——. At the club at Trichinopoly in those days it was the custom to play snooker pool for four anna pieces in the evenings before dinner. A lot of young subalterns who were stationed there, to join the Madras Staff Corps, used to congregate in the billiard-room and join in the game, and we contributed considerably to the income Colonel S——'s prowess with his cue brought him, and used to enjoy listening to his many yarns.

I remember on his return from a shoot in the Nilgherry Hills the old man told us that in one of the sholas he and his companion saw no less than seven tigers together. "How many did you get, Colonel?" one of us asked. "None, my boy," replied the veteran. "I shouted to my friend, 'For God's sake don't shoot, I'm a married man!'"

The five tigers I was fortunate enough to get to my rifle probably belonged to one family. They consisted of a tiger, a tigress, and three nearly full-grown cubs. Our party consisted of Spence, Pinney, a very special pal of mine "Byngo" Baynes, all of the Central India Horse, and myself.

During the first month of our shoot neither my friend Byngo nor myself got a tiger. We had however, a most enjoyable time. Although it

was the hot weather, it was never too unbearably hot on the central plateaus of India, there was abundant shade, and the nights were cool. We were camping under very comfortable conditions, with plenty of transport and changing camp every day or so, according as *khabbar* (news) reached us from the various parties despatched to tie up baits for kills and to search for game. When news arrived that a tiger was in the vicinity it was the custom to tie up bullocks in likely spots, and if Stripes killed one of these, a hasty change of camp was made and a beat arranged.

There is an extraordinary similarity in the scenery all over the Central India plateaus, and nothing would be easier than to lose your way unless special guiding arrangements were made. When we changed camp, the custom was for the shekarries and gun-bearers, lunch-carriers, etc., to go on to the new camping-ground during the night. We sahibs used to rise early and start on horseback at daybreak, and the tents and camp impedimenta followed as soon as they were packed. To enable us to canter along in the cool of the morning we should have required a mounted guide, but as these were seldom available, we had recourse to a plan of marking the route, an adaption of the old gipsy habit of the "patteran," which consisted of placing a few handfuls of grass at the cross-roads twisted towards the direction taken, a sort of paper-chase, but with natural signs. As the shekarries proceeded, at every hundred yards or so, and especially at every change of direction, one of the men would bend

and break a branch, or throw down a handful of leaves or grass, and with a little practice it became easy to follow such a route, and we were able to trot along at a good pace. Of course, there might be a bit of a check if a change of direction had not been plainly marked, but I never remember losing our way, nor being unduly delayed searching for it.

We had quite a number of unfortunate animals tied up in a radius of thirty or forty miles, but for the first month but few kills took place, and little luck attended us.

We only got two tigers during this period, and neither fell to my rifle, nor indeed did I during this time get a shot at one. We got some cheetal, leopards, bears, and sambhar, but the tigers, though there were plenty in the neighbourhood, proved too elusive for our arrangements.

The leopards gave us the best sport. On one occasion we were following up a wounded leopard on foot. This is always a risky business, a wounded leopard, or indeed an unwounded one, being frequently more fierce and courageous than a tiger; he is, too, a more silent animal, seldom giving any sound until he charges, when he gives a short roar. On the occasion in question we were advancing with our rifles cocked, when we came to a small depression, a shallow nullah, perhaps ten or twelve feet across. Two of us were just reaching the far side, the shekarri was halfway across, and the other two just behind him, when the leopard, which had been concealed in a marvellous way behind a small, almost unnotice-

able, bush in the nullah, charged at the shekarri, who was unarmed. We who were nearly across swung round and fired, the other two fired at the same moment. As I pulled the trigger I remember it flashed into my mind that each pair was holding nearly straight at the other pair, with the leopard as a moving target between us. Luckily the aim was good, and the leopard was dropped at the shekarri's feet; but what with leopard and bullet it was a near thing for all of us, and especially so for the shekarri, and taught us a lesson of the necessity of never breaking line in any degree on such occasions.

A good many leopards are caught in Central India by natives in traps constructed on the mousetrap principle. One day we were passing through a Hindoo village in the neighbourhood of Sirsa, when the natives informed us they had just caught a leopard in one of these traps. We decided to let the beast have a run for his life, and had the trap placed under a tree, a rope was attached to the door, and a native went up into the tree above and pulled the door up. Instead of bolting for the jungle, the leopard sprang on to the trap, and with the next bound was in the tree and clawing at the native's legs, and a rapid volley was only just in time to save the man from a nasty mauling.

After we had been out a month or so, Spense and Pinhey had, for reasons connected with regimental duties, to return, and Byngo and myself determined to carry on for a further period by ourselves. We were now nearing the Gwalior State,

and near those famous preserves we, or at any rate I, came in for a lot of luck, and in a few days I got five tigers to my own rifle. We had always arranged for machans to be placed in trees commanding the probable lines of approach of the tigers, but on each of these occasions things panned out quite differently to what we expected, and I got all mine on foot.

Our first tiger was a big male. It was a very windy day, and my machan had been tied in a small sal tree, and the wind caused it to rock about like a boat at sea. I thought I had kept a good look out to my front, but after the beat was over Nihal Singh came up to me and said, "Why did you not shoot, sahib?" I said, "The tiger did not come this way." "It did, sahib," replied the man. "Come with me and I will show you." And, sure enough, within fifty or sixty yards of my machan were the pugs of the tiger. I naturally felt pretty sick and disgusted with myself. It shows how stealthy and silent the movements of these large animals may be. Luck, however, was with us. Following up the pugs, it was found that the tiger had entered a cave and was lying up in it—in fact, the shekarri declared he could see the brute's eyes.

Byngo and I reconnoitred the cave with our rifles ready, about fifty or sixty yards away from it, but could see nothing to fire at, and it was decided to smoke the animal out. The shekarri and most of the beaters went off to a neighbouring village to collect straw and fuel, one or two men

were left to watch the cave, and Byngo and I went into the shade of an adjoining nullah to eat our lunch.

I felt a pretty average ass for having missed the opportunity of a shot, and I now was party to a still more foolish act. We put our rifles unloaded against a rock a few yards from us and sat down to our food. Suddenly the look-out men began shouting, "*Sahib, sahib, bagh nikalgaia!*" (the tiger has come out). We jumped to our feet, and not more than seventy yards away from us we saw the tiger coming down our nullah towards us. His head looked enormous. We sprang for our rifles, and I suppose our sudden movements alarmed the tiger. He sprang up the side of the nullah and cantered away through some low bushes across our front. As soon as I could load I threw up my rifle and fired, and luckily made rather a good shot and bowled him over, but he got up again and disappeared into some thick cover.

We had no elephants with us, and it was too risky to attempt beating a wounded tiger out of thick jungle on foot with men of the regiment as beaters. So we gave it up for the day, and sent off a messenger to a neighbouring native chief asking for the loan of some elephants. That evening news came in that other tigers had been seen in the near neighbourhood, and the next day we arranged for another beat. Shortly after we were in our machans it was evident from the shouts of the beaters and occasional roars that there were tigers in front of us. We subsequently

discovered these to be a tigress and three nearly full-grown cubs. These, with the tiger I had killed the preceding day (we found his dead body the day following), were probably a family party, the cubs having remained with their parents till grown up. Just as we were expecting a shot some other sounds arose, and the elephants we had sent to borrow arrived with a party of noisy natives right across the beat. I don't think I have ever seen anybody more angry than Nihal Singh, the head shekarri, when he discovered what had happened. The inopportune arrival had effectually spoilt a promising beat, and he was letting everybody know it. While the turmoil was raging we saw a young Sikh, a trooper of the regiment who had been placed on a small hill as a stop, dancing about excitedly and frantically signalling. We drew Nihal Singh's attention to him, and he said, "Yes, of course he has seen them, they broke out that way." Byngo and I determined to go and see if there was anything to be seen, and Nihal Singh stayed behind to vent his wrath on the newly arrived mahouts with their elephants. The nearer we got to the young Sikh the more excited did he become, and when we arrived rather out of breath at the top of his hill and asked him what he had seen, the man replied that three tigers were lying just beneath us under a sort of ledge in the rock. We hardly believed him, but I mechanically loaded my rifle. Byngo had so little faith in the vicinity of the tigers that he did not even do this, and while we were talking and questioning the man, suddenly,

from almost underneath our feet, out came cub number one. I got him with my right barrel, and no sooner had I done so than out came number two, him I got with my left barrel, when out came number three. I loaded as quickly as I could, and threw up my rifle, but in the excitement of the moment I had forgotten to push up the safety-catch, and before I could adjust it the tiger was out of sight.

Nihal Singh and the rest of the party now came running up, the wrath of the former being turned to joy at seeing two tigers lying on the ground. While these were being skinned we got the news that the third cub had joined the tigress, and both had been located in an adjoining nullah. Having just had all the luck myself, it was now Byngo's turn for the best position, and he was placed accordingly, and I took up a stand under a tree, into the fork of which I could climb if necessary; but the shekarri did not much expect that anything would come my way. The beat was along a fairly large nullah, with rather steep but sloping banks, covered with scrub. It was soon evident the tigress was afoot and angry, she made several short charges up the sides of the nullah towards the beaters, roaring as she did so, and suddenly I saw her coming at a gallop down the hillside almost straight for my tree. I am sure she did not see me, her attention being distracted by the noises behind her. She was coming at a great pace, and it was really something like shooting a big bolting rabbit. My bullet hit her behind the shoulder, and she turned three

complete somersaults, landing on her side a few feet from where I was standing. This was too close to be pleasant. I put in my second barrel, and loaded as quickly as I could, and put two more bullets into her. But the first barrel had, I think, killed her all right, and bar her limbs twitching she never moved again.

Three tigers in one day was something to be jubilant about, but luck was not yet over. The cub remained, and had been seen by the men dodging about. So we organized our last beat, and on this occasion I determined to walk with the beaters. Byngo's machan was made in a tree covering what appeared the only line the beast could take.

I have forgotten what is the record run on a number at Monte Carlo, but whatever it be the backers, if backers there were, could not congratulate themselves on better luck than I had that day. I'm hanged if the remaining cub, who was a bit smaller than the other two, did not break through the beaters and pass me at about thirty yards away, giving me an easy shot, of which I was quick to avail myself.

Four tigers in one day, and five tigers in two, and I a novice at the art. It was not long before the pendulum swung the other way. A few days later we were in the train from Gwalior on our way up to Simla, where we had sent our polo ponies, and proposed spending the remainder of our leave. The headache I had on that journey beat anything I have experienced before or since. At the time I put it down to a touch of the sun,

and led the doctors into a faulty diagnosis. It was really the commencement of enteric, and the unsuitable treatment I received and the severity of the attack brought me very near my death; but that is another story.

CHAPTER XIII

General David Shaw—A Piccadilly Flat—Drawing the Wrong Officer—Cavalry Training and Musketry—Alarming Creepy-Crawlys—Passing on the Jest—Confusion of Language leads to the Wrong Place—A Dance Incident—Don't mutter—"Baxter, fire"—Baptism and a Buck-nigger—Brevet Rank—A Bad Illness—Royalty and Life Below Stairs—That d——d Irishman—Baboos—Office Stool for Saddle—Non-appreciation of Humour—"Charles! open the window"—Port Wine and Claret—The Truffle Merchant.

WE were all young once, but the *bon camaraderie* of youth, the "what's yours is mine" principle, does not always work smoothly when applied to the more elderly. A great pal of mine, now Major-General David Shaw, and known to a very large circle of friends as just "David," was at home on furlough one year with me when we were both subs. David wrote to me one day from a flat in Piccadilly. A few days after, when strolling along that well-known thoroughfare, I found I was minus that useful product of civilization, a handkerchief. I remembered my friend's address and proceeded to look for the flat, which I found to be a spacious, well-furnished one over the well-known provider, Fortnum & Mason. I asked for my friend; the servant I suppose catching the word "Shaw" replied "First floor," so up I went. Overcome with the magnificence of the apartments, I thought it wise to point out that

we Indian Army subalterns were not wont to accommodate ourselves in such palatial abodes, and having found a handsomely monogrammed "wipe" in one of the drawers of an art wardrobe and crested sheets and envelopes of expensive paper in a leather case on a handsome writing bureau, I proceeded to indite an epistle somewhat as follows: "DEAR OLD DAVID—You *are* going it. I hope you have got a return ticket. I have sneaked one of your wipes. More power to your elbow.—Yours, CHICKEN." Unfortunately, David had indited his epistle to me from his father's flat (also a Major-General David Shaw), and had omitted to point out that the magnificent diggings were the property of his parent and not of himself. In due course the parent, accompanied by the son, arrived, and the former proceeded to open the envelope superscribed "For David." It was a subdued and chastened David who subsequently told me "The Governor" had let him have it—"Who the — what the — who is this d——d fellow who has the impertinence to make free of my room, steals my handkerchiefs, makes uncalled-for remarks about my elbow, and has the audacity to sign himself—yours, Chicken?"

The training of Indian Cavalry is very different now from what it was in the days when I first joined. Inspectors-General of Cavalry or of any other branch of the Service had not then burgeoned. Commanding Officers were left very much to their own devices—there were many enthusiastic ones who were rabid on the merits of the *arme blanche* and the *arme blanche* only—in

fact I knew one C.O. who went so far as to discourage marching in step on foot, saying this infantry device destroyed the cavalry spirit. It was Lord Roberts who, in India at any rate, gave an impetus to the development of the mounted branch to that pitch of perfection which, as the Great War frequently demonstrated, makes them capable of fighting anyhow and anywhere, in the trenches, on foot, or in the saddle as of yore, and especially did he lay stress on the necessity of accurate dismounted fire. Musketry instruction of a different calibre from that when a *fanfare* of trumpets greeted the fluked bulls-eye became a portion of cavalry training.

Poisonous creepy-crawleys of the most repulsive kind are common enough on the Punjab Frontier, nasty venomous scorpions and huge spiders called "jerrymungulums," whose bite—thank Heaven, I have never experienced one—cause, so the natives say, the victim to bleed at the ears. The regimental history of the 1st Punjab Cavalry shows that for sins of omission or commission, of which I know not, it has been its unpleasant fate to be more than once stationed at an unsalubrious spot called Dera Ghazi Khan—Dera Ghastly is its more familiar appellation. David and I were brother subs. there, and it was our alternative misfortune to spend hot and weary mornings on its sunbaked glaring rifle range. Part of the duties consisted of checking the targets after the firing had taken place, and on one occasion on my return from the marker's butts, sitting down to complete the register, as I lifted the paper I saw underneath it

a huge, horrible-looking scorpion. With a wild yell, and to the infinite amusement of the bored troopers, I kicked over the camp table on which the registers were placed, threw myself off the campstool, and—the scorpion remained motionless on the ground where it had fallen. The scorpion was made out of a sort of brown wax which was left in the cartridges of the Snider carbines, and a more life-like representation was not conceivable. Who made it I know not. Anyhow, the laugh was against me, and I was anxious to pass it on. David and I shared the same bungalow, and on my return he was away at the Mess somewhere. I carefully placed the life-like symbol on the floor of David's dressing-room under a sock or something, fastened to it a long thread—and the *mise en scène* was placed and ready. David returned to change. I strolled into his room for a chat and secretly possessed myself of the end of the thread. When the dressing progress was at a stage which appeared to be one to cause the greatest embarrassment, I commenced to gently pull the thread, shouting out, "Look out, David, there's an enormous scorpion!" David's bravery with the insect tribe did not exceed my own. When he saw the noisome animal approaching his bare legs, David too gave tongue, and his rapid leaps were some consolation to my vexed feelings. And now the *amour propre* of both of us required healing treatment. That evening there was a big dinner in the Mess, the visit of some General or something of that sort. The Mess-table had a number of little glass troughs running up and down between

the mess plate and the laid places, these were filled with wet sand in which flowers, leaves, etc., made a suitable display. Our accommodating plaything, with an invisible white thread leading to the seat of one of us, was duly secreted under cover of the leaves, and during dinner, at the opportune moment, the scorpion made its third and last journey. By the time many seats had, without permission from the President, been hastily evacuated, it was discovered that practical jokers were amongst the company, and over the subsequent proceedings in the billiard-room when dinner was over, where bumptious subalterns were taught the respect due to their elders, a curtain will be drawn.

I think it was after this little incident that David and I managed to get our furlough home together. After the usual voyage, uninteresting, except to myself that owing to bad weather I was a sufferer most of the way, I did not fancy further *mal-de-mer* on the crowded deck of a Channel steamer, so I wired from Paris for a cabin. The usual crowd of French *facteurs* were seizing the passengers' luggage on the Calais pier, and in no doubt execrable French I told one of them to take my effects to my cabin. Englishmen are not as gifted in modern languages as most foreigners, and when they try to use a strange tongue are apt to slip into the vernacular of the one they have last used. An Indian Army Officer who was standing alongside imagined that one of the porters asked if his kit was also for a cabin. "No" or "Not" in the Hindustani lingo is expressed by "Nay," and the officer, anxious to save his effects

from a wrong destination, emphatically exclaimed three or four times "Cabin Nay." The *facteur* took him in charge all right, and to the delight of his friends, but the chagrin of the officer, brought him to rest in a portion of the vessel entirely different from the passenger deck he was anxious to occupy.

The unfortunate habit of muttering to oneself also sometimes leads to embarrassment. There was a certain famous regiment which in the days when soldiering was a pleasant pastime, a period unknown to modern youth, and only dimly remembered by the old and hoary, was about to give at Aldershot one of its famous balls. Those were not the days of jazz and foxtrots, the terpsichorean professors of a dignified and stately mien themselves, taught dignified and stately steps. But these professional exponents did not find a lucrative practice in Aldershot, the gallant regiment was not over-endowed with dancing officers, and the C.O. had hinted that he expected all who were present to take the floor. A certain Captain C., a bit of a misogynist, though a keen sportsman, was informed that one of the ladies of the regiment had kindly undertaken to instruct him in the mysteries of the waltz, and that he was expected to be foot-perfect by the eventful night. Our unwilling friend, more accustomed to his own society and that of his gun and rod than to that of ladies, had acquired a knack when annoyed of expressing his private thoughts in an audible *sotto voce*. His lady instructress had impressed

upon him the importance of time in dance movements, and said, "If you will only count to yourself in time to the music, one, two, three; one, two, three, you can't go wrong. You know the steps quite well, and all you have got to do is to keep time." The eventful evening arrived, and Captain C., confident in his newly acquired skill, led out a partner for the first waltz. Those of his friends who had any leisure to observe his performance saw that the desired harmony of step had not been realized, that the Captain looked angry, and the lady red and embarrassed; so one of them sheered alongside and found the amateur performer dragging his unfortunate partner around to the perfectly audible, muttered accompaniment of "One-two-three, four-five-six—damn-the-girl—she's-taught-me-wrong—one-two-three," and so on. Captain C. took considerable pains to have "pressing urgent private affairs" on the future occasions when his hospitable corps held high festival.

In that development of musketry training to which I have already made reference, amongst the many devices to obtain "control of fire" which were introduced, was one which directed that in certain situations fire should only be opened by named men, the other men of the musketry section retaining their fire till they too were called upon by name. There was at this period in a British unit a gallant officer who was more celebrated for his knowledge and experience of worldly and social matters than for an intimate

acquaintance with the interior economy of his company. Rumour had it that the only man of his company with whose name he was familiar was his ex-batman, who rejoiced—and subsequently sorrowed—in the patronymic of Baxter.

The company was located amongst the Himalayan hills at a place called Chakrata, and not far from this small military station lay that highly popular hill resort, Mussoori. Our gay officer took up his residence in the club of this latter Elysium, and endeavoured to retain some slight control over his command by occasional visits to the Chakrata training-grounds. Reiterated injunctions that the musketry training of his company would receive special attention at a forthcoming inspection led our frivolous one to a study of this latest order, and when the practice was being carried out, an inability to recall the name of any private except the familiar Baxter, invariably led to the same command—"Baxter, fire." Life for the unfortunate Baxter became a burden. In the canteen, in the playing-fields, in the barrack-room, wherever the luckless man found himself in the company of his comrades, the same aggravating injunction rang out. Baxter, now convinced that a further sojourn in the East would lead to his becoming a sort of human machine gun, managed somehow or other to get transferred to the home depot, and as, with his kit-bag slung over his shoulder, he at last reached the familiar barrack-square, every window was thrown open and an uproarious salute of "Baxter, fire!" greeted his unsympathetic ears.

The exigencies of colonial conquest during the world-spread war led to many strange native corps being raised, and unusual officers to serve. Report has it, that in the wilds of West Africa there was a certain fighting Baptist minister who shed the cloth for the sword and took a temporary commission with a negro unit. The fighting parson could not altogether forget his ministerial functions, and when occasion offered converted the heathen soldier to the Baptist faith. On one occasion, having proselytized a hefty buck-nigger, he persuaded him to undergo the necessary immersion in the rapids of a West African stream. In the fervour of the baptismal dip both lost their footing and were washed away by the current. The nigger, on the clutch-at-a-straw principle, clung to the padre-soldier, the enthusiastic zealot clung to his man with the hope of saving his body as well as his soul; after some perilous moments he succeeded in bringing the dusky one to the bank. Though he modestly said naught, he no doubt hoped for some expression of gratitude from his ebon convert. The nigger, when he had recovered his breath, addressed his preserver with the following words: "'Specs there'll be a coloured gen'l-man *drowned* some day at this dammonsense game."

The custom of attributing to oneself a position higher than the one you actually occupy is not confined to the black races. Many years ago there was an old "Qui Hi" of the Madras Staff Corps whose soldiering days had commenced previous to the Mutiny. When those troublous times had

changed for the more piping ones of peace, he thought he was entitled to a furlough in England. The exact status of Indian filibusters was probably not much inquired into in those days, and the young officer thought his social dignity would be better upheld if he gave himself the rank of Colonel, and with this dignified status he wooed and won an English maid and persuaded her to a state of married bliss in the East. On the voyage out, conscious that on reaching his unit he would have to descend from his social pinnacle, he commenced to gently break to his bride that their position in their new home would not be such a lofty one as she contemplated. "One has to make the best of oneself—the fact is, I am not a Colonel, I am only a Major," he explained, after the voyage had lasted a few days. About midway through the journey he lowered his rank to that of Captain, and the evening before they reached their port of arrival he confessed that he was only a humble Lieutenant. The astonished bride, relating the story to her bosom friend, is reported to have said, "I can't tell you, my dear, how thankful I was when we did arrive to find he was not a Sergeant."

Some people find their social position go down in this world, other people find they have automatically "riz." After my tiger-shooting experiences related in another chapter, I was invalided home with a very bad go of enteric fever. I had spent four or five months in bed in Simla, and with the approach of winter the doctor said I

must be moved, and recommended a sea voyage and the Riviera. I rather think they thought it was a hopeless case, and were anxious to get rid of me. Anyhow, off I was packed, with a nurse and an officer of my regiment, Captain Unwin, who afterwards distinguished himself and obtained a D.S.O. (not a common decoration in those days), when commanding the regiment in one of the Frontier shows. My lady nurse was a most devoted, kind and charming lady, a Miss Macpherson, niece, I think, of the celebrated Sir Herbert Macpherson, but she was unable to accompany me to the South of France, and a male nurse had been telegraphed for to join me at Calcutta. Invalids have whims which—I won't express the opinion whether it is good for them or not—are generally given into, and I took an invalid's dislike to the nurse when he turned up. This rather upset plans, as the vessel was due to sail the next day. However, I was adamant that I would not have his services, and I told my unfortunate Hindu bearer that he would have to accompany me. The loyalty and devotion of many of these faithful servants to their sahibs is most touching. This man (I have told of his sad death in another chapter) was far from his home, had no means of communicating with it, and had no preparations for the voyage; but "true to his salt," with but little demur, agreed to accompany me, and most faithfully nursed me throughout the voyage. My sister came to meet me at Marseilles, and not knowing what plans or arrangements would have to be made, brought with her a good courier-valet of

the name of Bates. Batts-Sahib he was promptly christened by Khoob-Chund, my bearer. The two men quite took to one another, and both accompanied me to the hotel at Cannes, where I made a long sojourn, in bed all the time. Khoob-Chund was not of high caste, just an ordinary Hindu bearer, but the European style of food and living transgressed every tenet of his caste. He was given one of the servant's bedrooms in the hotel just behind mine, but the faithful fellow used to spread his bed, a mat and blanket, and sleep outside my door every night; and as I had female nurses and my sister to look after me, I fancy Khoob-Chund valeted Batts-Sahib, and Batts-Sahib, whose life at that time was certainly a bit of a sinecure, enjoyed himself how he could. They were a strange pair, and with but little knowledge of the other's language, became good friends, and strolled arm-in-arm, so I was told, through the town of Cannes. The Duke of Cambridge was staying at the same hotel and also some Royal Princess, I am not sure which. Royalty seldom fails in graciousness, and incidentally I may mention that the Duke, then Commander-in-Chief, used to frequently send one of his suite to inquire after my health, which was very precarious. Bates usually put in a short appearance in my bedroom in the morning. One morning I asked him how he was getting on. "Oh, pretty well now, thank you, sir," he said. "There's me and the Dook's man and 'er Royal 'Ighnesses' maid and *Mr.* Khoob-Chund, we sits at one end of the table together." Those who have sojourned

in the East and know the status of the ordinary Hindu bearer and how his caste in the ordinary way compels him to prepare his own food and eat it by himself, will appreciate the story.

When the spring arrived and the malaria season in the Riviera was approaching, I was taken to London to my Father's house. I had been begging to be moved there for some time, and from the moment I arrived in my own country I commenced to get well. When we are ill we have to put our faith in the doctors, and when I was at Cannes some famous specialist was paying a visit to the place; I have forgotten his name. At an enormous fee my sister got his opinion on the wisdom of removing me to London. He told her that it did not matter much what they did with me, as he was sure I would never walk again, and he did not think I could survive long. Of course, I was not told this opinion at the time. My Father, who was then quite an old man, had held the Irish in disrespect all his life—I don't know why, though had he been living now he might have had more excuse for this rather severe view. He naturally grudged the rather large sum which he had kindly paid on my account for a certainly worthless opinion, and if during the last years of his life he wished to accentuate a condemnation of somebody, he would say, "Oh, he is no better than that d——d Irish doctor!" I do not believe the doctor was an Irishman, but after the fallacy of his opinion had been demonstrated my Father would never allow him any other nationality.

I do not suppose race characteristics are anywhere more markedly accentuated than in the East. The fighting races *are* fighting races, generally uneducated, plucky, hardy, but shrewd. The non-fighting classes never have possessed the desirable virtue of courage, and, in spite of Mr. Montagu's reforming efforts, are never likely to be so blessed. On the Might is Right axiom they will inevitably in the future succumb to the more virile type, just as they have always done in the past, and when the support now afforded to the educated, discontented, cowardly agitators who follow Mr. Gandhi is withdrawn, these political revolutionaries will, unless Eastern history does *not* repeat itself, again find themselves under the yoke of the more belligerent clans—and a good thing too.

When I first joined the Indian Army the office work of a regiment was carried out by civilian followers, and units had their own Baboos, generally of the educated and non-fighting class, who carried out the whole of the clerical duties. In the cavalry unit with which I first had the honour of serving, the office establishment consisted of an old Baboo and his two sons. The old father had, I think, been with the unit from the time it was first raised previous to the Mutiny by Sir Henry Daly, and his sons were being trained to follow in the father's footsteps. Suddenly, like a bolt from the blue, came from higher authority the very proper edict that the clerical establishment should, as in British regiments, be drawn from the rank and file, and the two youths were

informed that they must either enlist and become troopers or their occupation would be gone. They, like Cornet Jinks in the "Lays of Ind," were told

. . . "the riding-school
And Adjutant's drill for you."

Sadly and sorrowfully themselves, and to the unconcealed delight of the other more warlike recruits, the two Baboo boys exchanged the comfortable padded office-stool for uncertain vicissitudes on the hard and slippery saddle. In view of their sedentary duties the standard of horsemanship demanded from them was not a high one, their early experiences were confined to trotting in file on a stripped saddle round and round the riding-school. In this not very complicated manœuvre it is laid down in Cavalry Regulations that horses should be kept at half a horse's length distance from one another, head to tail. Our young friends' abilities were so entirely absorbed in preserving a precarious tenure in the saddle that they had little attention to give to the matter of distance, and their unaccommodating steeds were generally treading on the heels of the horses in front of them. From the drill instructors or Adjutant the warning constantly rang out, "Baboo, will you go slower? Baboo, keep your distance. Baboo, not so fast." Until at last from the lips of one of the unhappy, goaded, sore and uncomfortable youths-of-the-pen issued the protest to the Adjutant, "Sir, it is not I who am fast, it is the terrible horse!"

If the Scotchman be in some cases devoid of humour, this attribute is equally missing in many of our dark brethren. My friend Unwin, to whom I have previously made reference, was on one occasion travelling in a railway carriage in company with two native gentlemen. Ancient Bible pictures have portrayed for us the graceful walk of Rebecca and other captivating scriptural young women with pitchers of water on their ebon locks, and this balancing habit is in the East not confined to the fair sex. At any station in India may be seen the male merchant who, with a large round basket heaped high with pieces of sugar-cane, sweet-meats, oranges, etc., perambulate up and down the platform when the passenger trains are standing there, shouting in a sing-song voice the nature of their wares. Unwin, whose carriage was opposite the end of the platform, which ended abruptly in a perpendicular drop of some three or four feet to the rail level, was nonchalantly watching one of these pedlars, whose chief energy was devoted to shouting very loudly, "*Aie neringee!*[†] *aie neringee!*" In the enthusiasm of his declamations he forgot or was ignorant of the abrupt termination of the platform. Johnny Head-in-Air stepped into space, and the next instant, bruised and surprised, he, his basket and his numerous oranges, were scattered over the Indian soil. Unwin went into roars of laughter over the comic display, and the native gentlemen, who had watched the itinerant vendor throughout the proceeding without a smile on their countenances, looked in wonder at the

[†] Oranges.

convulsed officer. They felt they should in some manner participate in the Sahib's pleasure, and after a considerable pause one of them gravely remarked, "*Perhaps* he did think there was platform."

An Indian Army friend of mine was brought up on a Cheshire property. His father felt that an early association with all modes and manners of men would be to the benefit of his offspring, and frequently kept him in his study with him when his different tenants came to interview him. On one occasion what my friend described as "A musty, fusty garrulous old pair" came to visit the Lord of the Manor. The visit was long and tedious, my friend was rather irked with the wearisome interview, and when the estimable couple had at least taken their departure, no doubt he showed it on his countenance. His father reprovingly remarked, "Very excellent and worthy people, very excellent and worthy people indeed"—after a short pause—"Charles! open the window."

Some members of my family are, I am afraid, rather prone to the unpleasant malady of gout. I believe it is supposed to skip a generation, and as my Father did not suffer from it, the unpleasant twinges I occasionally experience myself are perhaps due to this hereditary idiosyncrasy. When my Father was very old he was ordered to take one or two glasses of really good port wine a day. So he recalled the remembrance that his family used to purchase the rather large quantities of

wine that it was customary to lay down in those halcyon times from, I believe, Dow's. At any rate, he went to the firm of which he had remembrance, and asked to see the senior partner. He stated that he was anxious to buy some really good wine, and that he hoped that the custom done with his forbears would lead to his now being served with the genuine article. The partner, after a consultation of his books, assured my Father that the best vintage procurable was at his command, and added, "We have sold enough port to the Westerns to float an ironclad." My Father, with his immunity from the malady, seemed to think the remark was rather amusing, but his surviving children, now arriving at the age at which the malady makes itself felt, do not see quite so much humour in their ancestors' delinquencies. "Good wine needs no bush" is an old saying, and although the "bush" tavern sign is not often seen nowadays, I remember an occasion when bush with a different signification seems to have exerted a beneficial influence upon wine. When my regiment was stationed at Rajanpur, where we had the terrible hydrophobia experience, to which I have referred in another chapter, the Mess Secretary ordered a large cask of claret from Bordeaux or somewhere in France. The wine went astray. It was known to have arrived at Karachi and been despatched up country by rail, but had never been sent on from the railway station, and correspondence with the railway authorities had had about as much effect in the matter of eliciting useful replies as has present-day

correspondence with a Government department. So when I was proceeding on leave towards the end of the hot weather one year, the Mess Secretary asked me to stir up the sleepy railway authorities. The nearest railway station was a place called Khanpur, on the Quetta-Karachi line of rail. It was some fifty or sixty miles from the cantonment, and the journey involved crossing several branches of the Indus. I remember during the hot ride coming across a camel engulfed in a quicksand. There are quite a number of these quicksands in the sandy river beds of the northern rivers of the Punjab. The wretched animal's legs and the greater part of its body had disappeared, and the long snake-like neck and head of the unfortunate beast waving about above the shallow water had rather a comical appearance, though the look of terror and appeal in the animal's eyes was harrowing to see. Its attendants, with the usual Eastern apathy, were seated on sound ground alongside and watching with apparent unconcern the struggles of the drowning beast. With the help of my escort and some long oars procured from a native boat in the vicinity, we eventually dug the animal out of its watery bed, and in due time I arrived at the railway station. The stationmaster, a native, denied all knowledge of the missing hogshead. I asked to see the place where goods were unloaded, and found it was on a rather steep embankment whose sides were covered with thorny bushes and luxuriant jungle growth, and had an uninviting and snake-infested appearance. As I felt pretty certain that the cask had at some time arrived at the

railway station, and that the native official was to blame, I insisted on the stationmaster accompanying me down the slope; and as the scanty garb worn by such native Baboos in the hot weather involves bare extremities, his timorous negotiation of the snake-ridden area and thorny obstacles was quite exhilarating to watch. Sure enough, at the bottom of the slope, hidden by the jungle, was the missing cask. The wine was duly despatched to the Mess, and why I recall the incident is, because that wine turned out to be about the best claret we ever drank in the Mess. I have been told that the improving effect of a voyage round the Cape to a cask of Madeira is now brought about by placing such casks at the top of moving machinery for a few months, and perhaps some ambitious vendor of *vin ordinaire* may like to try the effect of screening a cask with vegetation and keeping it for three or four months in a temperature of something over 100°, which I have no doubt is about the average ground temperature during the hot weather months of that insalubrious spot Khanpur. Perhaps one of the forcing houses at Kew might be a suitable spot to make the experiment.

It was during our sojourn at Rajanpur that our Mess Secretary spent a considerable portion of his time as a truffle merchant. In these isolated stations it is necessary to order stores in rather large quantities, and in the Mess orders sent home the more ordinary articles of consumption are ordered by the gross. By some unfortunate mis-

take truffles were also ordered by the gross, and some dozen gross at that. In course of time troops of camels heavily laden with bottles of this rather expensive delicacy commenced to arrive at the Mess, and as load after load was opened and the Mess Godowns became filled with bottles of the underground fungus, the Mess Secretary commenced to tear his hair and shouted for the Mess order-book. The home merchant refused to take back the inordinate surplus supply, stating he had been put to considerable trouble to collect the large quantity definitely ordered. This table delicacy became a constituent portion of every dish that was served in the Mess, and the Mess Secretary found that his duties became those of a wholesale and retail truffle merchant.

Selections from
George Allen and Unwin's List

My Life, and a few Yarns

BY VICE-ADMIRAL H. L. FLEET, C.B.E.

Demy 8vo.

16s. net.

Admiral Fleet entered the Navy at the age of fourteen in 1864, and in the course of his forty-one years' service had many interesting and entertaining experiences. His account of life in the Navy in the sixties, and subsequent adventures in the West Indies, the Mediterranean, the West Coast of Africa, and many other places prove that Admiral Fleet has a keen sense of humour and an observant eye. After his retirement from the active list, Admiral Fleet served as Nautical Assessor to the House of Lords, and during the War was County Director Auxiliary Hospitals of V.A.D. in Berkshire.

Twenty Years in Roumania

BY MAUDE PARKINSON

Demy 8vo.

10s. 6d. net.

"Miss Parkinson is a shrewd observer of wide sympathies, with a capacity for wide appreciation, and withal a sly humour."—*Church Family Newspaper.*

Yorkshiremen of the Restoration

BY J. S. FLETCHER

Author of "The Making of Modern Yorkshire"

Demy 8vo.

10s. 6d. net.

"His facts are delightfully presented, and the author's style makes the book a difficult one to put down."—*New Statesman.*

"Mr. Fletcher is a fine exponent of that local patriotism which was never more needed than now."—*Saturday Review.*

Up Against It in Nigeria

By LANGA-LANGA

Demy 8vo.

24 Pages of Illustrations

18s. net.

In "Up Against It in Nigeria" the author, avoiding religiously the well-worn themes of tribal marks, pagan music, geographical features, and other platitudinous matter, throws open his store of thirteen years' experience as a Political Officer, and introduces the reader personally by name to the toilers, official and commercial, who have faced the despondencies, the dangers, and the changing fortunes of an Administration which only attained its twenty-first birthday on January 1st of this year. (The simple obituary footnotes are in themselves a gruesome commentary on the terrible human toll levied by the climate.)

With cynical, but entirely friendly pen, Langa-Langa sketches scenes on trek, on "safari," on patrol, in Court, and—not least exciting—on s.s. *Falaba* when, at five minutes' notice, she was incontinently dispatched to the bottom of St. George's Channel.

Adventures in Swaziland

By OWEN ROWE O'NEIL

Medium 8vo.

Profusely Illustrated

16s. net.

The author of this thrilling and picturesque narrative was, with his companion, the only white man ever initiated into the Swazi tribe, a savage people who, under the leadership of old King Buno, were a constant menace to the surrounding Boer villages. How the old queen refused to give up her throne, how a civil war was precipitated, and how Sebuza, the crown prince, won a great victory and assumed his rightful kingship over Swaziland, completes a story that for imaginative quality and vivid power rivals anything out of the Arabian Nights.

The Long White Cloud

Ao-Tea-Roa

By THE HON. WILLIAM PEMBER REEVES

Demy 8vo. New and Revised Edition. Illustrated 12s. 6d. net.

"Out and away the best book on New Zealand."—*Daily Chronicle*.

Around the Shores of Asia

By MARY A. POYNTER

Demy 8vo.

Illustrated

16s. net.

"A book to be read with fancy alert . . . agreeably written . . . cordial, sympathetic, entertaining."—*Daily Chronicle*.

"A charming book of travel."—*Church Family Newspaper*.

My Term Off

By CAPTAIN N. G. BRETT JAMES

Cr. 8vo.

10s. 6d. net.

"A very pleasing book. . . I heartily recommend it."—SIR W. ROBERTSON NICOLL, in *British Weekly*.

The Memoirs of an Ambassador

BY FREIHERR VON SCHOEN
TRANSLATED BY CONSTANCE VESEY

Demy 8vo.

10s. 6d. net.

In this valuable contribution to the political history of modern times, Freiherr von Schoen, the German Ambassador in Paris in 1914 and former Minister for Foreign Affairs, relates his experiences as a diplomat during the period between Bismarck's retirement and the outbreak of war. Incidentally he refers to the German ignorance of diplomacy and distrust of the Foreign Office, and shows us how thoroughly those mainly responsible for Germany's foreign policy during the last twenty years justified this distrust.

My Memoirs

BY PRINCE LUDWIG WINDISCHGRAETZ

Demy 8vo. TRANSLATED BY CONSTANCE VESEY 16s. net.

"We have seen no more vivid and dramatic account of the last stage of Hapsburg rule than that which Prince Ludwig Windischgraetz has written."—*Spectator*.

The Master Spinner

A BIOGRAPHY OF SIR SWIRE SMITH

By KEIGHLEY SNOWDEN

Demy 8vo.

With Frontispiece

16s. net.

"A biography, which for intimacy of treatment, combined with unusual restraint and good taste, can scarce have had its equal of recent years."—*Westminster Gazette*.

"One of the most delightful biographies I have ever read."—SIR W. ROBERTSON NICOL, in *British Weekly*.

Seventy Years among Savages

By One of Them

Demy 8vo.

HENRY S. SALT

12s. 6d. net.

"Most entertaining . . . If Mr. Salt rides his fads hard, at least he shows a sense of humour and a wide acquaintance with people worth knowing."—*Westminster Gazette*.

"Whatever he is . . . he is not a bore; the personal anecdotes are many and diverting. His book ought to be read for its serious purpose as well as for its lighter parts."—*Times Literary Supplement*.

Joseph Gundry Alexander

Cr. 8vo. BY HORACE G. ALEXANDER 7s. 6d. net.

"This concise memoir of a singular, full and active life fully justifies itself. . . . So telling a picture of a life of unconquerable devotion."—*Times*.

Readers and Writers (1918—1921)

Cr. 8vo.

BY A. R. ORAGE

7s. 6d. net.

A selection from the well-known series of weekly causeries contributed to the *New Age* during the past eight years over the initials "R. H. C." Though many guesses have been made at the personality behind these penetrating and forcible comments on current literary affairs, it is only now that their real authorship has been avowed.

John Masefield A Critical Study

Cr. 8vo.

BY W. H. HAMILTON

7s. 6d. net.

This is the first book on Mr. Masefield's work and artistic development to be published. The author has endeavoured to accord due praise and communicate the glamour of enthusiasm for his subject, while exercising discrimination and reaching independent conclusions concerning the thirty or so volumes from "Salt-Water Ballads" to "King Cole." The Poems, Plays, Novels, Critical and Historical Works are studied with adequate quotations.

Modern Men and Mummery

BY HESKETH PEARSON

Demy 8vo.

10s. 6d. net.

"Exceedingly lively . . . he is at his best when he is being amusing—and rather daring—at somebody else's expense. . . . He writes freshly and well, and he has mixed with his ink a touch of vitriol . . . there will be few people, except the victims, who will not enjoy reading it."—*Daily Telegraph*.

Twenty-four Portraits

BY WILLIAM ROTHENSTEIN

WITH CRITICAL APPRECIATIONS BY VARIOUS HANDS 25s. net.

"An exceptional book both in its pictures and in its text. Only an artist of Mr. Rothenstein's rank and determination could have risked juxtaposition with the brilliant writers who contribute the notes."—*Manchester Guardian*.

The Outer Circle

BY

THOMAS BURKE

Cr. 8vo. Author of "Nights in Town," "Limehouse Nights," etc. 7s. 6d. net.

"In the proper Burke vein . . . it is just as human a book about Greater London as 'Nights in Town.' One cannot say more."—*Evening Standard*.

A New Book About London

A Quaint and Curious Volume of Forgotten Lore

Demy 8vo.

BY LEOPOLD WAGNER

10s. 6d. net.

"A more fascinating record of histories, associations and customs it would be hard to find. . . . Mr. Wagner can truly claim that he breaks fresh ground."—*Sunday Times*.

Woodland Creatures

By FRANCES PITT

Author of "Wild Creatures of Garden and Hedgerow"

Demy 8vo.

Illustrated

12s. 6d. net.

In this book the author gives an intimate description of the lives, habits, and characters of many birds and beasts that inhabit our countryside, including shy woodland creatures such as the badger. This animal and others are fully dealt with; the accounts, from personal observation, giving many original facts which will be of interest to all who love Nature, both expert naturalists and those who like to watch wild life. The author's aim throughout has been to write in plain non-technical language which all can read, and to draw attention to the fascinating though elusive inhabitants of our woodlands.

Mostly About Trout

By MAJOR-GENERAL SIR GEORGE ASTON, K.C.B.

La. Cr. 8vo.

8s. 6d. net.

"There are few things about trout fishing the author does not know. . . . The book will amply repay reading."—*Manchester Guardian*.

"A 'happy' book—happy in spirit, but also in phraseology and style. . . . We have enjoyed the book and should have liked more of it."—*Field*.

Dancing for Strength and Beauty (Renascent Dancing)

By EDWARD SCOTT

Author of "Dancing in All Ages," etc.

Demy 8vo.

With 19 Illustrations

12s. 6d. net.

"The book is as full of entertainment as it is of information, and this is saying much. His book should revive the interest in this neglected art, and most of us would welcome a little of the author's influence in the modern ballroom."—*Manchester Guardian*.

British Sports Library

EDITED BY CAPTAIN F. A. M. WEBSTER

Cr. 8vo.

6s. each net.

VOL. I. RUGBY FOOTBALL. By D. R. GENT.

Mr. Gent is the famous English International half-back.

VOL. II. HOCKEY. By S. H. SHOVELLER.

The object of the British Sports Library is to provide text-books at a moderate price which will aid the proficient competitor or player of games in practically every branch of sport, and which will, moreover, set the feet of the beginner on the right road to success.

Each book will be the work of an expert, well qualified to write authoritatively. Mr. S. H. Shoveller is universally conceded to be one of the greatest, if not actually the greatest hockey player Great Britain has ever produced. Captain F. A. M. Webster, F.R.G.S., was English Amateur Javelin Throwing Champion 1911, Midland Counties Champion, winner of many Divisional Army championships, and holder of many Divisional Army records.

Essays and Addresses

BY PROFESSOR GILBERT MURRAY, LL.D., D.LITT.
Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

"A great humanist . . . the past he has so richly explored is linked to the service of the coming generations."—*Nation*.

"His moderation, his urbane humour, has at the heart of it an interest so intense and persistent that it might be called a concentrated passion."—*Times*.

The Poetry of Dante

BY BENEDETTO CROCE

TRANSLATED BY DOUGLAS AINSLIE

Demy 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

It was fitting that this masterly essay on Dante by the greatest of Italian critics should be published for the first time in English at a time when much is being written and said concerning the great Italian. Benedetto Croce is the "foremost Italian thinker of our time," and incidentally Minister of Education in the Giolitti Cabinet.

Ariosto, Shakespeare, and Corneille

By

BENEDETTO CROCE

TRANSLATED BY DOUGLAS AINSLIE

La. Cr. 8vo. 10s. 6d. net.

"Never have we read a better essay on Shakespeare, one that will help the reader more to experience Shakespeare's art. . . . In this book, through all its philosophic calm we feel the longing for a free, conscious and happy art."—*Times*.

The Social Philosophy of Carlyle and Ruskin

BY FREDERICK WILLIAM ROE

Demy 8vo. 12s. 6d. net.

Both an interpretation of two great and related literary personalities of the Victorian era, and a contribution to the history of social thought in England during a critical period.

Greeks and Barbarians

BY J. A. K. THOMSON

La. Cr. 8vo. 8s. 6d. net.

"This charming book by an accomplished scholar . . . deserves to be widely read."—*Spectator*.

LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN LIMITED
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C. 1

PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE
CARDS OR SLIPS FROM THIS POCKET

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO LIBRARY

DA
68

.32
W42A5

Western, John Sutton Edward
Reminiscences of an Indian
cavalry officer

