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ASTOR,

*Kashmir  
Territory,*

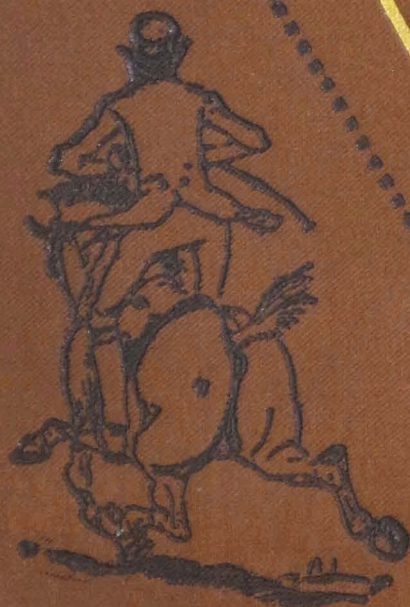
Journal

of

Sport

and

Travel



## PREFACE.

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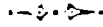
No book should be written without an object. The encouragement of sport, the preservation of Kashmir Game and the discovery of new shooting grounds are the points aimed at in the present one. It is hoped that they have not been missed.

The journal portion of the work and Chapter IX have appeared from time to time in "The Asian."

H. L.



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## CHAPTER I.

### *Preliminary.*

**A**S gusty March advances over the plain, his genial warmth quickens the juices both in plants and animals. The cornfields ripen, the trees blossom and the blood circulates with a quicker rush through the veins of animate nature. The migratory birds that in Autumn streamed over the snowy barriers, driven from their domestic happiness by the rigor of the northern winter, are now again restless: they ruffle their feathers, outstretch their wings and prepare for the long journey homewards. They circle in the air practising their wings, collect in large numbers on the cool banks of rivers lingering to the last moment the increasing heat will allow: then, driven by that instinct more unerring than human reason, are up and away on their long flight to the cool Lakes in the north—the land of their romance, for I suppose, that even a crane or a gander has his illusions when the temporary madness of love is upon him. So the Englishman. The ardent sun of March and April stirs the migratory instinct within him beyond control; he too must be up and away, also Northwards. Then occurs that extraordinary phenomenon in India—the migration of the white conquering race from the parched and heated lowlands to the cool shades of Himálayá. From the Viceroy

in his Palace to the white-faced soldier in the Barrack this desire is felt with equal force. The former, steams away to his mountain refuge; the latter, bound by the iron bonds of discipline, lingers and pines in the suffocating atmosphere his lungs cannot breathe.

The most extraordinary feature in this migratory flight is the fact that year after year so many hundreds of Englishmen flock to the far-famed valley of Kashmir, and the countries connected with it, for sport. There is no parallel to it in any other nation or country in the world. It illustrates one of the most marked traits of the race in connection with the instinct common to all northern creatures, human and animal. It is notorious that the sporting instinct in the people of England is stronger and more developed than in any other nation on earth. The reason of this! Circumstances make the individual—why not the nation? The character of the individual Englishman is moulded by the *climate*, ‘tightness’ of the “tight” little island, and the *food* and *drink* he consumes and assimilates—and the nation is built up of these individuals. The rigorous climate makes the strongest food and drink a matter of vital necessity. Thereby is created an enormous store of energy which *must* have a safety valve, for the very preservation of the machine itself in which the force is stored. England is certainly too “tight” and cannot supply it—so her sons rush away to the uttermost ends of the earth and spend their accumulated forces in far off lands. Never a war occurs in any corner of the world but the Anglo Saxon is there; and, when the spilling of human blood to uphold a sentiment, or found an empire cannot be indulged in, he takes to SPORT.

But strange animal that he is—though the Englishman is all that I have painted him, it is only one side of his character that I have pourtrayed—the “bloody instinct” (if I may so call it) satisfied, he is the tenderest creature in God’s image! He will shoot or cut down a fellow creature without any compunction—and immediately after try to save the life he has done his best to extinguish! He has more than once lost his own in the attempt! What sportsman cuts the throat of the animal he has shot, does not his attendant do it while the Englishman turns his back on the operation? What are the feelings that stir in his breast as he stands over his noble quarry? Are they not a strange mixture of satisfaction and remorse? And, all honor to the mothers of England—the ferocious tendencies of the male Briton from the time he can toddle on his uncertain little legs to the moment he leaves his country for the world’s good, or the reverse, are checked and bridled by the ever-watchful mother and softened by gentle intercourse with sisters and cousins. Thus grows up within him that curious anomaly the English character which has stamped its impress on every country in the world, and is moulding the destinies of the greater portion of the human race. And so, the beef, beer and bread of Old England are the foundations of Old England’s greatness! As long as her sons build up their bodies with the strong food of their island homes and breathe the air of her hills and valleys she may be trusted to hold her own against all comers.

This humble individual feels that in him is stored somewhat of that northern energy, and that India’s burning sun has not as yet been able quite to dissipate it. The treadmill round of his daily duty not being sufficient to



use it up, he is obliged periodically to rush away, like others of his countrymen, to lighten himself of the intolerable burden. In April, of a recent year, accordingly, he obtained three months leave and hied him away to the Markhor and Ibex grounds of Astór beyond Kashmir. The result of his travels and sporting adventures are given in this book for the pleasure and, he hopes, the profit of his fellow sportsmen.

No thoroughbred Englishman exists who has not a natural liking, if not a passion, for sport in some, if not in all, its branches—shooting, hunting, fishing, racing, etc.—and who does not enjoy its attendant hardships quite as much as members of other nations enjoy the most refined luxuries. Yet there are some who sneer at the madness of those who toil and sweat for the pleasure of taking a wild goat's or wild sheep's life; they cannot understand the infatuation of a countryman who makes shooting his passion, though they themselves may be at the same time dissipating their store of energy, and ruining their fortunes in racing, hunting or some other branch of the great national hobby. I am prepared to endure the ridicule of those who may laugh at the folly of my self-imposed hardships in following the noblest quarry in the world. I know however that I shall be supported by the appreciation and sympathy of those others who handle gun and rifle with the loving grip of the true Shikári. For them this book is specially written. I hope not one will put it down after perusal without having derived some amusement from its pages or a few hints for the further development of the great national trait on which, unfelt by them, rests so much of England's supremacy in every quarter of the globe.

## CHAPTER II.

### *The Frontier District of Astór.*

THE DISTRICT OF ASTÓR comprises the main and side valleys of the river of that name which takes its rise on the watershed line dividing it from Gurés in the Krishanganga valley. The whole course of the river is from south-east to north-west and its length is about ninety miles. From the Dáskirim Pass, above its western source to its junction with the Indus below Rámghat, it has a fall of 9,274 feet, or an average of more than one hundred feet per mile. The descent of the waters for the first two-thirds of the river is not so abrupt as the fall in the last portion of its course or from Astór to the Indus. The passing traveller will be often reminded of this difference as he proceeds on his downward journey. The frantic dash of the waters within their pent-up course, their deafening roar during the whole distance to Rámghat, will remind him forcibly of the blind career of a herd of mighty wild beasts gone mad, rushing to their destruction.

A series of valleys from Daiamar in the west to the Parishing stream in the east contribute to this mass of water. The Rúpil valley pours out its muddy washings from the feet of the mighty mountain; the sparkling waters of the beautiful Mir Malik, enter further south: then joins in the Kamrai. After these comes the main

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branch of the Astór itself with its numerous feeders, and lastly the Parishing in the east. These valleys form a vast basin with a diameter at its brim of nearly 50 miles. The waters collect at a point two miles above the village of Gurikot on the Barzil route; then, with accelerated speed, they dash down to the Indus, thirty-five miles distant. After the junction of the Parishing, no stream enters the main channel which is compressed between lofty mountains that rise abruptly to glaciers 16,000 feet above sea level within five to ten miles of the river.

The general aspect of the country is dreary in the extreme to the traveller from Kashmir who has just passed through the finest combinations of earth, air and water that the world can show. After crossing the Pass from the Gurés direction, a wilderness of snow has to be traversed for several miles, even in the month of April. No vegetation of any kind is visible. Willows and stunted birch-trees are the first to welcome you after your weary trudge through snowland: lower down a patch of pines here and there struggles for existence, but no extensive forests can be seen at any point on the route. As you get to a lower level the green turf under your feet gives a pleasant spring to your steps; and after passing the first village, the wide-spreading walnut offers its unfathomable depths of greenery as a cooling lotion to your sun-scorched eyes. The "first" walnut tree and the "first" apricot tree will surely arrest your attention; and you will feel as if getting among old friends again. From the village of Chhagám fruit trees become frequent, and large patches of cultivation surround each village that is passed. After leaving Astór the scene changes again. The steep sides of the mountains are clothed with pines though no

forest is visible that can be called extensive ; the prospect on every side is very much confined, and the traveller has only one desire—to proceed as rapidly as possible to the happy hunting grounds now within view.

The most remarkable in the whole district is certainly the Rúpil valley. As I had not the opportunity, nor the time, to explore it myself, I take the liberty of compressing here Drew's description of it, written fourteen years ago, in his work "The Northern Barrier of India." "Three miles from the village of Chhagám, proceeding in the direction of Astór, we Pass the Rúpil stream ; four miles up that valley is the village of Tarshing, half a mile beyond is one of the glaciers that spring from the mighty mountain which towers above in a great and snowy mass that seems to be a gigantic escarpment. In its lower course the glacier has a width of about three-quarters of a mile : it is much broken by curved transverse crevasses. In 1850 this glacier was jammed against the road on the opposite side of the main valley to which the Rúpil is tributary. The stream from the south-west, which drains other glaciers, found a way for itself underneath. Next year in winter time the waterway got stopped up, and a lake was formed in the valley above. The lake must have been at least a mile and a half long, half a mile broad, with a depth of one hundred to three hundred feet. The waters at last flowed over the glacier, and cut a course for themselves between the ice and the cliff. This caused a disastrous flood that lasted three days." Drew goes on to say: "Now again the space between the end of the glacier and the cliff is closed up ; the waters at present find a passage for themselves beneath, probably the same process of compression has recommenced which may again

end in a complete stoppage of the upper drainage, formation of a lake and subsequent outbreak and flood."

This was written in 1870. Fourteen years after there is no trace of a flood, and nowhere along the road can the glacier or its work be seen except a glimpse of immense moraines in the Rúpil itself and a full stream of slush running from it down to the main stream—a sure sign that the tail of the glacier is not far off. The predicted flood, however, may have come off years ago. Near the mouth of the Rúpil is a plain marked "Thora" on the map. This no doubt was the bottom of the lake alluded to above. The road to Astór runs through it now. Further up, on the main stream, are the Gabar and Ruttu plains. They have every appearance of having been at one time the bottoms of extensive lakes, formed no doubt in the way explained by Drew.

The people of Astór are called Dārds. They come of the Aryan stock. According to Drew they are separated into five divisions: Ronu, Shin, Yashkan, Kremin, Dúm. The Dúm, the lowest of all, is no doubt the same as the "Dom" or "Merasi" (musician) of India. Drew is of opinion that in all these cases we have remnants of the early pre-Aryan race that inhabited India. "This is a new and unexpected fact, the existence of this race, among the high mountains and in the snowy country." The Kremins are the potters, millers, etc., of the country and correspond in function with the "Kahars," "Jhiwar," etc., of India. The similarity between Kremin and the Punjab word "Kamin," which is used to designate the same class of people, is certainly curious. The Yashkan are the most numerous and are owners of the soil. They and the Shin may be considered the bulk of the Dárd nation

who invaded this country and took it from the earlier inhabitants. The Ronus are to be found in Gilgit only, and are accounted the aristocracy of this people. They are not numerous. The Därd race are spread over a great extent of country including Astór, but are not found beyond its limits towards the south, except a few scattered families in Gurés. "In physique they are broad-shouldered, moderately stout-built, well proportioned men; active and enduring and good mountaineers. In faces hardly handsome but with a good caste of countenance, hair mostly black, sometimes brown; complexion moderately fair, eyes brown or hazel; voice and manner somewhat harsh." In disposition they are bold and independent, by no means soft-hearted, but not disobliging. In intellect they are decidedly clever, clear-headed and quick, and they exhibit in no small degree a pride of race which is certainly not a little refreshing after intercourse with the cringing, soft-mannered, and ever deceitful Kashmiri. Their dress is a woollen pájama, (trousers) choga (long coat), waist band and cap. The latter is a bag half-a-yard long, rolled up outwardly until it fits the head. The roll protects from sun and cold nearly as well as a turban. This head-dress is characteristic of the nation; it is never discarded. They wear strips of leather round their feet and legs, as far as the knee, secured by thongs. The skins of wild animals are generally used for this purpose."

"There is one custom among the Shin cast of Därd that deserves particular notice. "They hold the cow in abhorrence; they look upon her in much the same way that an ordinary Mahomedan regards a pig. They will not drink cow's milk, nor do they eat or make butter

from it. Nor will they even burn cowdung, the fuel that is so commonly used in the East. Some cattle they are obliged to keep, for ploughing, but they have as little as possible to do with them. When the cow calves, they will put the calf to the udder by pushing it with a forked stick and will not touch it with their hands."

The Dărd nation is also peculiar in its Government, that is, of course, in those places only where they have not come under the yoke of the foreigner. The Astór Dărds under Dogra rule are governed according to Dogra ideas; but in Gilgit and across the border, in some districts the Government is a despotism, "untempered absolutism;" in others, there are "republics pure and absolute." These latter are generally found on the right bank of the Indus. The republic is governed by a general assembly called Sigás. The executive consists of a few men, five or six, chosen by the people in their assembly; these are called Joshteros; they can formulate a policy, but have no power to carry it out without the sanction of the Sigás. They can, however, settle minor disputes. The usual advantages of monarchies and republics, on a large scale elsewhere, also exhibit themselves in these small governments among the Dărds. The village of Thaliché, consisting of seven houses only, which can be seen across the Indus from the road to Búnji, enjoys the distinction of being the smallest republic in the world.

The forts at Astór and Búnji are the only places of any importance in the district. Strictly speaking Búnji is beyond its limits, but being situated on the left

bank of the Indus, communication with Astór is much more frequent than between it and Gilgit, to which latter district Búnji is subordinate. The Astór garrison consists of six hundred men. A general commands the troops. A few guns are mounted in the fort. There are about two hundred men in the Búnji fort under a Commandant, who is subordinate to the General commanding the Gilgit District. Near each fort are collections of huts which may be called the cantonments. All the officers and men live in them; only a small number at a time garrison the forts.

The civil administration is distinguished by its simplicity. The Civil Governor is called the Wazír; in him is centered all civil authority. Under him is the Thánádar, the chief officer of police. These two officials manage the affairs of their charge through the medium of jaghírdars and lumberdars, the great and small landholders of the country. The military and civil administration is entirely alien, though Rozi Khan, the present Wazír, a very capable man, has strong sympathies with the population, as his family has been settled in Gurés and Astór for the last two generations.

Let us now turn to the game animals of Astór and the places where they are found. The list is not a long one, but it comprises the two animals for which this corner of the Kashmir territories has always been famous—the markhór (*Capra megaceros*) and the ibex (*Ibex Siberia*). Besides these there are the Urin (*Ovis Vignei*) or wild sheep, the brown or snow bear (*Ursus isabellina*) and the musk deer (*Moschus moschiferus*), a short list no doubt but every individual worthy the rifle of the best sportman in existence.



The markhor (*Capra megaceros*) is called Bŭm in the Dărd language: *bŭm mazáro* is the male; *bŭm ai* (pronounced "eye,") is the female. Sterndale (page 441) after Kinloch, divides them into four varieties: we are concerned at present with the fourth, or Baltistán and Astór markhor, distinguished from the rest by "large flat horns branching out very widely and then going up nearly straight with only a half turn." It is impossible to give a description of this animal that will strike the experienced hunter as accurate. Sterndale says: "The general colour is a dirty light-blue grey with a darker beard, in summer with a reddish tinge." Ward, though he gives no detailed description, says (page 14): "In their winter coat of grey they are difficult to discover." Jerdon describes the animal's colour ("The Mammals of India" page 29), as "in summer light greyish-brown, in winter dirty yellowish white, with bluish-brown tinge." My experience of the Astór animal, recorded on the spot, inclines me to think that the male, in the month of April at any rate, wears a dirty-white coat on his back, which hangs some distance down his sides making him a very conspicuous object indeed among rocks; the light "blue-grey," or "greyish-brown," hardly visible on the body. These were the old males; the young bucks, herding with the females, were decidedly of a "muddy-red," that made them, when they were motionless, undistinguishable from their surroundings at even a short distance. Two weeks later, in another locality, across the Indus (Damót valley) the old bucks had only a broad streak of dirty-white along their backs, and the light blue-grey was very conspicuous. In the figure at page 442 of Sterndale's "Mammalia of India and Ceylon,"

the whitish streak along the back of No. 1 variety illustrates exactly what I mean. It is evident that the colour of the pelage changes according to seasons, localities and age. The dirty-white coat doubtless belongs to winter; it disappears more or less quickly according to the early or late arrival of spring. Perhaps the young bucks have not this distinguishing colour to the extent of their elders. The size of the markhor varies according to localities. Ward in his "Sportman's Guide" (page 14) says "this (the Astór markhor) is larger than its representative in Kashmir proper. Many stand as much as eleven hands high, whereas the largest I have seen in other localities barely reached ten-and-a-half hands." Jerdon and Sterndale agree in fixing the height at  $11\frac{1}{2}$  hands. Ward thus continues: "The curves of the horns are bold and flat, the divergency at the tips great, and the massiveness which is shown to such advantage in the single twist leads this variety to be considered by most people the handsomest of the four." Single horns of 61 and 63 inches have been found in Astór, but complete trophies range from 52 inches and less. The length, girth and divergency of different sets of horns vary considerably. It may be laid down as a general rule that the longest are always the most slender, while the shortest are the most massive and have the greatest divergency. This will be found to be the case with most horned wild animals. I have noticed it constantly among antelope, gazelles and ibex. It would seem that nature had fixed a certain *quantity* of bony and horny matter for the head ornaments of each male, which, according to individual circumstances, is developed into long and slender or short and

massive horns. It will very rarely be found that length and massiveness go together. The best specimen measured by Ward had the following dimensions (page 15): "Length along curve, 52 inches, girth at base  $12\frac{1}{2}$ ; divergency at tips, 43 inches. "Trophies of this kind" he continues, "are rare  
 \* \* \* rare indeed is a head with horns much over 50 inches in length." He speaks truly. The best trophies fall to the goat-herd's rickety matchlock or the surer onslaught of the mountain leopard. These are the ever present enemies of the markhor and ibex. The keen-eyed goat-herd, not many degrees less wild than his quarry, always takes his matchlock with him when his flocks mount to the grassy uplands for their summer pasturage. In a few days he has marked down all the game within range of his vision. He bides his time, and when a certain opportunity occurs, he bags the the biggest markhor or ibex in the hill. But he has not been mentally measuring the splendid horns, or stroking the flowing beard of the patriarch of the flock. His one idea is meat, meat, meat. The largest animal will supply the most flesh and he goes for him accordingly. He may become possessed of the most splendid trophy, but the goat-herd's first act is to smash the horns with his hatchet, split open the skull and throw the brains on the blazing logs of his camp-fire. That is his *bonne bouche* for dinner. The remains of the splendid head and the sixty-inch horns find their natural level at the bottom of the glen, to be picked up years after by the casual Saxon who sighs over the lost splendour "of the largest horns he ever saw."

The markhor is an ungainly animal; his long back and disproportionately short legs rather detract from his

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appearance as a game-looking beast; his shaggy coat and long hair which conceal the upper portions of his limbs make his ungainliness more conspicuous. Even in his gait he is not graceful, but none can deny his wonderful activity among the rocks and precipices of his favourite haunts, and he is, notwithstanding these detractions, a noble animal, worthy the powder and lead of the best sportsman in the world. A venerable buck, standing solitary on a rock, contemplating the world below him, will make the blood of the most blasé sportsman tingle in his veins: or a herd of long-bearded seniors, gravely crossing a patch of snow, perhaps just beyond the reach of your rifle, is a sight that will recur to your memory for many a year after. And the amount of fatigue and labour that you will have to undergo before you can bring a forty-incher to bag will certainly create a wholesome respect in your bosom for the acute sense of smell and vision, and the wide-awakeness that this animal possesses in perfection.

Kinloch says (Sterndale, page 443): "The markhor inhabits the most difficult and inaccessible ground, where nearly perpendicular faces of rock alternate with steep grassy slopes and patches of forest. It is very shy and secluded in its habits remaining concealed in the densest thickets during the day time, and only coming out to feed in the mornings and evenings; \* \* \* early in the season the males and females may be found together in the open grassy patches and clear slopes among the forest, but during the summer the females generally betake themselves to the highest rocky ridge above the forests, while the males conceal themselves still more constantly in the jungles, very rarely showing themselves."

My experience is that the markhor is not a cold or snow-loving animal like the ibex, though nature has not been niggardly in supplying him with winter clothing. He passes his life at a much lower level, at all seasons of the year, than the other animal, and he seems to bear the heat of the early summer months without any inconvenience though he still wears his winter suit. As summer advances, he is driven higher by the flocks from the villages that graze gradually up as the snow keeps melting; and also by the swarms of flies, gnats, midges and what not that make life a burden both to man and beast at a low level. The fresh and tender grass, too, can be found only near the snow line. These circumstances combine to keep him constantly moving upwards, till he reaches open slopes near the top of the range where he may then be seen in close proximity to the ibex. The rutting season overtakes him here by the end of September or beginning of October, and he has his short season of madness at this high elevation where cover is scarce and precipices unfrequent. Native shikaries have informed me that *this* is the time for markhor-shooting, and that they themselves hunt him most frequently at this particular time. His shyness and seclusion, I am inclined to think, is caused a good deal by those ever present pests, the flies. The cool shades of the forest and thicket preserve him from their attacks during the heat of the day when these insects are liveliest. In the morning and evening, when the cold has paralyzed the activity of the flies, the markhor is not loth to take advantage of the opportunity. The old bucks are decidedly lazy, and if a flock of them is watched for some time, a decided stiffness and slowness

of movement will soon discover the seniors of the flock. The younger bucks are full of life and play, quick in their movements and have a set-to after every dozen mouthfuls of grass; the elders are always feeding or resting. The native shikaries say the old bucks keep these youngsters with them for the sake of their keener sense of sight and smell; they are quicker to detect danger and so warn their seniors.

The Ibex (*Capra Siberica*) is called Kíl in Astór (Kél, in Kashmir): Kíl màzáro and Kílai for male and female. He is much more plentiful and is more easily found, stalked and shot than the markhor. Sterndale's description of him is as follows: "General color light brownish, with a dark stripe down the back in summer, dirty yellowish-white in winter; the beard, which is from six to eight inches long, is black; the horns, which are like the European ibex, are long and scimitar-shaped, curving over the neck, flattened at the sides, and strongly ridged in front; from forty to fifty inches in length. Under the hair, which is about two inches long, is a soft down, which is highly prized for the manufacture of the fine soft cloth called *tusi*. Size: height at shoulder, about 44 inches (11 hands.)"

The ibex is by no means an ungainly animal as I have styled the markhor. He is lord of the mountain tops, and looks every inch the monarch of all he surveys. But I must protest against the caricature of this animal at page 445 in Sterndale's book. The head shows none of the massiveness of the living animal: and where, oh! where is the beard "from six to eight inches long?" As for the understandings of the figures in the book they are truly a libel on the sturdy limbs of this the gamiest of moun-

tain animals. Those spindle shanks would snap like pipe stems if they were used as I have seen the ibex use *his* legs while jumping from rock to rock in his mad career. And I may as well, too, ease my soul here of the feelings excited by that silly looking animal at page 443 labelled "*Capra megaceros*." "No. 1 variety"—looking at No. 2 upon the opposite page—wears a mingled air of contempt and disgust on his countenance that has been shared, I am sure, by every reader of the book who has seen the real animal as nature made him. Of course No. 2 is a stuffed specimen on a stand in some museum: his appropriate location.

The ibex is the pleasantest animal to hunt that I know of within the limits of Kashmir. More real pleasure has been experienced in the pursuit after him than of all the rest put together. Markhor takes it out of you in a very short time: after you have secured a reasonable trophy you are apt to cry, "hold, enough." But the ibex is a gentleman in his manners and customs, as compared with his spiral-horned cousin lower down on the mountain; and he gives you all the chances that a gentlemanly-minded animal should give to an honest foe. He is nevertheless "all there" when treading his ancestral hills, and after you have circumvented him, you feel that he has been a worthy opponent. Kinloch's description of the habits of the ibex is the truest by far that I have seen, and I again take the liberty here of extracting his words (page 446, Sterndale:)  
"The ibex inhabits the most precipitous ground in the highest of the ranges where it is found, keeping above the forest (where there is any) unless driven down by severe weather. In the daytime it generally betakes itself to the most inaccessible crags, where it may sleep and rest in

undisturbed security, merely coming down to the grassy feeding grounds in the mornings and evenings. Occasionally, in very remote and secluded places, the ibex will stay all day on their feeding grounds, but this is not common. In summer, as the snows melt, the old males retire to the highest and most unfrequented mountains, and it is then generally useless to hunt for them, as they have such a vast range and can find food in places perfectly inaccessible to man. The females and young ones may be met with all the year round, and often at no very great elevation.

The most wide-awake animal in creation is certainly the female ibex, and she seems to exercise her vigilance solely for the benefit of the ungrateful male of her kind, who is by no means so watchful: in fact, if he is old and lazy, he keeps no look-out at all after having comfortably laid himself up for the day. That duty falls to his compact little companion, and admirably she performs it. Uncomfortably perched on a jutting rock far above the rest of the flock, who are securely snoozing below on some soft patch of level or gently sloping ground, the sportsman's powerful telescope has watched her hour after hour lying motionless on her rocky bed, scanning untiringly, to the right and to the left and straight down before her, the mountain sides for miles and miles. The patient native or Kashmiri, is used to her sentry duty, and after taking in the situation he, too, falls asleep like the bearded males he is trying to circumvent and waits patiently for a chance; but the hot-blooded Saxon, boiling over with energy and impatience, is fuming and swearing at one moment, and at the next watching the little animal through his glasses. The case is a perfectly hopeless one; there is no approach nearer than a thousand yards, without instant



detection, for several hours to come at any rate: and the bad language that contaminates the pure mountain air in that locality is truly awful. How often have I resolved in these moments of desperation to shoot that one female in particular, and allow the long-horned careless one, sleeping just beyond range, to go in peace just for the satisfaction of the thing. That feeling has come to more persons than myself, I am sure, when they have been similarly placed. The female ibex is the *bête noir* of the sportsman; she has spoiled many a careful stalk, and at other times has forced him to trudge many and many a weary mile to escape her all-seeing eye: when, if she had been absent, a walk of a few hundred yards would have placed him for his shot.

The report of the rifle is so similar to noises in these elevated regions that ibex are little alarmed by the crack of the weapon. "Falling rock," or "thunder" is the first idea that occurs to them when the sound reaches their ears, and their first start is to get out of the way of those familiar dangers. When a good stalk is made, and the sportsman has his wits about him, several shots can almost always be obtained, and instances are not rare when three or four animals have been bagged at one stalk. The ground, too, in general is so favourable that the stalker can get within very short range: always providing that the sharp-sighted female has been successfully dodged. I have shot bucks at five, ten and fifteen yards distance, and a sportsman has informed me that on one occasion he could have *touched* the animal with the muzzle of his rifle.

The Urin or Oorin (*Ovis Brookei*) is the only representative of the wild sheep in Astór. He is an animal that I have never shot, and I cannot, therefore, speak of him

from personal acquaintance. Sterndale, page 435, gives a very short notice of him: "General colour brownish-grey, beneath paler, belly white; a short beard of stiffish brown hair; the horns of the male are sub-triangular, rather compressed laterally and rounded posteriorly, deeply sulcated, curving outward and backward from the skull; points divergent. The female is beardless with small horns. The male horns run from 25 to 35 inches, but larger have been recorded."

"This sheep was for some time, and is still by some, confounded with the Oorial (*Ovis cycloceros*), but there are distinct differences. \* \* \* \* It inhabits the elevated ranges of Ladakh, and is found in Baltistan where it is called the Oorin."

"Urin" is, I think, the Astór, not the Baltistan, name. This animal is not fond of snow, and I should say would seldom be found at elevations of 12,000 to 14,000 feet as stated by Sterndale. From all accounts it is a most difficult animal to stalk, as it generally frequents level plains in the hills, where it cannot be approached within easy rifle range. Large horns are now scarce in Astór.

The Himalayan Brown Bear (*Ursus isabellinus*). Sterndale's description of this animal is as follows: "A yellowish brown colour varying somewhat according to sex and time of year." Jerdon says: "In winter and spring the fur is long and shaggy, in some inclining to silver-grey, in others to reddish-brown; the hair is thinner and darker in summer as the season advances, and in autumn the under fur has mostly disappeared, and a white collar on the chest is then very apparent. The cubs show this collar distinctly. The females are said to be lighter in colour than the males."

The brown bear is always found close to the snow at very high elevations. He is most impatient of heat as he well may be with the tremendous quantity of hair that clothes him! Grass roots and berries are his food.

I must confess to feelings of regret as I contemplate the figure of this old acquaintance on page 110 of Stern-dale's book. He has been persecuted for a human generation in Kashmir by the English sportsman, and has yielded his splendid furry coat year after year amid groans and grumblings that cannot be soon forgotten. An old male mortally wounded and fast dying at your feet, uttering his protest in his own bearish way seems to say, "why have you murdered a harmless creature like myself? I keep far away from the human species and have done them no harm: even the roots and berries that are my food cannot ever be of any use to you and yours." And after the poor devil has been deprived of his coat, his stark and naked body, lying on the bare hill-side, resembles so much the human corpse that few sportsman can look on it without feelings of compunction. And the sport itself is so tame that, after obtaining a couple of good skins, the majority of sportsmen leave him alive and turn their attention to worthier game. Nevertheless, a certain class of these gentlemen persecute poor Bruin perpetually, and then every tourist, whether sportsman or not, must be able to say that he has "shot a bear." The native shikari, too, can always secure a good price for the skin, and he is constantly on the look-out for the poor animal.

Although my sympathies are all for the bear, I cannot deny that he is mischievous sometimes. If he gets into a sheepfold he is apt to be very destructive, and if he

makes regular visits to a field, much corn need not be expected from it; but these are rare occurrences. Bruin is by nature a timid creature, and by habit a far-away dweller from human habitations; he cannot tolerate man or his belongings. When the shepherd with his flock enters a valley, the brown bear at once makes tracks for the opposite crest and seeks a solitude uncontaminated by man and his dumb companions.

The localities in the Astór district where markhor and ibex abound are so numerous, so well known to the local shikaries, and to several from Kashmir, that the sportsman will never have any difficulty in finding them; the earlier he goes in the season the better chances he will have of securing a good place; if he arrives somewhat late he will have to travel a good distance towards Búnji and beyond, before he will get a vacant valley. Again, if he goes *very late*, i.e., towards the end of the season, he will find many good *nális* (valleys) available, but the game will be hard to find and most difficult to circumvent.

As regards markhor the shooting grounds are divided into two distinct portions in Astór proper by the river of that name. First, the range of mountains that begins from the Nunga Parbat peak and runs down directly north to the junction of the river with the Indus, below Ramghat. The watershed of this range on the west is into the Indus, on the east into the Astór river. The whole length may be about 30 miles; the side valleys 10 and 15 miles. Those running down to the Astór river are not good for markhor, and are seldom visited by sportsmen; but the valleys on the opposite side towards the Indus are sure to yield trophies, the best that are to be

found in this country. The Búldar, however, is the only one that can be visited; it runs into the Indus a little below the point where this river takes a turn at right angles to the west. Several branches flow from the glaciers and form the main stream lower down. It contains a greater extent of shooting ground than any other valley in Astór, but is most difficult of access. Firstly there is no road to the valley; it must be entered by a path from the Astór river side after a difficult climb, or by the Huttú Pir which is a longer way. Secondly, the valley is scarcely within Kashmir boundaries, and the officials are always reluctant to assist sportsmen to get there for fear of complications with the tribes just across the Indus—nevertheless, it is sure to be occupied very early in the season. The large village of Ghór is just opposite the opening of the Búldar; the slopes of both valleys can be minutely examined, even by the naked eye, from either side, and the inhabitants of that village are a notorious and turbulent lot. Even if the diplomatic sportsman can “arrange” matters with the Wazir at Astór, it is certain that the latter will pester him with messages to the effect that some disturbance has occurred across the river, and that the gentleman had better return. The markhor in the Búldar are disturbed the least of all, as it is no man’s land and is seldom visited. For this reason large heads there, are a certain find. Second, the range of mountains that culminates above the Parishing stream, and running down first in a north-westerly direction and then in a southerly direction, past Búnji, ends in the loop formed by the Indus opposite the village of Haramosh. The watershed of this range is on the south-west into the Astór, and on the north-east into the Indus from Rondú

in Baltistan downwards. The whole length is about 50 miles. The valleys on either slope are numerous, but they are not of much length and are generally confined. Those on the Astór side are the most known, and have been shot over so much year after year that a good head, say over 40 inches, has become a rarity. The animals have no refuge on this side as they have in the Búldar on the opposite range. They are constantly harried, not only by sportsmen from Kashmir, but by every local shikari who has a gun, by shepherds wandering with their flocks, and by sepoy's from the garrisons at Astór and Búnji, and the troops passing up and down this route. Most of the shooting is done by the natives during the winter time and by the European sportsmen during the summer months; as usual the former never spare the females,—the markhor are thus slaughtered all the year round in these Astór valleys without any intermission. It is no matter for surprise, therefore, that good heads have disappeared. The following valleys are the best known on the Astór river side:—

- (1.) The Garai and Amátabar.
- (2.) Dichal.
- (3.) Shaltar.
- (4.) Dachnar, Dachkat or Missigan.
- (5.) The Búnji valley.

The first is a short valley that can be reached from the Astór fort in a day. There is not more than a week's shooting in it. The second (Dichal), is nearly opposite the village of Daskin, which is on the left bank of the river, and the first day's march from Astór. This is the largest valley on the south-western slope of the range; it

has extensive grounds, and is certain to be occupied at the beginning of the season. It is not easily accessible as the river divides it from the high road. The third (Shaltar), though a small valley, has a good name for large heads. It is difficult of access but is always taken up early. The fourth (Dachnar, Dachkat or Missigan) is to the north of Rámghat; the stream, on its way to the Astór, is crossed by the Búnji road about a mile or more from the Rámghat bridge. Ward, in his sketch map, facing page 16, has named this ravine Dachnár and has called another Masken, (Missigan,) on the reverse (S. E.) slope of the same range. This seems to be a mistake. Dachnar and Dachkat mean the same thing, *i.e.*, grape valley, the name given to it by Kashmiris from the circumstance of a wild vine growing there which yields a small white grape. Missigan is the local name. It is a short valley, and is so accessible that much shooting in it need not be expected. The next shooting ground is the Búnji Valley, divided from the Missigan by an ugly stony plain, six miles in extent. The markhor here are few and the heads are small. It is quite shot out.

On the Indus side, or N.-E. slope of this range, the shooting grounds are as follows:—

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| (1.) Jachi.  | (3.) Baltari   |
| (2.) Daroth. | (4.) Ballachi. |

They are all marked on Ward's sketch map. The Ballachi has the reputation of being the best shooting ground. None of them are so much frequented as the vallies on the S.-W. slopes; a determined sportsman, crossing over from the Astór side, would have more chances of obtaining good heads in them than in the overrun ravines he leaves behind him.

Strictly speaking, these are the only markhor grounds in the Astór district. But the game may be found during the end of the season, round the broad base of Nanga Parbut, and in plenty in the Damót and Jagót valleys across the Indus, opposite Búnji. Behind Nanga Parbut, in the direction of Chilás between the Indus and the Kashmir border, are good grounds. But the Kashmir officials are unwilling to allow European sportsmen to occupy these grounds for reasons already given, and the British Resident at Kashmir generally limits the wanderings of his countrymen in this direction by ruling that the Kashmir border shall be the boundary of their excursions. From the Lolosar lake on the road to Chilás to the bend in the Indus below Rámghat, is a distance of 70 or 80 miles. The frontier line runs along the water parting of the range. The Indus is about 15 or 20 miles from it. The valleys that drain this extent of country have, I believe, (with the exception of the Búldar) never yet been visited by any European sportsman. I have received information that this is A.1. ground for large heads. The first adventurer who can overcome the difficulties and undoubted dangers that surround this bit of country, and can there spend, say, ten days with his rifle among the markhor, will certainly be able to show an array of heads that he may will be proud of. *Verbum sap.*

Of course there is a large extent of markhor country in the neighbourhood of the Astór district; but my business is with the latter only. Ward's most useful book gives all the information that a sportsman could desire for other localities.

It should be taken for granted that ibex will always be found where markhor abound, only at a much higher



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elevation. They are numerous on all the higher ranges and can be hunted in many localities on the route from Kashmir to Astór, Búnji and beyond.

Urin are found from the Búnji plain along the range on the left bank of the Astór, across the lower slopes of the Nanga Parbat, above Chhagam, and as far as the Mír Malik valley. I do not think they wander beyond this river. They are restless animals, and are on the move constantly backwards and forwards between the limits named. They spend their winter in the Búnji plain and the low hills in its neighbourhood. As summer approaches they wander up the spurs from the Hattú Pass, proceed along that range, round by the base of Nanga Parbut, as far as the Mir Malik. They reverse this order on the approach of the cold months. These journeys are regularly performed by well known pathways; in consequence, the patient local sportsmen lie out for them at favorable points along the route, and many are bagged without any exertion or trouble. The Kotwal of Búnji (son of Wazir Rozi Khan) is a well known hand at this kind of pot shooting.

Brown bears are most numerous in the upper valleys of Astór to the south along the routes leading from Gurés to that District. They are scarce in the markhor grounds.

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## CHAPTER III.

### *Journal.*

A GENEROUS GOVERNOR having granted three months' "privilege" leave (after the submission of a medical statement cataloguing all my bodily ailments and asseverating that the indulgence was necessary to my health), behold this ardent sportsman on his way to the hunting grounds beyond the vale of Kashmir. It takes thirty-three months continuous service in this land of the sun to earn this indulgence. The cares of office fell from my shoulders on a day in April and I felt as light as Christian when *his* load fell off. The human effluvium of an Indian Court would no more offend my nostrils for three months at least, and its, almost as thick, moral atmosphere would no more harrow my soul. What jaded Indian official has not experienced the same sense of relief as he sped on the wings of the flying train towards the blue mountains in the distance.

My stay in Rawalpindi was just long enough to enable me to swallow a cup of tea and transfer myself to a hill cart, when I was off again to Murree. Seven hours afterwards I was breathing the pure mountain air of that favourite Punjab sanitarium and felt my spirits rise at each inhalation. My plans had been well arranged previously, and there was no delay. I slept for the night at Roburg's Hotel (the best in the station) and early next morning was astride a very small pony, almost extinguished under a huge cavalry saddle and going down the Kashmir road at the

small creature's best pace. That night I slept at *Chhattar*, the third stage from Murree, having caught up my traps and solitary servant on the way. I was on the road again next morning by four o'clock, and, taking the short cut *over* the range, instead of going *round* it by the regular road, made Gurhi by 2 P.M., having by this flank march of 16 miles accounted for three more stages on my way to the valley. The path was rough like most short cuts. A stream has to be waded through twice; then there is a steady ascent for about four miles, several miles more of somewhat level country at the top of the range and a sudden descent to the Gurhi bungalow of a couple of miles more. The next day I could only manage two stages, as coolies for the baggage were procured with difficulty and delay at each stage. The following day, however, I made up for lost time by hard going for fifteen hours and reached Bara Mula at 5 P.M., my traps coming in an hour after. It is quite possible to make the journey from Murree to Bara Mula in two days with the aid of the Maharaja's ponies, now supplied at each stage, but to accomplish it in that time the traveller's baggage must be sent ahead several days before he himself starts.

At Bara Mula I was met by the ever-obliging Bahár Sháh, Banker of Srinagar, the Shikari whom I had engaged by post, and all the appliances necessary for my shooting trip; a boat too was ready. By the time I had arranged my business with Bahár Sháh, the most important part of which was the exchange of several notes for coin, the things had come up, and, an hour after, I had stepped into the boat and we were slowly poled up the Jhelum by the boatman and his family. A few miles further on we came-to for the night. Next morning early we had

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passed Sopar and were floating on the broad bosom of the Wúlar lake. We crossed without any accident, and the boat reached Bandpura by half past one in the afternoon. As this is the point from which the journey to my hunting ground begins I now take to my journal.

*25th April.*—Left Bandpura at 6 A. M.; delayed on the road for coolies and “rasad” (rations) for my men. Improved the time by visiting a “Globe trotter” encamped in an apple orchard a little off the road. The gentleman and his “pal,” who was out shooting, were on their journey round the world and had taken Kashmir by the way. He was a gentleman and a decent fellow. They have been here for a month and have bagged five stags and a black bear. People say, however, that they found two of the stags buried in last winter’s snow, dug out the carcass and appropriated the heads! This is one way of making a good bag. Started from Králpura village at 9 A. M., and toiled up a steady ascent for six hours: reached Tragbal at 3-20 P. M. Snow on many spots. There is a post house here with ten men. All the level spots for a tent were covered with snow; had to pitch the tent on a very wee bit just freed from it. Began to rain as soon as we got to camping place.

*26th.*—Left at 5-45 A. M. and began ascent again; not so steep as yesterday. After going a short distance nothing but snow to be seen. The ascent was very gradual with level bits here and there. How I lingered over the level bits! The path winds along the hillside, then crosses a ridge and along the hillside again for some distance. The wind about here was very cold and trying. The descent on the other side was steeper and shorter than the ascent.

Descended for several miles along a narrow valley covered with snow. The coolies came along very slowly; waited for them several hours at a post hut, not with much patience and good humour as my breakfast was behind also! They came up at 4 P.M. I gave them no rest but a good "birching" instead, birch trees being handy for the purpose. Just after beginning descent on this side met a Punjabi fakir going to Kashmir; said he was once a Hindu and living in the Gurdáspore district. Left home twelve years ago and first went to Sind and Kandahár; turned Musalmán there from *conviction*! Lived in Kabúl some time. Wandered away again and came back by Chitral, Tangir, Gilgit and Astór. He seems to have gone crazy over religion—said he had studied them all and talked with some knowledge of the Bible and Kurán. His body, very emaciated, was covered with a tattered coat and a pair of torn pajamas; in his hand he had a very ragged cap which he never put on his head; yet he sat in the snow without any discomfort, and talked to me quite at his ease. He said he was a "Charúsi," *i. e.*, smoked charus (hemp), but that he could not always get it—this was the only regret he had. Two miles above Kauzlwán halting place Sharafa the shikári saw a brown bear on the opposite hill side, but alas! the second man with the rifle had gone on ahead! There was some excitement and bad language in consequence. It seems the birching I had given the coolies two hours previously had put so much life into them that they had gone straight ahead without a halt and I never overtook them, and the rifle-carrier was with them. Sharafa ran on for the rifle while I sat down glass in hand and watched the animal for half an hour. When the rifle arrived Sharafa

and myself made a successful stalk and got within 40 yards of the animal. I hit her (it was a female) on the point of her left shoulder but rather low. The bullet smashed the fore-leg, split up and then made a big hole in her side. The bear fell back off the rock she had just mounted, stood for a moment very sick, then collapsed and rolled down the hillside on to the snow at the bottom of the valley—dead. This is my first shot with the new .450 Henry Express; I had not fired even at a mark with it. The whole business did not take 15 minutes from the time the rifle came up. It was getting late, camp was some distance off, so we had to do everything at best pace. The bear was a small one but full grown, very thin but with splendid fur. Left second shikári to skin her and went on. The coolies had been told to halt at Kanzlwán, but on reaching this spot I found they had gone on to Bagtor village, three miles down the Krishenganga. That switching had put perpetual motion into them. It was getting dark fast, so taking a glance round we started again. Kanzlwán is a triangular plain where the stream of the valley, down which we came, joins the Krishenganga river. It must be a very pretty meadow later on. The road here splits into two branches. The one up the river leads to Gúrés, the regular but longest road to Astór. The one down the river leads to the Gugai valley, a much shorter road, but it is not open for travellers till late in the season. We made for Bagtór as fast as possible, but night soon moderated our pace. Passed five lagging coolies. The path ascends a little and then passes through a plain which must be a large and lovely meadow later in the season; just now it is boggy and wet, and I floundered over it in the dark in very great ill humour.

There was a dense forest of fine trees to my left, on the edge of the meadow, that lent a greater gloom to the darkening dusk. Little rivulets of snow water had to be jumped every ten minutes; the rushing Krishenganga was on my right a good distance below, and the path very often led along the edge of the steep slope that overhung the river. A false jump, and I should have been well soaked in very cold water, or a slip on the path and I should have rolled down to the river—perhaps into it! My steps were therefore cautiously taken and my jumps well calculated by the aid of my alpenstock before they were effected. A twinkling light in the distance was a most welcome sight; I believed myself to be near the village, but it turned out to be a little boy with a pine torch thoughtfully sent out by the good old lambardár. The village was yet a good distance off. Reached the village at 9 P.M. The tent was with the lagging coolies—so opened out my bedding on a bed of grass. Something to eat and a glass of whisky soon put me in good spirits. I had been going from 5 in the morning to 9 at night, and was not particular as to *how* I got some rest as long as I got it. All the blankets were piled over me and the waterproof sheet over all. It was a fine clear starlight night, but the stars did not interest me in the least, and I was soon asleep.

27th.—Abdúllah Därd is the headman of Bagtór and some other villages lower down; a good, obliging man, very fond of his educated son who was taught Persian in Srinagar, and very anxious to show off his learning on all occasions; he too is a very obliging and willing young fellow with a slight cast in his left eye. Six coolies are to be changed here. Bagtór is at the end of the level

plain I came over last night. Started at 6 A.M. and went along left bank of Krishenganga, a lovely stream with splendid bits of scenery along it. The path is rough owing to fallen trees, rocks, etc. Ibex are said to frequent the range across the river. After about four miles, crossed to the right bank, over a very springy bridge, river flowing very level and silent all the way. After going about a mile came to level ground again with splendid scenery on all sides. Three miles further crossed a small ridge leaving Krishenganga on the left, and after some more level forest (very pleasant at midday) came to the bridge over the Gagai stream. Crossed and have just had breakfast here. Some delay about coolies. The Gagai stream flows into the Krishenganga a little below the bridge. Sharofa says the forests about Bagtór are firstrate for stags when the calling season begins. He says from the 15th September to the 15th October is the proper calling time. The stags begin to call as they start from their summer quarters in the valleys on the right bank of this river about the 15th September. They take about three weeks to reach the Kashmir valley, calling all the way, so that by the 5th October the calling is nearly over. The best way to get stags is to reach their summer quarters about 15th September, and then keep along with them all the calling time till they reach the valley. It is a mistake to *wait* for them there. Had nine trial shots with the .450 Henry at a mark at 100 yards. From a rest—the accuracy is perfect, recoil not disagreeable even at a mark—did not feel it at all when firing at the bear! No coolies, so pitched tent near the bridge; second shikári laid up with two boils on his back and a sore foot, so paid him off and discharged him. A second man



is not necessary until you get to the 'shooting ground, and then as a local man has to be employed to show the ground, he can also carry the spare rifle.

28th.—Started at 5-15 A.M.; went up Gagai stream for one and a half miles and came to a gentleman's tent who has been here more than a month and has shot only a young bear! He has a bad leg and cannot get about. He was not at home when I passed. Went on and came to a *pole* bridge—a fine sapling of very narrow girth indeed, and the further end even still narrower and very *elastic*! Some coolies passed over, load and all splendidly; some very badly. Sharofa was A-1.; he went over many times carrying loads; my turn came last. Sharofa came to help (very unnecessarily) and took my hand. Half way the sapling began to spring up and down at a great rate and I lost my balance. Tight-rope dancing was nothing to this! Sharofa went clean over into the stream and was carried away a couple of yards but soon recovered his legs. I clung on with arms and legs, under the sapling, like a monkey! Sharofa came up, and with his help I got on the right side of the bridge again at the expense of some skin and the seat of my bags; *rode the rest of the bridge*, pushing and sliding myself along; only my cap got a wetting; but Sharofa was drenched through and got a knock on his head and left hip. He was in a sad plight as the water was very cold; it was early morning and there was no sun; we had to make a fire for him, but I think he deserved the ducking; if he had not been so officious I would have got over by myself without any mishap. Turned at a small stream called the Chhota (small) Gagai; crossed another pole bridge, much narrower than the first one, but shorter with *very little spring* in

it. The Nálí (valley) narrowed gradually, was full of snow and had a gentle ascent. Rocks and rocky ridges on either side, very ibex-looking, but it is too late in the season for them to be found near the path now. They are no doubt grazing higher up and out of sight. Halted at 10 A. M. for breakfast. After an hour went straight up the valley again, winding and ascending, snow all the way. The rocks and narrow gullies A-1. for ibex, but none to be seen. No bears even. Reached Barzil at 3-10 P. M. and camped on the snow. This is the foot of the Gagai pass. The dâk coolies of *five* sahibs are with me, going up to Astór and beyond. Wind and some snow in the evening, and very cold. It always gets like this at 4 P. M. in this valley but clears up at 8 o'clock.

*29th.*—Left Barzil at 5-5 A. M. Went up straight some distance, then turned up to the left, ascent all the way. Then a long and stiff ascent that I thought was the top of the Pass, but I was badly sold! It was only a ridge; from this there is a slight descent into a level valley round to the right, then another stiff ascent, and ridge No. 2 is reached. The level valley is bounded by rocky ridges and peaks on both sides. Snow everywhere. Another stiff ascent, turning gradually to the right, leading up to ridge No. 3; then a gentle ascent, still going towards the right, and ridge No. 4; another slight slope upward, and *then* the top of the Pass! A few naked rocks on the crest which come into view right in front, a short distance from the top, mark the Pass. Snowy peaks all round: reached at 10 A. M. Descent down the other side is very sharp for a short distance; slid down and nearly obliterated the Colonel of a British regiment! I thought him one of the coolies, and took no further notice till he

sent after me his salám! Lay down alongside of him, and had a talk. After a time he proceeded up and I proceeded down. Descent very gradual after the first dip, and winding right and left; snow very deep and everywhere nothing else visible. It began to snow towards evening, and got very cold. Reached Riát camping ground at 5-30 P.M. Snow increasing, and wind very cutting. Got tent up somehow on the snow in a young birch forest; very uncomfortable. Riát is a small plain with a little birch forest on it; it must be a pretty place a month hence. Trees (pines and birches) appear here for the first time from last camping place. "Barzil" means "birch trees" simply.

*30th April.*—It must have snowed for several hours! Had to get the snow shaken off the tent twice during the night. The morning light shows a splendid winter scene. The branches of the leafless birch trees (to the smallest of them) are beautifully ornamented with a snowy dressing, each branch standing out distinctly from its fellows. An hour's sun and this fairy scene will vanish. Awoke at 4 A.M., and shouted for the "Khidmatgar" (table servant). I did this several times, and always got a muffled reply, "coming," as if from the depths of a dozen blankets or 10 feet of snow. I began to get alarmed, but the rascal had not been snowed up. He was too comfortable in his blankets to get up in a hurry! I came to that conclusion, and dozed off again. At 5 o'clock appeared Sharofa. Packing was a terrible business with everything frozen. The tent was as stiff as a board, and would have stood up without the help of ropes and pegs. Managed to get off at 6 A.M. About a foot of snow must have fallen last night, measuring with the point of my alpenstock. The

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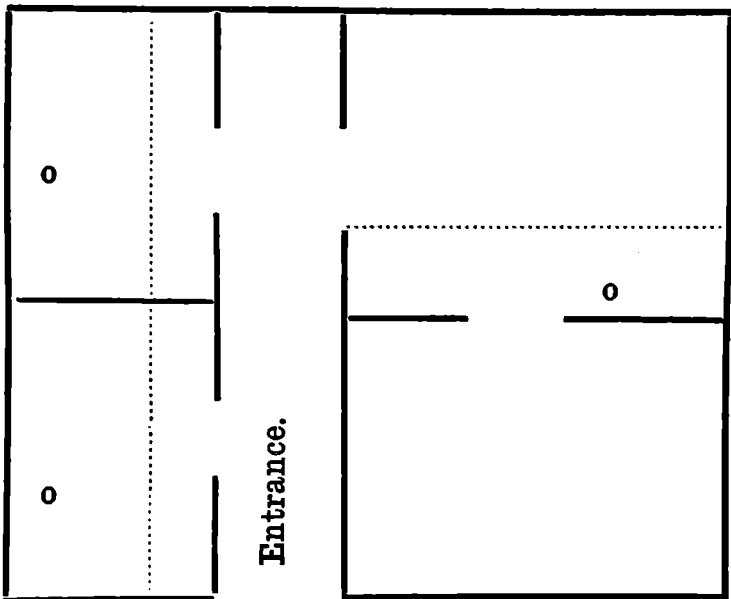
travelling in it was difficult and dreadfully slow. The valley still descends gradually. At 10-30 came at last to Loyán-hurrar, a pretty plain. A large stream runs through it which I at first took to be the Astór river; but the map shows that river further north, this only is a tributary: comparing both, however, in the map, this one seems to be the largest of the two; another stream runs down into the river between it, and the valley down which I have just come. This plain must look splendid when the snow is off and spring in full swing; just now it is one sheet of snow with a few pines sticking out of it here and there, no forests visible anywhere yet. The stream is crossed by a bridge. Had breakfast, and went on to Marmai. The regular road by Gûrés passes over the bridge, so I am now on the beaten track, and I hope all the roughest travelling is over. Marmai is the first village in the valley. The coolies from Thobat (the village near the bridge on the Gugai where I was delayed) changed here; but there was, as usual, more difficulty in getting fresh men. Marmai is a collection of three miserable huts. When I arrived it was in possession of women and children only, not a male visible. Such an assortment of old hags it has never been my misfortune to see collected together before; in particular one who grew a grey beard of which no man need have been ashamed, neither was she! The beard was dominated by a hooked nose and the face clothed in a corrugated species of leather, the furrows on which were well manured by, I should say, a century of dirt. Manure was certainly not scarce round the village, else so much of it would as certainly not have been allowed to go waste. The old woman was so much out of the common that the curiosity of the fagged coolies of my party was excited,

and every one of them went round the corner and had a good stare at her, returning with an amazed look on his countenance which was at last dissolved in a broad grin and loud guffaw as the sublimity of the hag's ugliness penetrated his dull comprehension! Three or four young women were comely, and but for the hereditary dirt would be pleasant objects to look at. They wear a curious woollen hood with a broad metal button at the end, and a loose woollen sack dress down to the heels. This is their full costume. The dress is worn till it rots away from the body—a process of decomposition that was visible in many parts of the fair one's garments before me. I fancy one woollen shirt must last the wearer her lifetime. No man being visible and time pressing, active measures were restored to. A burly Kashmiri “Dâkwálá” (postman) belonging to a gentleman shooting in Astór, and who was accompanying my party, was most useful. Former experience through a long series of years had made him familiar with the proper *modus operandi* in such circumstances, and he came to the front naturally. He at first gently appealed to all the women to say where the men were; he was answered most energetically and in full chorus, that all the adults were away; the “Makadam” (headman) had gone to one village, the “Kótwál” (village watchman) to another. The dâkwálá looked incredulous; but to avoid hurting the feelings of the ladies did not express himself; he simply dived into the huts, and made a search. He was unsuccessful. Another appeal to the ladies, but this time in more determined language, and addressed particularly to the “Bai” Makadam (Mrs. Makadam), the best looking of the lot. This harangue took some time and was eloquent enough to touch the heart even of the Bai. She

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went to the entrance of the huts and shouted, "Kirim Khán come out," and out in a second came Kirim Khán, a stalwart youth clothed in woollen rags and rather a sheepish look. Amazement and satisfaction mingled in the smile that spread over the broad features of the dákwálá; he had just that moment searched the three huts and found no one. Hope now rose high in our hearts, especially in those of the tired Thobat coolies, and we made certain, very unreasonably, that a sufficient number of men to carry us on were concealed in the huts, but we were disappointed. Kirim Khán was a big-boned strong young fellow with reddish hair and honest brown eyes, a thorough-bred Dãrd. He enjoyed the situation as well as any one of us, and set about his task of a beast of burden with great good humour. It was as good as a play to him, and he had been an actor in the same part I should say many times before the present one. As no more men could be drawn from the cavernous depths of the huts, Mrs. Makadam was induced to despatch Kirim to bring her husband (the Makadam) from the next village; and we rested on the house tops, about four feet above the level of the ground. The coolies were talking to the women; suddenly a whisper went round that men were concealed in the huts below! Excitement ensued, a general rush was made into the huts and another man brought out! He came resigned to his fate, and fell to mending his leather stockings at once. Shortly after, some more whispering with the women, another rush to the huts, and another man was brought up to daylight. It was now whispered that the Makadam himself was concealed below! This was too much for me. I lighted the lantern, and myself went down and explored the nether regions. But

there were no more discoveries; the human mine was exhausted. These poor wretches exist in a most extraordinary fashion, as nearly like the brute creation as possible. The village consists of three houses (families I suppose), and the following is the ground plan: One roof covers the whole village; the entrance only is open to the sky. The walls are about four feet high; the eaves sloping down almost to the level of the ground.



The three points marked *o* are holes in the roof for letting out the smoke from the hearth below. The dotted lines mark a stick partition running the length of the room, dividing it into two. In the back portion the family live, and keep their chattels; the front portion is the resting place for the cattle, cows, sheep, goats, and tattoos. The entrance is a shining cesspool into which runs the liquid muck from the inner rooms. The cattle room is ankle deep in filth, and must be waded through to get to the human dwelling places beyond. It is hardly possible to imagine the state of existence that must be the lot of these people during the eight months of winter, when

they must lie buried several yards below the surface of the snow. I explored one room, and gave it up; the stench inside was suffocating. I am sure *one hour* in there, even at this time of the year, would be certain death to any European. My search for the Makadam was a very short one indeed, and he was not within after all. The Kótwál appeared after a time from a village across the river. The burly "dâkwálá" pounced on him at once, tied his arms behind his back, and belaboured him on his posteriors with his alpenstock till he was tired. After this preliminary he spoke to him. The matter-of-fact way in which the Kótwál took this punishment was most extraordinary; *he was evidently quite used to it!* With his arms tied, he was sent down to the river bank opposite the next village to shout for coolies. Shortly after appeared the Makadam with two men. Still there were not sufficient men for the loads. I was therefore obliged to make the Makadam and Kótwál carry a load each as the sun was setting, and I was determined to make at least five miles more before halting for the night. These two men had not gone a mile when two others came running up from the next village and relieved them of their loads! This is how we travel in this part of the world. Reached Diril village at 6-30; was delayed more than two hours at Marmai. The people of this latter place are said to be Shías—rafizis, heretics, and not Músalmáns; and are evidently treated in the manner described above by the orthodox Kashmírís from the valley as a matter of religious duty. They are said not to be Dārds, but emigrants from Baltistan who have settled in this valley.

*1st May.*—Left Diril at 5-30 A. M.; got to Chhagám at 12-45. Same difficulty again about coolies but no delay.



Some distance from Diril the road crosses the river and goes along the left bank. Forgot to mention yesterday that just before coming to Diril there is a steep descent to a stream running into the river, and a corresponding ascent to the village on the other side. This is the first valley from the *right* that sheds its waters into the main stream. The right of the main valley is bounded by a high mountain range without valleys or "nális" of any sort; while on the left several large valleys run down to the river. The contrast is very marked. After crossing the bridge and going some distance down the left bank, turned a shoulder and came on to "Gabar maidan" (fire-worshippers' plain?), a curious undulating plain running down towards Chhagám; the road passed over it. An open and level valley, the "Mír Malik," comes down to the river from the left. It is a pretty looking valley and a good find I am told for bears and "úriál" (wild sheep). Gabar means "fireworshippers"—were they ever here? From Chhagám the river takes a sharp turn to the right, going completely round the spur of the range on its right bank. The range ends abruptly in this bend. Just opposite, on the left bank, is the mouth of the Rúpil Náli (valley) running down from Nanga Parbat, of which a grand view can be obtained from the bridge which spans the muddy stream. Ibex are said to be found now up this valley and markhor later in the season. Reached Rúpil bridge at 2-30 P.M. There is a penal settlement of Kashmiris a little distance up this valley; they are called "Galwáns." These people gave so much trouble in the Valley stealing ponies that the Máhárájá banished them to this spot, under the shadow of the naked mountain, several years ago. Reached Gúrikót at 7 P.M., a very hot

march from Chhagám. Rózi Khan, Wazír of Astór, has his house and family here, as Astór is not a nice place to live in.

*2nd May.*—As soon as I arrived last night I sent for Rózi Khán to arrange my shooting trip; but he had gone to Astór. In his stead came his little son with a tray of sweets and a “Samovár” of hot tea—quite the Central Asian custom—which brought home to me, very pleasantly, that I was now some distance from Hindustan and its exclusive customs. Rózi Khán has an older son who is Thándár (Police officer) of Astór, so that the Civil Government of this district is exclusively in the hands of this family. Left Gúrikát at 5-10 A.M., got to Astór at 9. Met on the road a young officer of a British Regiment returning from his shooting. He had bagged six markhor; very good heads they seemed to me, but he said he was not satisfied and was afraid his Colonel (the gentleman I met on the pass) would not be very well pleased with him! Soon after my arrival Rózi Khán paid me a visit and we had a long talk. He promised me a good man and a good place for a certain consideration, which I agreed to on the stipulation that I was satisfied with my sport. The fort of Astór is on the edge of a deep ravine, at the bottom of which flows a stream. The road from Gúrikát descends to the water, and there is a very stiff pull up again to the fort. A small tank lies in front of the fort gate; a few poplars shade its banks. On the other two sides are the houses and huts of the garrison. My tent is pitched on the right bank of the tank, a narrow place not ten feet wide. There is a ravine close by where the sanitary arrangements of the cantonment are very much neglected; consequently my camping place is

not an agreeable one. The fort was taken by the Sikhs from the Dārds in the usual treacherous style common among Asiatics. Rájáh Gúláb Singh's besieging force could make no impression on it for a long time. The Dārd Rajah was then beguiled by solemn promises to give himself up. As soon as he passed through his fort-gate he was made a prisoner, and the fort entered. The Rájáh has a "jágír" (a grant of villages) now and still resides in Astór. Received a second visit from Rózi Khán in the evening. He is a stout middle-sized man, beyond middle age and of a dark complexion, with the manner and deportment of a native gentleman. His ancestors came from Kabúl some generations ago and settled in Gáres. His grandfather migrated from that valley and settled in Gúrikót; Rózi Khán is a well educated and intelligent gentleman. Has travelled about this frontier a good deal, and has a very exceptional knowledge of the peoples and countries beyond the Maharajah's territories. For any political work in that direction he would be most useful, and I think could be trusted. His salary as Wazir, or Deputy Commissioner of this district, is Rs. 60 a month, besides four villages in jagir. He has two wives—one of them, the favorite, bears the reputation of being a very wise and able woman and helps her husband, the Wazir, a great deal, with her wise counsels in the affairs of the country. The good effect of her influence has been recognized by the Maharajah who pays her a salary of Rs. 40 a month. Here are some new ideas of administration for the Government of India. Even Mr. Seymour Keay would not object to Civil Officers in India receiving Rs. 60 a month as a recompense for their services, and what an original and graceful way of recognizing the good manage-

ment of a district by subsidizing the wife of the successful administrator! It would also be a premium on marriage, ensure dual control, and be a soothing concession to the raging lionesses of women's rights in the old country! Altogether the idea is a good one and worthy of consideration, and I make a present of it to Lord Dufferin and his wise Council. Rózi Khán has given me his own shikári. "Gharíb Káká," who will show me the best ground; but I doubt it as he intends taking me to some nálá close by; however I will soon know. I have promised him a good present if I am well pleased.

*3rd May.*—Left Astór at 5-15 A.M., and came along the Búnjí road down the left bank of the river; crossed by a bridge to right bank, went along it some distance, as far as another bridge, and then went straight up hill. After a long ascent came to the Garai Nala: went up some distance and then camped. Reached at 12 o'clock. This is the place said to contain large markhor. It looks gamey, but I do not believe that large horns are to be found here. I shall know to-morrow. Sharafa told me to-day the story of "Bhúp Singh's Parhi" or rock. This is a large flat rock on the road from Búnjí to Gilgit on the Gilgit river. It overhangs the bank, and a large number of men can obtain shelter under it. Bhúp Singh was a Colonel in Gúláb Singh's service, and had a thousand men under his command whom he was taking to Gilgit. He camped under the flat rocks for the night; next morning he found himself blocked up in this rat trap *by three Dãrd brothers*—rebels. These three brave men kept the Colonel and his regiment shut in for several days. At last, after a parley, Bhúp Singh and his men were allowed to come out on condition of leaving their arms behind: All did so

except two "Púrbiás" (southerners\*) who refused to give up their arms. The unarmed men being well away from the rocks, were surrounded by the three brothers and their retainers who butchered them on the spot! The two Púrbiás jumped into the river with their swords and swam down to Búnjí, the only survivors of Bhúp Singh's regiment. One of the three brothers who planned this massacre is still alive and living in his village.†

As I am now on my shooting ground, and will begin operations to-morrow, this is the proper place to notice my shooting establishment. I have brought with me only one

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\* Men from Hindustan.

† To show how tradition garbles facts I append here an extract from Drew giving an authentic account of this bloody business. "Bhúp Singh, hearing this sudden attack of Gour Rahman on the Gilgit fort in 1852, advanced to their relief with some 1,200 men. He crossed Nila Dhar, the ridge, which separates the Se and Gilgit valleys, and had reached the bank of the Gilgit river where there is a narrow space between the water and the natural cliff; the path here rises from the level of the stream to an alluvial platform, two or three hundred feet above it, a narrow *gully*, but here found the road stopped by the enemy; the Dárds had barricaded every possible channel of access; they had built sangars or stone-breast-works across every *gully* that led to the higher ground. And the Dárds had also managed by passing along difficult mountain paths to get to the rear of the Dogras, so that their retreat by the way they had come was made difficult with their advance. The river by their side was swift and deep; there was no hope to be gained from that; at the same time the Hunza people assembled with adverse interest on the left bank opposite, within gunshot. In short Bhup Singh was caught in a trap. Thus encircled, he was helpless unless by main force he could push his way up one of the defiles.

"The Dárds then began to play the game of double dealing in which they are adepts. They promised Bhup Singh provisions. In fact of these he was quite short, and a safe passage back, if he would agree to retire. This he consented to do, and he waited for days in the hope of food coming. The Dárds kept him in expectation and fed his hopes: we might fancy that they had learnt a lesson from Akbar Khan of Kabul. Thus for several days the Dogras were kept without food; and only then, when they were so reduced in strength as to be helpless, did the enemy begin their attack. The Hunza people fired from the left bank while Gour Rahman's army sent from the summits of the alluvial cliffs close above, a storm of bullets and stones that soon overwhelmed the force. Near a thousand died on the spot, a hundred or two were taken prisoners and sold into slavery."—*Our Northern Barrier*.

servant from the plains—a khidmatgár (table servant), a weak-kneed and slim young man, a follower of the Prophet; this has been his first experience in snow travelling and he does not like it. The night he spent in the snowstorm at Riát, he says was the most wretched he has experienced in his life! He is in great awe of the shikári Sharofa, whom he calls Bara Míán (Great Sir), and treats him with the greatest respect. He addresses the coolies as “my brother” whenever he asks them to mend their pace or do anything for him. In consequence they laugh in his face! Altogether he has had a bad time of it, and seems completely out of his element. I have given him an old cloth coat and a pair of warm pants; he wears them without alteration and they are of course a very bad fit; but they clothe him with a certain air of importance. With a blue pugri round his head and a pair of blue goggles over his eyes, to protect them from the snow, he has the appearance of a decayed Persian gentleman travelling (not) for pleasure. His solemn countenance and slow progression as he treads the mountain path make it very evident that he is now passing through the most serious moments of his life, and I have often turned aside for a quiet laugh at his *tout ensemble* and fish-out-of-the-water kind of look. Sharofa shikári, however, should have claimed my attention first as he is certainly the first gentleman in the play. I engaged him a month before my expedition began, on the recommendation of the author of that most useful book to the Kashmir sportsman—“The Sportsman’s Guide to Kashmir,” and I have to thank him for this good selection, as well as for the readiness with which he gave me very valuable information. Sharofa is a handsome man, tall and well made, and very gentle, manly in his

bearing and manners. He has a pair of honest soft brown eyes that inspire confidence when you look into them. He has a good temper and great tact, and can manage the coolies and people of the country in a manner that I have not seen excelled by any Kashmiri shikári. I was a witness of his good nature at the sapling bridge where he and I came to grief. He carried over the loads of several coolies who could not face the springy log and helped over others by holding their hands and guiding them across. It remains to be seen whether he is equally good in his professional work. The next in importance is Gharib "Káká," (or old cock Gharíb,) the Wazir's pet shikári. He is a small slightly built man, passed middle age, weak looking, and troubled just now with a bad cough. The most remarkable features about him are his bushy eyebrows and keen steady looking eyes that belong only to the born shikári. He has two weaknesses—he is very garrulous and is too fond of the *húká* (native pipe). The latter is a bond of union between him and my table servant; they have therefore cottoned together. No one else in camp smokes. Gharíba is a Därd and has accompanied other sportsmen after markhor; his local knowledge will be most useful. The Wazir has also given me a sipáhí (soldier) to look after supplies for my camp—a most useful arrangement that saves me much trouble. Manawar Khán is a Kashmiri, and has a thorough knowledge of the country and villages on my route. I have brought nine coolies from Kashmir to carry the baggage at a monthly rate of Rs. 5 per man. Only two of them deserve any particular mention as they have turned out to be most useful. Jamálá (or "Jamal dín" as he is called when he stands on his dignity) has been appointed "tiffin coolie."

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He is to accompany me, when after game, carrying the food for the day, spare grass shoes, etc. Jáfár Bata has been appointed Bhisti (water-carrier), and general assistant to the table servant. He is a strong square-built man with a determined countenance, and a bullying deportment that has naturally brought him to the front. The others are mere baggage animals. My camp equipage consists of a small tent 6 feet square for myself, and a smaller one for the servant and cooking operations. When starting from Bandpura I found the carriage difficulty so pressing, even at that early stage of my journey, that I left my camp-bed, table and chair at that village in charge of the Thékádar (contractor), who provides travellers with supplies. I had to leave there also all my tinned provisions and others superfluities that I should not have brought to Kashmir at all. Regarding the tinned provisions I entered into an ingenious arrangement with the said Thékádar, or rather his son a smart young man. On every tin I wrote in Persian as plainly as I could the name of the eatable inside. I then made two lists—one I gave to the Thékádar and one I kept myself. I then arranged that I would send a list of the things I wanted by the hand of the Dâkwálá (postman, who was engaged to bring out my letters, etc., every fortnight or so), and that the Thékádar was to send me the tins with the same names written on them when my postman returned. In this way I lightened my baggage considerably, and at the same time will always have, I hope, a sufficient supply of provisions with me. To return to my camp. My bedding is placed in the centre of the tent; it is then thoroughly furnished; my necessaries are contained in three waterproof ruchsacks or Swiss shooting bags (most convenient things for this kind



of work). I have not a single box of any kind with me excepting one containing a small spirit stove for tea, etc. The provisions and cooking apparatus are carried in kiltás (wicker baskets covered with leather) and are kept in the servants' tent. These kiltás are the weak point in my arrangements; they are too large and heavy; the coolies are always shirking them and their weight delays the pace of the other men; the men carrying them always come in last. My tent is generally pitched in the most level spot to be found, and the cooking tent on one side. The shikáris and coolies put up wherever they can find shelter, but very often they sleep out in the open round a blazing log fire.

*4th May.*—Started early and went up the slope just above camp; then turned down towards the Astór river and got on the ridge dividing the Garai from the Amátabar-náli; searched the opposite side of the latter ravine for a long time; saw some ibex only. The two shikaries then went further down on the Garai side. After an hour Sharofa came back and said he had marked down some markhor. I went with him, but no markhor were to be seen! Sharofa looked puzzled as he had not been away more than 15 minutes. After watching for an hour I gave it up, got a soft place and had a snooze; then breakfast. Had just finished when the markhor were seen again. They were much lower down on the same ridge that we were on. We had to watch them for a couple of hours as they were restless and could not select a place for their midday rest. They did come to an anchor at last, but in terribly difficult ground. In fact it seemed to me, unacquainted with the locality, an utter impossibility to get within shot of the animals; but Gharíb "Káká"

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was equal to the occasion. He took us back a little, and then descended below the level of the off side of the ridge, to be out of sight of the game. The going was awful—loose crumbling rocks all the way, in most places ground into gravel and sand, and the slope down which we had to slide, not walk, most abrupt. I could hardly get any footing, and the sand and the stones rolled down at every step making noise enough to frighten game away, I thought, a mile off. It took us a long time getting down; the blazing sun right overhead added to my distress. The heat was something frightful on that hill-side, and there was not a tree for shelter anywhere until we were nearly over the markhor. Came at last to some stunted pines and I made a halt at once. On again; the ground was the same crumbling stuff, and as we were now nearing our game, extra caution was necessary to prevent noise, and the going became very slow and aggravating indeed, as the stones would roll and fall, tread as lightly as I could. We did at last reach the precipices, below which we had marked down the animals. After dangerous and painful (and very cautious) craning over the brink, I saw one young markhor lying in the shade of a tree more than 200 yards off. The others, the larger ones, could not be seen—they were evidently right under us, below the precipice, and out of sight! Gharíba at last found a way down a short distance to a lower ledge and we followed. We could look straighter down from this point and saw one more. Here we had to wait patiently on the brink of a sheer precipice till the markhor moved and got into a better position. The sun was terrific, I soon gave in and went up again to the shade of the trees, though very little there was of it. After long waiting the markhor moved,

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and I went down again and got ready for my shot, but to fire down almost perpendicularly was impossible without following the bullet in person, and I was not so enthusiastic. No rest could be found for the rifle. Three of the markhor at last moved lower down and further away from the precipice. I became anxious as they were getting out of range. The *fourth* and *largest* animal, the one on whom I had set my heart, had not yet been seen. He was still lying down right below me. After screwing about and craning over I did at last see him, but my struggles on the ledge above him attracted his notice. He looked up, rose at once and ran down to the others, who also became alarmed and were quickly moving off. I was in despair, so went as close to the brink of the precipice as I dared, made Sharofa hold me by the belt behind and had a shot, standing as I was, at the last one, who was the biggest. He stood for a moment facing to my left and I fired. The bullet hit; I could see the animal's legs fly from under him, and he rolled head over heels down the hillside and fell into the ravine out of sight! I fired with very little expectation of hitting and was rather astonished at my good luck. The distance was certainly 250 yards and I used the first sight. The .450 did its duty—all honor to Henry. This is the No. 2 rifle of the pair—the same that did for the bear. This is my second shot at game and I have bagged both times! The rifle is a perfect stranger to me, and it was landed in Bombay only six weeks ago. Mr. Henry has not belied his reputation in making for me this splendid pair of weapons. Gharíba went down and brought up the head. We returned the way we came. It was a frightful pull up hill; but as we could go as we liked, heedless of the stones rolling down,

it was not so bad as the descending, but the sun, though it was evening, still punished me and I wanted a drink. Some shouting brought Jamála down, but of course he left the tea bottle above! He had to run up again for it, as I refused to stir an inch till I had a drink. Gharíba went round a corner and got some snow for himself and Sharofa. He plastered the snow on a rock facing the sun, and the water was soon dripping from it into a hollow in the rock, from which they drank, a very slow process indeed for thirsty people. I had finished all my tea by the time they had a couple of mouthfuls! I marched very contentedly back to camp; but the grass shoes had punished my feet severely. Grass shoes in this dry, stony country are certainly not the best things for hunting in. Two or three pairs get worn out in a day; they soon get loose and twist over on to the instep in a very aggravating manner, when one is walking along a hill-side.

*5th May.*—Remained in camp for the day, as my feet are sore and Sharofa has to prepare the head and skin. I measured the horns. Length, 30·5 inches; girth round the base, 11·5 inches; divergence at tip, 26 inches. The length is below the average, but the other measurements are good, and the horns are a handsome pair. I am afraid nothing larger will be found here so close to Astór. The meat was brought in to-day by the coolies. The bullet hit the markhor below the small ribs, touching the spine, which was not much injured. The shock, however, must have quite paralysed the animal. From the position of the bullet hole in the skin, it can be easily inferred that I must have fired down almost perpendicularly! We found this flock of markhor very low down, much lower than I imagined they ever went. The two largest had *white*

coats; the other two were very small and of a dark color. I got the largest of the lot. The shikaries have gone up Amátabar to-day to look for markhor. Got out rifle No. 1. I find I have been using the barrel of No. 2 on the stock of No. 1! Heard to-day that the Dichal valley is not likely to be vacant for same time, or indeed at all. Every one of the usual markhor valleys is occupied; so I shall simply have to go on and on until I come to good ground, and then occupy it. Shikarís returned in the evening saying they had seen two large markhor—one of them very old and emaciated, and with horns of three curves. I am not inclined to believe this.

*6th May.*—Rose early, and went straight up hill above camp. After a long pull got to the top of the ridge dividing the Garai from the Amátabar. After some searching with glasses the shikarís spotted a large markhor on a ridge of rocks on the opposite side of the Amátabar, but he was not the three-curved one. I never saw this animal the whole day, and for a very good reason; he was to be found only in the imaginations of my companions! Gharíba says there is no way to get at the one opposite, unless we go up a day's journey, and then come back on the other side the same distance! If we went straight down and up he would see us from his point of vantage before we had gone a hundred yards; so we have nothing to do but to watch his manners and customs during the day, in the hope that he may get into a more favorable position by evening. I have examined him carefully through the big telescope. He is not much larger than the one I have shot, but his horns may be a few inches longer. I can see plainly that they diverge *outwards* in a very remarkable way. He seems very uneasy and alarmed. He does not

feed for five minutes at a time in any one spot, but keeps to the rocks looking about, though this is his feeding time. It appears to me that there is something the matter with him. He is either ill or wounded, or has very lately been fired at. The shikaris say a shot was heard here the day we came up—most likely a shepherd's. Saw a flock of ibex higher up the valley, but no big horns. In these valleys the wind blows *upwards* from sunrise to sunset, the reverse way during the night. Sharofa has studied this part of his work thoroughly, and is always correct in his conclusions regarding the wind's direction. Ibex are always found higher up the valleys than markhor. The latter seem to endure the heat better. But they stick much closer to rocky precipices and dangerous ground than the former, who generally graze and wander about level grassy hill-sides for longer periods than markhor. Came down to camp in the evening. The wary brute that I studied all day kept to his rocks the whole time. Just as the sun was setting he crossed the ridge above him and disappeared from our sight; no doubt he went across to have his evening's feed, and must have come back to his citadel for the night after we left.

*7th May.*—Went up early to the ridge where I shot the markhor—could see nothing for a long time. At last there was a great rattling of stones under the precipice I was sitting over and soon after some females and one small markhor were sighted far below us. The buck was last, a very small fellow, hardly full grown. I had two shots at him (I wanted meat) and am glad to record I *missed*. Returned to camp at 12 o'clock. Must clear out of this to-morrow. The shikaris are tempting me with stories

of magnificent ibex higher up this valley; but I am not to be drawn. I must have markhor first.

*8th May.*—Started at 5 A.M. by the road we came; got to bridge at 7 A.M. Went on and stopped for breakfast at a village at 10 A.M., sun very powerful. Am stopping under the shade of a rock until it is cooler. Went on at 12 o'clock: two hours having exhausted my patience and some friendly clouds obscuring the sun. Ascent almost all the way to Dashkin which I reached at 2 A.M. No coolies to be had so I remained for the day. No tent put up; I am dodging the sun round a bush. We must make a very early start to-morrow to avoid the heat which is said to be very disagreeable for the remainder of this journey to Búnjí. While I was having tea under my bush, an old man from the village came up and amused me much with his conversation. His name is Khúshál Khán, and he was formerly one of the lumbardars of Dashkin. He was turned out because he was out-bribed by the present holder of the appointment! It seems the Wazir makes him the head-man who bribes highest. Khúshál Khán has weak eyes and wanted medicine for them. I told him to wash them often in fresh goat's milk—said he was strong enough *otherwise*, though 80 years old, and that his wife could vouch for this! His language was much plainer, the old scoundred. He has two grown-up sons and a little boy and girl *besides*. He remembered Hayward very well and mentioned his name. He passed through Dashkin on his way to Yasin.

*9th May.*—Left Dashkin at 3-30 A.M.; very dark as the moon was behind the hill. Had to use the lantern for an hour or so. The road ascends and goes along

the hill-side till it turns the ridge, then descends as gradually on the other side. Shortly after starting came on the fresh droppings of a bear on the pathway. He was travelling in the same direction that we were going. He could not have been far ahead of us, but as I had the lantern and we made a noise, no doubt he was soon alarmed. After turning the ridge, a pleasant bit of country is reached, well wooded and watered by murmuring streams, just like a hill-side in Kashmir—quite refreshing in this bare stony country. After getting through this small forest came on to the bare hill-side again and reached Tór-billing (3 huts) at 6-15. From these huts there is a short cut to the Buder nala, a famous ground for markhor: it is of course occupied. There is a stiff ascent from Tór-billing winding up the hill-side till the ridge is reached, when the path again descends to the village of Doín; reached at 9-15. Sun getting very hot. The village is a good distance below the path on which there is only a post house. Am putting up under a rock near the chauki (post house). There is a great number of roads about here. I have noticed this in many other places on my journey up. The explanation given is that when the Wazir of the district is hard up for money he writes down to Kashmir that he has discovered a new line of country by which a much better and shorter road can be made if *the funds are supplied*. The *funds* are supplied, a new path is made by the people of the country, and the Wazir replenishes his treasure chest. It is true that the Maharaja's Sappers and Miners are sent out to construct the road, but that distinguished and scientific corps only *superintend*! The R. E's of Kashmir are not behind



their brother officers of an adjoining country in this respect! At Doín there is another road much higher than the path I am on, called the "Mule Road;" there is another below me, and I can plainly see a *third* across the river on the opposite edge of the valley! This is the last one and is under construction. The mule road above me is a much longer one than the path I am on; it crosses the Hatu Pir (see map) which is visible from here high up. Before the road on the other side the river can be used a bridge across the river will have to be put up below Doín; it will then be the shortest one from Búnjí to Astór. Left the shelter of my friendly rock at 3 P.M., as it was cloudy and cool; then came a most heartbreaking road. Stiff ascents zigzagging up for a good distance; in the same crooked fashion down again, making the road just double the length it should be, with the greaest amount of inconvenience to the traveller superadded! This goes on till the last and highest ridge is reached. Before coming to it there is a long and steady ascent. Both myself and the coolies were uncommonly glad when this last bit was accomplished. It was getting dark, and we had a rough and long descent on the other side. About half way between Doín and the highest ridge, about the middle of one of the zig-zags along a precipice, we met two Sappers of the Kashmiri Engineers coming from Búnjí. One of them was crumpled up, and leaning against the rocky side of the path looking very sick indeed. I thought him at the point of death. His companion was sitting close by almost as helpless as his sick comrade. The latter had given out at this point and could go no further, and they had both made up their minds to

pass the night here! The wind was blowing cold; there was a slight drizzle and they were clothed in the scantiest rags. The place they had selected was about the most dangerous point on the whole raad, as stones and rocks were constantly rolling down from above and crossing the path with a whiz like that of a bullet. But these poor creatures were too apathetic to notice any of these things. They had some rice with them, but could not cook it as they had no wood or water. Sharofa again came to the front here. He pulled some wood and sticks from the floor of the path (which was laid along beams fixed in the rock), made them a fire, filled their brass pot with water, and arranged for the cooking of their rice. We then had to leave as it was getting late. The two Sappers were advised to move lower down to a safer place after their meal, but it is doubtful whether they stirred. Both were Báltís (native of Báltistán or Little Thibet). I was informed that the whole corps of "Safar maina" (Sappers and Miners) were recruited from that country, that is to say the people were forcibly taken away from their homes, sent away under an escort to some part of the province whence they could not desert, and formed into regiments of Sappers for work on the roads, &c. *They never saw their country again!* I have met these poor creatures several times during this journey carrying their digging tools, a long handled matchlock, cooking pots and several days' provisions, in the shape of a bag of flour, toiling along the road to and from Astór. Their dejected countenances and humble mien were distressing to look at. They are all "Shías" and consequently "Ráfizis," or heretics, and are treated by the "Súnnís" (orthodox Músalmáns,) as the vilest scum of the earth.

After a short halt on the top of the ridge started again and reached Rámghát at 7-45 rather fagged. The descent was rough but nothing in comparison with the path on the other side. There was a smart shower of rain before we topped the ridge, but it did not last long. I pitied the two Báltís left on the road; they must have suffered. Rámghát is a bridge on the Astór river with some sepoy's huts about it—a most horrible place. The hill-sides came straight down to the water's edge on both banks, and there is no level space for anything. There is one hut near the bridge and a large cave higher up. The sepoy's have to answer the calls of nature a few feet in front of their doors, and they have to fish in the river for passing logs of wood to cook their meals with! I had to put up here for the night as there was a bad place just beyond the bridge, and the coolies refused to cross in the dark! The stench from the filth was frightful, but I was fagged and decided to stay and start very early next morning. I did not, however, get much sleep, as a hurricane was blowing all night down the river, and the sand, grit and what not kept peppering me the whole time like charges of small shot. It was very hot also: altogether I had a disagreeable night of it—the worst I have yet passed.

*10th May.*—Started at 3 A.M., a very bad road up hill, and down again to the Misigan stream; was carried across by Sharofa. Road ascends again, and then comes on to a plain sloping down from the range on the right bank of the Indus. The plain is very stony, and cut up by narrow channels made by the rush of rain water down to the river. This is the famous Búnjí plain where Úrin or Úrial (wild sheep) are so numerous during the winter. It is a very ugly bit of country without a tree or blade of grass.

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After toiling two hours along this plain, that seemed without end, came suddenly to the brink of a deep broad ravine a small stream running at the bottom. This is the Búnjí Nálá and across it is Búnjí itself, smothered in green trees—how pleasant to look at! There are green fields too across and lots of running water; what a contrast to the country I have just passed through! Came to an apricot and mulberry garden, and found there a gentleman just having his morning's wash. He gave me some tea which was very refreshing after my bad night and long trudge. I reached Búnjí at 6-30. After a rest visited the post office and made the acquaintance of commandant Bágh Singh in charge of Fort Búnjí. He was very kind and obliging, and did all I wanted without any hesitation. This was owing to a happy mistake on the part of the worthy commandant. After making a few enquiries he suddenly came to the conclusion that I was an old friend of his that used to be very kind to him in the plains a few years ago! He said I was not altered in the least after so many years toil in the heat and recognized me at once, nay every feature in my face! I had, I am certain, never met this gentleman in my life before; but I did not correct the lucky mistake he had fallen into; on the contrary I made the most of it! The result was that my arrangements here were completed in an hour, and I was allowed to cross the Indus and make for my hunting ground without any opposition. There is a standing order that no sporting gentleman or any other is to cross that river as the country on the other side is considered "dangerous." All I was asked to do was to write a few lines saying that if anything happened to me on the other side no one was to be blamed, and that I

went over entirely on my own responsibility. There was, however, I think another reason. A sportsman was already across! That being the case it was rather difficult for the officials at the Fort to make objections to my crossing. I was informed that that gentleman had had some difficulty in getting permission but he did arrange it. I am told, by some "management" on the part of his shikári. I have no particular desire to have my sport across the Indus—I am simply driven in this direction by force of circumstances. All the good shooting grounds Cis-Indus are occupied I do not care to go further up the river (in the direction of the Bara Lóma) as I have already come far enough, and I have only three months' leave. Hearing that there was a vacant valley on this side (the right bank) I made for it at once, and luckily commandant Bagh Singh (who has earned my sincerest gratitude and thanks), has facilitated in no small degree my movements by his ridiculous mistake. Crossed the Indus in the ferry boat at midday and went on at once to the village of Damót, the valley that is to be my future hunting ground. The sportsman before me has been shooting in it for the last fortnight, but as he has bagged nothing I may have a chance of picking up a couple of good heads. He has now moved up to the next valley, Jagót, where I hear he is just as unsuccessful. My tent is pitched under a beautiful wide spreading walnut tree, round which has been built a broad and clean platform. The Damót stream flows below me a few paces off, and there are a few houses of the village some distance above me. It is a pleasant spot, and I am going to enjoy a few days' rest here. I have made the acquaintance of Wazir Búghdór Sháh, the headman of this and the neighbouring villages

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and the Kashmeri officials in charge of affairs on this side of the river. I have had a long talk with him, and he has promised to give me every assistance. The Wazir is a tall, well-made gentlemanly looking man, with a very dignified deportment. He has long features, rather dark, with none of the national characteristics of the Därd. He is an agreeable old fellow, fond of saying his prayers and very conscious of his dignity. Damót is a pleasantly situated village—lots of water running about, green grass next it and mulberry trees scattered about the banks of the water-channels. But beyond the influence of the water everything is rocky, dry, and uninteresting.

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## CHAPTER IV.

### *Journal continued.*

#### MARKHOR SHOOTING.

*11th May.*—Halt to-day, making arrangements. Wind and dust in the evening blowing down the valley, and it came just as I was at dinner! Búghdór Shah has all the villages as far as Chakarkót under his charge. They are all on or near the high road to Gilgit, and the “bégári” work (compulsory labor) falls heavily on the people. There is a constant stream of officers and men going to and coming from Gilgit. The baggage of these people has to be carried by the villagers, who go two marches in either direction before they are relieved. In the Astór direction they go as far as Dashkin, consequently they are constantly absent from their fields for three and four days at a time.

As this goes on during all seasons of the year, the labor tells very heavily on the people, and they are very hard pressed. Many homes have been broken up for this reason; the men running away across the border which, here, is only a few miles off, and settling in villages beyond the influence of this intolerable tyranny. The Wazir complained bitterly of this. He is placed in a most difficult position. On the one hand he has to satisfy the demands for carriage constantly made on him; on the other he has to see to the cultivation of the fields by means of the very men he has constantly to

send away as baggage-carriers! The system of compulsory labor presses very heavily on the people of the country in every part of Kashmir, and it is greatly aggravated by the numbers of English travellers who wander about this country for eight months of the year. Rozi Khán of Astór was also very bitter on this subject. Every lam-bardár (headman) I met and spoke to brought this subject forward at once as *the* grievance of the people, and I myself have been witness more than once of the hardships they endure through it; for instance the coolie difficulty at Marmai that came under my notice.

*12th May.*—Started at 5-30 A.M. with five coolies for my shooting ground up the Damót valley. Easy going along the streams for some distance. There is only one bad place, a huge rock, running straight down to the water; the path goes up and down this rock; a slip, and down you go into the water. It is no distance to fall and not enough water to drown you, but still it would be disagreeable! A short distance before coming to this rock, I passed the family mansion of the Wazir in a shady grove of fruit trees, surrounded by a stone wall, running water sparkling and murmuring in every direction—a pleasant spot—mulberry trees and cultivation scattered along the waterside all the way, flocks of goats feeding about, wild rose trees in full bloom and a gentle breeze blowing in my face and carrying the fresh scent of the roses down the valley. The morning was cloudy and cool, and I enjoyed this walk immensely. The valley is narrow; steep rocky hills on either side, without a trace of vegetation on them. The green bits along the water's edge are real gems, in very rough setting indeed. Reached camping place at 9 A.M., about four miles from the



village; this shows how I loitered about in the pleasant spots I passed through. Sent back three coolies. I will remain here three or four days and then move higher. There are only seven of us now, Sharofa, Gharíba, Mirza Khán (local shikári), breakfast coolie, Jamála, and two others. I have left the tent and heavy baggage behind, also the khidmatgár. All my supplies will have to come from the village, so the less number of men I have with me the better. My own food will be cooked at the village and sent up daily. Shikáris have gone on to view the ground higher up. Towards evening I was lying on the ground, my eyes wandering over the steep hill-side before me, when I saw a female markhor on a rock, a few hundred yards above, sharply defined against the sky. I went down with Gharíba a short distance to a ravine, on left of main stream, to watch in case there might be a buck close by. Could see only three females coming down the ridge under which a flock of goats were grazing. The markhor evidently wanted to come down to the water for a drink, but were afraid to venture so low. After watching them for awhile, came back to camp. Sharofa says he saw only two males, a great distance off, high up on the ridge above camp.

*13th May.*—Started at 5 A.M. and went straight up a náli, a little above camp, and then turned up the hill-side over camping place, a steady ascent for  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours. Came across many old signs of very large markhor, but nothing fresh; no trace of the two bucks seen about here last evening. Crossed the ridge and descended to next náli; had breakfast at a spring; passed a most dangerous place just above the water. We went slanting down the face of a precipice for more than ten yards, holding on to

ledges, &c. After a rest went up the valley, a very narrow one; but soon after the wind began to blow very strong, *upwards, i.e.* from us. There was slight rain too; lay up for a time and went on again when the wind abated. Sharofa came across the head, horns and backbone of a markhor that had been killed about twelve days previously, evidently an old buck, judging from the long beard; but the horns were only 34·5 inches long. They were quite joined together at the base. This and their shortness, Mirza Khán says, was caused by this markhor being one of a pair that were kidded together—twins! He said a leopard had killed it; we saw fresh traces of him on the ridge above. This probably is the reason why no markhor are to be seen here now. The ground is Al for them, and Mirza Khán says this náli is always a sure find. Sent down Ghariba and a coolie to bring up bedding and food, as I intend staying out the night under a rock near a spring higher up, so as to be on the next ridge and valley early to-morrow morning. Mirza Khán says the markhor *must* be there, as they have been driven out of this by the leopard. Reached the spring at 1 P.M. Rain again in the evening and a very cold wind, but my shelter was dry and comfortable. It is a hollow under a huge rock, nicely cleaned out and dry grass spread at the bottom. Mirza Khán says this is one of his "shooting boxes." At certain times of the year he conceals himself here, and when the markhor come down to drink at the spring, he shoots them down!

*14th May.*—Passed a fairly comfortable night. Bright and clear this morning. Went up the left side of the valley over the spring and on to ridge after a short climb; looked for markhor but saw none. Sharofa discovered two

very small *black* bear cubs playing at the mouth of a cave; no sign of the mother. I watched the cubs for nearly two hours from the top of a rock, 20 yards off. They played about in the most amusing manner all the time, climbing small trees, tumbling down and wrestling with each other. The white half moons on their chests were distinctly visible, and the point of the underjaw was of a reddish colour. Sharofa says some have the point of the lower jaw *white*; those with the *reddish* colour are always the fiercest. We came to the conclusion that the mother was in the cave. She would not wander far from such young cubs. Got the rifles ready and had stones thrown into the cave; no result. Did not proceed to extremities as I was not anxious to shoot her; the youngsters would have died of starvation to a certainty. Went higher up the ridge into a forest of birch and fir trees; rocky places here and there, just the spots for markhor, but not a sign of them. Went up higher, close to the snow line; saw nothing; descended into the valley. A short distance down passed many places where markhors' dung was lying in heaps, but all old; this must be the place for them in the rutting season. A long and difficult descent into the valley; then down along the stream for a great distance to junction with main stream, and up along the latter to camp at 5 P.M., fagged and disappointed; but a teapot of tea has brought contentment and hope of better luck to-morrow.

*15th May.*—Left camp at 5 A.M., went up main stream to a field of corn and a hut,—Mirza Khán's goatshed. Then straight up hill to the right of main stream, a very steep ascent, along a goat track for some distance. Came to first spur at 7-15. Sat down for a time and searched

the hill-sides carefully but saw nothing. I am afraid my predecessor in this valley has frightened all the game further up, for, though he did not bag anything, I hear he had a good many shots. Turned to the left and went up a narrow and steep gorge for some distance; turned to the right and came to a forest of firs on a very *steep* slope; toiled through it, the slope becoming steeper: then through a birch forest on the same plane, and at last to a ridge of flat slate rocks at 9-30, four and a half hours from starting. This is the greatest grind I have had yet, going straight up for that time without a long halt anywhere. When I got to the pine forest I was thoroughly done and could not go ten yards without being pumped. This is quite over-doing the business; two days at least should have been spent over the extent of ground we have done this morning. Saw traces of markhor now and then but all *old*. I am certain we have come too high in search of them; this ground must be their head-quarters later on, in July when it gets very hot lower down. It is too cold for them so high just now. There is a good deal of snow lying about here still. All the places we have visited are A1 for markhor, and they must be numerous here at the proper season. Mirza Khán is in the habit of hunting markhor later in the year, when he has harvested his corn and comes up to the grassy slopes to graze his goats; and during the rutting season (October). He then finds them here and so thinks they will be found here in May! Had breakfast and on again after half an hour; but *along* hill-side and *descending*. Went some distance, passing one rocky ridge and grassy slope after another but saw nothing. After getting low down heard a peculiar cry which Sharofa said was that of a young bear cub. Soon

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after he sighted the mother and youngster very low down. We at once went for them, but it was very difficult ground, and we had to go slowly and cautiously. It now began to rain and sleet; the bears too began to move, came towards us for a short distance, and then crossed to a slope on our right. We waited for them to come up opposite us, when they would have been only 50 yards off, but unluckily they went along the hill-side and did not ascend. The closest they came was 100 yards; Sharofa entreated me to fire. But I made certain they would come up closer, and I wished to make a certain thing of it and so lost my chance. The bears got round a rocky ridge and went out of sight. Though we descended as fast as possible, the ground was so difficult that it took us some time, and the wind was most uncertain. The bears must have nosed us for we never saw them again, though we followed their tracks at a good pace on fair ground for some distance. This was very disappointing. The female was a very large one and had a splendid coat of fur of a dirty-white colour: the hair on her sides almost touched the ground. The cub was half-grown. I was very savage with myself for not following Sharofa's advice when I had the only chance of a shot. I was rather fagged after this, and my left knee was painful as I got a bad knock on it in the hurry of following the bears' tracks—the same knee that I smashed in an exactly similar manner ten years ago; my feet also were very sore from so many hours of continuous walking. Made for camp along a very rough and steep goat track. Came round the shoulder of hill, and in sight of camp on main stream, very far below us. The shikari sat down here to have a "dàmà" (breathing time) and to examine the rocks

opposite and the cliffs to our right. Suddenly Sharofa spied a large male markhor among the latter, about a thousand yards off, above us a little and in a most impossible looking place. He came suddenly round a corner on to a sheet of sloping rock, and I had a good look at him through the telescope. He kept turning and looking about and gave me a good view all round, showing me all his grand points, as if in derision. He had a splendid pair of horns, with two curves, wide spreading, with a grand sweep. They must be 50 inches at least: he looked a venerable monster, with his great flowing beard and shaggy coat hanging down his sides, light in colour on the fore part, of a darker tint on the hind part of his body, quite different from the dirty-white colour of the one I shot in the Garai. We saw only this one; but Mirza Khán insisted that there were several others, and that this was the flock we had been searching for all day. While we had been toiling and sweating at the back of the range looking for them, they were quietly feeding about these cliffs not half a mile from the camp and actually in sight of it. When we made the first halt in this morning's ascent and searched this hill-side, in this very direction, they could not have been further from us than they are now; they must then have been feeding in some grassy ravines concealed from our view. It was now 4 P. M., too late to do anything. To get at the markhor it would be necessary to go back and up the gorge where the bears bolted from us; then round the top of the ridge to the edge of the precipice below where we saw the markhor. This could not be done in the time left before night set in. The markhor came down a little way, fed for about five minutes, went up again and disappeared

round a projecting point, and we did not see him again: came down to camp at 6 P.M. It is about half a mile beyond Mirza Khán's field and just below the cliffs where we saw the markhor. I have had the tents brought up and the khidmatgár too, and intend making this the base of my operations. The shooting grounds are too far off the village to be convenient in this respect. I am now in the centre of the valley, about six miles from the village, and the same distance from the line of watershed on the main range. I have been on the tramp to-day for thirteen hours; this is too much for pleasure. My feet are very sore, but I do not feel fagged in the least. This morning about an hour after leaving camp, Sharofa picked up an old markhor horn and taped it on the spot, 52 inches! This must have been a grand animal. A shepherd says he saw a flock of ten markhor two days ago on left of main stream a little below camp.

*16th May.*—Remained in tent for a rest; sent Gharíba and Mirza Khán to sight the flock of ten markhor seen by the shepherd. They are to send word by 12 o'clock. I got a ducking in the main stream this morning, having slipped off a rock during a walk; the water was very cold and the sun was not up, but luckily I was close to camp and soon changed. The two shikáris returned in the evening, having seen nothing; but they say they came across plenty of fresh tracks, etc. About the same time, Sharofa sighted a flock of seven markhor on the opposite hill-side, some distance up, just above camp! Great excitement in consequence—fires put out, coolies crawling on hands and knees to get under cover and speaking in whispers; an observatory extemporised at tent door, binocular and telescope permanently focussed on the animals

above. This began at 4 P.M. and went on till 7 P.M. The single markhor seen the previous evening must have been one of this lot. They are nearly in the same place. They grazed down gradually in a slanting direction and came very low. They wanted, I fancy, to come down to the stream for a drink, but were afraid of the camp. They were last seen on a hill slope, half a mile from camp up stream. As we were below them all the time, we could not stir, so had to watch them patiently for a chance; it never came, and we had to leave them for next morning.

*17th May.*—Up at 5 A.M. The markhor are in the same place where last seen yesterday evening. Started, but we had great difficulty in getting along as they were in sight, and we were below them. Crossed main stream below camp, and got under shelter of the hill-side and out of their sight successfully. But the wind was blowing from us, and we had to push along without being able to get a view of the game. The stalk failed. It could not have been otherwise from our relative positions. We went up to the place where they had been seen, and found that they had slept there for the night. Followed their tracks in the direction they came from last evening. This was a bad business too, and ended in failure. The markhor had the better of us, both as to wind and sight, and they scored. After going along cautiously for a time, we heard their note of alarm, and knew we had been sighted or smelt. Shortly after they were seen making straight for the precipitous rocks on the sky line. When they were out of sight, we followed and went along below the cliffs, scrambled up some ugly places, and soon after came on our footmarks of the 14th, and up we went again



along that toilsome ascent! The remembrance of my first journey was still fresh in my memory; it did not make this second one more agreeable. I knew what was in store for me. Followed our old footsteps till we came to the fir forest; then Mirza Khán took us along the hill-side instead of continuing the ascent. I felt relieved! Came to the rocky ledge overlooking the spot where the markhor had been last seen. Mirza Khán searched the rocks below carefully, but the markhor had vanished. Had breakfast and started again, 10 A.M., Mirza Khán knew every inch of the ground, and also all the dodges of the wily markhor. He decided that they had topped the ledge, crossed the fir forest and made off for a fresh resting place higher up, and behind the ridge bounding the pine forest on the other side; he was right. After going a short distance, we came on the fresh track of the animals running at a good pace through the forest! They must have crossed here while we were toiling up to the trees and have got our wind again! Followed the tracks to the opposite side of the valley, bounded by a rocky ridge, terminating in a very precipitous hill. The markhor had gone up to and round this hill, I remained below; Mirza Khán and Sharofa followed up to see if they could spot them on the other side. This was a dangerous piece of work, and I am sure Sharofa did not like it. Mirza Khán went first, knowing the ground. I caught him once quietly laughing as Sharofa was straining up a rock! The last I saw of them were some gymnastics they went through—climbing a pine tree in a very narrow cleft between two rocks which, apparently, was the only way of doubling round the hill. From the top of the tree they jumped out of sight. An hour afterwards they reversed the performance and came down the same

way. They had not seen the seven runaways, but reported a solitary markhor sitting on a rocky ledge on the other side of a ravine. Mirza Khán now led us by the right of the hill, through forest and rocks to the ridge above, a very disagreeable bit of work. Turned to the right again, and went up for some distance. Coming to an open spot in the forest, we stopped and examined the rocks and cliffs opposite where the solitary male had been seen, and sighted our old friends, the seven, at once! We had run them down again. We watched them for two hours from this breezy ridge. The snow was lying about in large patches and the wind was strong and cutting. I was severely punished by it, sitting so long in a cramped position watching these animals. The markhor at last grazed away down the slope, went across the ridge and disappeared. This was about 5 P.M. Got off the ridge and into my overcoat at once, and had something to eat with a sip of tea; then walked hard up and down hill to get warm; but it took some time before I could overcome the shivering of my body and the chattering of my teeth! Jamála had been sent down for food and bedding in the morning as soon as we had made certain that the markhor would give us a long chase, I was determined to follow these long-horned rascals till I got a chance. Mirza Khán was on his mettle, and vowed he would track them till he brought me within range. The coolies were heard below in the forest just as the markhor had crossed over, so we went down a short distance and whistled them up. Went along a goat track some distance, till we reached the ridge a good way above the point where the markhor had disappeared, crossed it and went down the other side for some distance until we found a suitable place, and camped

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for the night under some rocks at 7 P.M. The weather had been rainy during the day, and it now began to sleet and snow. Very disagreeable, indeed, as the rock I was under was just sufficient to only half protect me. With all my dodging, I could not manage to prevent about ten inches of my bedding on the outer edge from getting wet; I had to jam myself against the rock to keep dry, and the difficult operation of eating dinner had yet to be performed! I had a hunter's appetite, and must eat, no matter what the difficulties, and I did perform the feat! The rock I was under came down perpendicularly from above; there were about two feet of level ground at its foot; and then the hill-side sloped away rather abruptly. Lengthways I had room enough, but I was cramped for breadth. Dinner consisted of two lumps of tinned beef and two chapátis (cakes) cooked the day before. But as it was dark the lantern had first to be lighted, in doing which I failed many times before succeeding; then the umbrella had to be opened and kept up to prevent myself from being soaked through, and it had to be *held* to prevent the wind from blowing it into black space. This dinner then was eaten under some difficulties. My attention was equally divided between the lantern, which threatened every moment to take a header down hill; the umbrella (inconstant she), who made strong attempts to elope with every lusty gust of wind that came round the corner; and my own mouth. I managed them all for I was hungry; but I must say I have enjoyed more comfortable dinners in my time. However, after the eating apparatus had been put away, the umbrella folded, and a glass of cold water and whiskey stowed away over the dinner, I was contented, and the re-action of rest and quiet after the

day's exertions was delicious. The sense of comfort, both in body and mind, that creeps over the hunter at this dark hour, just before he becomes a log of wood in the deep sleep that is fast approaching, is well worth the toil of the day. The mind goes over every past incident and the tingling muscles recouping themselves, emphasize each thought. Then there are the hopes and fears of the coming hunt—shall I run in those rascals to-morrow?—shall I get a close and certain shot, or will it be a long one?—how careful I shall be to select the largest head for the first and deliberate shot, and he must be hit clean or I shall lose him to a certainty among these frightful precipices, or he will tumble down some bad place and smash his horns—I must not be in a hurry to fire—just behind the shoulder, with a rather fine sight if he is close, and—the rest is blank as the sheet of snow on which my eyes have been resting; heavy sleep has curtained round my senses and I am dead to this world for eight hours. But on the present night it was not to be so. I was not asleep long when it came on to snow, and I was soon brought back to my awkward position by the cold flakes that fell on my face? My faithful umbrella, that usually formed part of my pillow, served me well again, and saved my head from being smothered in a white and cold sheet; but snow was being piled on the waterproof sheet covering my blankets, and while I was speculating on the probable result to myself, I fell asleep again; but my slumbers were disturbed ones. The thought of my good umbrella disappearing in an extra strong gust of wind was always present in my half-conscious mind. This would have been a serious misfortune indeed; for that useful piece of furniture was my constant protection, both by day

and by night, and was the best part of my pillow when not more legitimately employed. I held it with one hand all the time. I woke several times—sometimes to see a twinkling star keeping watch over head, sometimes to feel the steadily falling snow. I remember having a series of dreams during each bit of sleep, and some of them most frightful—demons rushing away with my umbrella and myself helpless to prevent them—huge markhor peeping over the ledge of rock looking at me in the most defiant manner and my rifle not at hand! In fact I was well nightmare-ridden and was broad awake and longing to be up a couple of hours before it was time.

*18th May.*—Started after these blessed buck-goats again at 6 A.M. Went up to top of ridge and then along it till we came to their tracks; and followed them down steadily for four hours. Going down this ridge was terrible work indeed. I am sure we did not get over a mile in that time. The whole distance was one mass of crumpled rocks with great gaps between—the rocks were knife-edged, the edges to the sky, the slope below at a frightful angle, for a short distance, ending in blank precipices further down. Mirza Khán led over this dangerous ground at a good pace, always some distance ahead, going over double the ground I traversed, carefully peeping over the precipices on either side and searching the hill-sides below with the binoculars. Sharofa looked serious and did not relish the work at all, for Mirza Khán beat him at it out and out; and he had to play second fiddle throughout. I gave in after 9 A.M. and sat down on a rock, blessing the goats with all my heart. I kept my eyes on Mirza Khán all the time, a good distance below, quartering the ground like the best of trained dogs. At last came his faint

whistle, and it galvanized the whole of us like the shock from a battery. The real excitement of the chase now began! I went as best I could and reached Mirza Khán in no time; he said he had sighted the flock far down below the precipices! He led for half a mile more and then we had the markhor *under* us! They were feeding at the foot of the cliff on a patch of young tender grass. It was impossible to get a shot from this point; we had to go along the ridge some distance further and take them in flank though the range would be greater; came to a good place, a projecting rock with a stunted fir-tree growing by; it served for some cover, though cover was not necessary. We were *above* the animals, and they were so intent on the young grass that there was no danger of detection. Got into position and picked out the largest pair of horns I could see: waited some time, till I got a broadside shot, fired and—*missed*! Fired the second barrel and *missed again*! Took the second rifle, and at the third shot broke a foreleg. Another large markhor came into view; fired the fourth shot at him and missed! Took first rifle (reloaded by Sharofa) and fired again at the wounded one, who was now making off, and missed again! The agony of that moment was hard to bear. The brute was limping off and would be round a projection and out of sight in ten paces more! Luckily, just at the turn, he stopped for a second to look back. My last shot and my last chance. Desperation made me steady. I put up the second sight, and with deliberate aim placed the bullet at last in the proper spot, behind the right shoulder, and the markhor rolled down the slope some distance and lay dead. The range of this shot could not have been less than 300 yards. Firing downwards at an angle of 30 degrees is

very difficult work, and many misses must occur unless the hunter is well practised in this kind of shooting. At the last shot the animal, though further off, was nearly on a level with me, and hitting him was easier. Mirza Khán and Gharíba, with drawn knife, started off at a frightful pace for the "halál" (cutting the throat) but the ground was most difficult; they had to go back some distance the way we had come, then go down round one slope, cross the ravine and up the opposite hill-side, on which the markhor was lying. It took them at least 15 minutes before they appeared on the opposite side, whereas the poor old buck had been goat's meat for nearly half an hour! The halál was a failure; but *would not have been* if Sharofa had not been so orthodoxically scrupulous. He shouted out that the animal was dead, and that no halál was possible! but to be careful about cutting well below the neck, &c., &c. Gharíba, in a rage, shouted back that he would halál! Sharofa then said the meat would be "makrúh" (unlawful): that was the end of that meat! I now found out from Sharofa that, in this country, the game is always considered "halál," provided the hunter, after shooting the animal, follows him up and *never sits down till he has cut its throat*, though this last act may be performed hours after the animal has been hit, or is dead. But for this convenient interpretation of the law a good deal of meat would be wasted in a difficult country like this. In all countries, where Músalmáns are the hunters, they always have some convenient dodge like the above. Sharofa superintended the cutting off the head through the telescope. When this was done we left our perch on the rock, going back and then down hill, making for the main stream. Then up to tent at 2-30 P.M.—and

so ends the hunt of the 47-incher. Dimensions—Length of horns round curve, 47 inches; girth at base, 11·25 inches; divergence at tips, 26·75 inches. I measured the hoof of one of the forelegs, length 3·5 inches, breadth at heel, 2·25 inches. Of my six shots only two took effect; the third broke the left foreleg at the knee, the sixth through the right shoulder—a splendid shot at 300 yards, if not more. The colour of this markhor's coat is quite different from that of the one shot first—the latter was like the dirty-white fleece of a sheep in colour: this one is the same as described by Ward in his book, page 17, "a reddish or brownish hue," mixed with white in front, a darker shade toward the hind quarters. The hair is not long except the beard, which is a splendid one. The second large fellow that I missed had shorter horns, longer hair and a more robust body, with a different style of horns. They were thicker and more widely divergent but not so long as the pair I have bagged. The latter animal looked thin and had a tucked-up and screwed-in appearance quite different from the other. This perhaps was caused through old age; his teeth are ground down nearly to the gums and the horns are worn, battered and chipped. Mirza Khán and Gharíba appeared with head and skin at 5 P.M. Sharofa was upbraided in strong language, for causing so much good meat to go waste! I think he made a mistake by interfering with the "halál": will not let him do so in future.

*19th May.*—Came on to rain at 4 A.M. and still continues, 7 A.M., as I am writing this. Rained up to 11 A.M. The snow has come low down. All the game should be driven down by it. A large markhor seen just above tent on right bank of main stream!



*20th May.*—Started at 5 A.M. for the markhor seen last evening. Went down by Mirza Khán's hut in the field, then along the narrow valley on the right, the same that we ascended the first day I went out, but up the opposite side. After following the stream some distance, came across fresh tracks of large markhor which had just come down the hillside we intended to ascend, and had gone up stream. Saw them soon after on the ridge. They must have seen us for they were alarmed. Had we been fifteen minutes earlier we should have met them face to face! Turned up hillside and came across numbers of markhor tracks, quite fresh—no doubt made by the flock we had just seen, and these must have been the same that were marked down last evening, and after which it had been our intention to spend this day! This is my usual luck. Went on and disturbed three females among some rocks. Great hurry and excitement in getting rifles ready. They were still in their cases; but no male appeared. We went along higher and higher and at last crossed the dividing ridge where the markhor were seen last evening: no sign of them. Went along hillside up the valley we had crossed into. Very bad ground and very slow going—precipices and rocks—but just the place for the game we were after. Saw some more females, two bucks with very small horns; shortly after two more, not worth stalking. One of these was lying on a rock just under us but out of range. He was looking down the valley with a most steady gaze, never dreaming of his greatest enemy—man—above him. Sharofa made a slight noise and the buck vanished silently like a phantom and we never saw him again! This youngster had a dirty-white coat similar to the buck I shot in the Garai. These animals, like all hill game, use

their eyes *downwards* for their safety, and their ears *upwards*, and these organs are most admirably placed by nature for this purpose. Sighted no big markhor during the whole of this dangerous journey. Descended to bottom of valley over ground much worse than I had crossed during the day, and that is saying a good deal. Along the stream to Mirza Khán's field and so to tent by 6 P.M. Did not go over much ground, but it was slow and dangerous work for the latter half of the day.

*21st May.*—Started at 6 A.M. for the ridge where the large markhor were seen yesterday: those that had crossed our path a short time before we came up. We went up by the same way that we had gone on the first day. Ascent of three hours to the top where the markhor had been last seen. Saw their tracks and nothing more. Sharofa killed a large suake (viperous) among some rocks. He first caught it by the back of the neck. He said he was not afraid as he knew a "mantar" (charm) that protected him even if bitten! Two large dark-coloured hawks, or eagles, passed a few yards over my head in full chase after a large snow-cock. They went at a terrific pace, tearing the air with their powerful wings, but the snow cock had a good start, and I think got under shelter on the next ridge before his pursuers could catch him up. It was a grand sight though it lasted for a few seconds only. The weather has been very muggy and hazy since the rain and snow—quite a hot-weather appearance. We cannot see to any distance distinctly. Sharofa, who had gone further up came back and reported seven large markhor in a small valley to the left, but they soon fed out of sight round a rock, and Mirza Khán says there is absolutely no way in that direction by which we could follow them, and the

hillside certainly looks like it. About 2 P.M. sighted the same lot of markhor on the hillside opposite, right across the valley, and shortly after three more, quite a separate flock, some distance lower down the same hillside. This was most provoking. Yesterday we were on that side of the valley on the very ground these animals now occupied, and sighted the markhor on *this* side. To-day, after toiling up to this ridge, we see the bucks on the very ground we went over yesterday! There is no getting near them to-day, so we laid ourselves down comfortably behind rocks and under the shade of pines, and watched the game till it was time to go down. This watching of the game and noting their habits is, I think, only less pleasant than the actual stalk and the successful shot at the end of it. The seven males were immense brutes, every one of them with splendid horns and long shaggy beards and coats that seemed, through the telescope, to sweep the ground as they grazed about. These old gentlemen were very intent on their dinner and never left off feeding for a moment till it was time to retire. They then proceeded slowly up, grazing all the time, towards some rocks where, doubtless, they passed the night. The other three, or at least two of them, were more lively; they were not so large as the seven above. These grave and reverend seniors had no fun in them, and were engaged, I should say, in the pleasantest occupation of their lives at that age—like their human brothers who, at the same stage, have only the pleasures of the table left to console them! But two of the other three, after a few mouthfuls of grass, would turn to and have a friendly trial of strength in true hircine style, butting each other, locking and unlocking their horns, retiring, then standing

on their hind legs and clashing their horns with a report that could be distinctly heard half a mile off. This went on till one gave in and turned, when the victor would give the vanquished a parting butt in the rump and commence grazing again. This happened several times while the animals were under my glasses. At 5 P.M. we rose, crossed over to reverse side and proceeded down the next valley (the one in which I slept under the rock, near the spring, on the 17th). This is a dry stony valley, very steep and full of large boulders: going down was very slow and tiring. We had intended sleeping in our old resting place, under the rock higher up, but Mirza Khán changed his tactics after sighting the markhor in the other valley and brought us down to the main stream. Slept under the trees where we had camped the first day coming up from the village.

22nd May.—Started at 5 A.M.; came up main valley, as far as Mirza Khán's hut and field, and turned up the stream. Went up the same way that we came down on the evening of the 19th. Topped the ridge at 10 A.M., but the weather was very cloudy and rainy, and the wind could not be trusted. After waiting for an hour the sun came out for a short time, and we went along the ridge higher up so as to get above the spot where the markhor had been seen. No signs of them. Mirza Khán worked hard and did not leave a rock unsearched though at the risk of his neck more than once. Gave up the search, disappointed and disgusted. At 4 P.M., came down exactly the way we had gone up on the 19th, having quite given up the idea of meeting the markhor we had been searching for all day. And here occurred the usual *contretemps*. We were all proceeding carelessly (time about 5 P.M.) and

looking *down* anxiously to the spot at the bottom of the valley (next the stream) where the coolies should be with the bedding, etc. Mirza Khán was in front leading. As he topped a swell on the hill-side, just under the rocky ridge where we had disturbed the three females on the 19th, he came bang on to the seven large markhor we had been hunting for all day! Distance not more than 70 yards. The animals rushed down the slope, and by the time a rifle could be got out of its case (they had been carefully put away) and loaded they were out of range on the opposite hill-side, 600 yards off at least. They ran *over* the camp at the stream where the coolies were lying down! After watching each other for some time we descended to camp and the markhor ascended to theirs—I suppose. It is useless to analyse my feelings! The English language was not created to describe such a situation, else some extra strong words would have been invented for these very special occasions. I was so thoroughly enraged with myself, the men, with everything, all creation, in fact, that I lost my appetite! A few minutes before my imagination had been revelling in the pleasant prospect of the dinner not far off—tinned beef and chapáti though it only was—and my empty stomach was appreciatively responsive: the charms of the concluding glass of whisky had been contemplated over and over again, I had already in imagination drunk it half a dozen times over. Alas! when I reached camp the very thought of food made me sick, and I went to bed at once without a mouthful of food or drink of any kind! Mirza Khán was no doubt most to blame; but he was so frightfully cut up himself and looked so miserable that I had not the heart to say a word to him. He threw himself down alongside a rock, with his face

downwards, and remained there motionless as long as I could see him. I believe he, too, went to bed without any dinner.

*23rd May.*—Began to rain at 4 A.M., so came down to tent at 7—still snowing on the hilltop and raining lower down, 10 A.M. This is beastly weather and very unusual for these parts at this time of the year I hear. It cleared after 1 P.M. Went up main stream for some distance to have a look at the ground; saw five young markhor and several females. Further on saw three large bucks: returned the same way. Got letters and post from Búnjí this evening, but no sign of my dâkwala. These letters have come through the post office.

*24th May.*—Started at 5-15 A.M. for the three large markhor seen last evening. Reached the spot at 9 A.M. No trace of the long horns excepting a few hoof-marks, but there are small markhor in sight in three different places! They are so beautifully situated around us that we are in a regular trap and cannot move an inch from our position without being sighted by one or other of the flocks! It does not matter much so far as the small males are concerned, but if these were alarmed and bolted, the large ones we are looking for would surely take the hint and bolt too, so we have to be patient and amuse ourselves by watching the various groups of animals around us. Patience and sleep. It rained again last night, and the weather is muggy and hazy again to-day. Returned the way we came up without seeing the three large markhor we had sighted last evening, though we lay most of the day on the very ridge where they had been 12 hours before! On reaching main stream, at a spot close to its

bank, Mirza Khán said that a few years ago the "Major" sahib, who was engaged in the survey of this valley, was encamped here with the Wazir Búghdór Sháh and a party of men. The surveyor was on his way to the ridge at the head of the valley above the village of Ghór, on the reverse slope, to map the country on that side, but the Ghór people objected and did not wish him to do so. The Major insisted. The Ghórians had a powerful fakir, or saint who had command over the elements. That very night, while the party were encamped *here* by the stream, he sent a tremendous flood from above down the valley with an awful roaring noise! Most of the Major's camp was swept away; he himself barely escaped by rushing up the hill-side with a lantern in his hand. What a sight that must have been—the major in his night clothes, and the extremity of funk, bolting up hill with a lantern in the dead of night, from the wrath of the Ghór fakir! The Wazir and his men lost all their traps while saving the sahib's. The latter, however, had his way for I have the map he then made with me now! After the story was finished we had not gone a hundred yards when there was a brilliant flash of lightning just overhead, and then three deafening claps of thunder. The suddenness of these loud reports close overhead after Mirza Khán's story was very startling and had a telling effect on the men with me. The thought in everybody's mind must have flashed as suddenly as the lightning above,—“the Ghór fakir again angry at another sahib's intrusion!” And he was no common magician content with flash and sound only. The thunder was followed by a hard hailstorm! The little stones stung me sharply and I had to seek the protection of my umbrella. The storm quickened our pace considerably,

and we did look as if the fakir in person (or the devil) was after us! I have no doubt that this incident, too, in the simple annals of this valley, will be placed to the credit of the holy man of Ghór. The storm ended when we were within a mile of camp; it could not have lasted more than 20 minutes. The weather, just before, was inclined to be rainy; but there were no threatening clouds overhead, and none of us had lightning, thunder and hail in our heads at the time. This is the *first* time since my arrival in this valley that I have seen lightning or heard thunder; and this is not the season for them—more credit to the holy man I say!

*25th May.*—Found the dákwala (postman) had arrived when I got to tent last evening. How I have longed for the appearance of this man! He has taken more than twenty days since his last departure on the way to and from Srinágar. He should have done it in fifteen. He is a snuff-taking old scoundrel, a regular sniveller. He is too old for quick travelling now, and I made a mistake in taking him on. Wrote letters till 12 o'clock and then sent off the postman on his return journey. At 2 P.M. took bedding and food, went down main stream to the field, a mile or so above village of Damót, and camped under mulberry tree.

*26th May*—Started at 4-30 A.M. and went up the last spurs of the range, between the main stream and the Indus. Mirza Khán says large markhor are always seen here, higher up. Sighted a flock at 7 A.M. on the extremest ridge overhanging the river. Went for them, ascending and descending very cautiously about half a dozen intervening ridges and as many deep ravines. When the ani-



mals were first sighted they were coming down apparently towards us; so that after the third or fourth ravine had been crossed we moved along with greater caution expecting to meet the markhor face to face as we topped each ridge. After creeping up slowly to the top and making a careful survey of the ground below us, we rushed down the next slope at best pace and repeated the cautious tactics on the next hill-side, and so on till we came to the last ravine, just above which we had sighted the flock. It was ridiculous to watch our slow and cautious approach to each ridge, and then the frantic haste we made to get down again for fear of being sighted by our game—and all our trouble and caution came to nothing, for when we arrived within a short distance of the spot where the markhor had been last seen, we saw by their tracks that they had gone along grazing *up* a ravine, out of our view all the time, and had crossed over to the slope running down to the Indus! I was rather done, so sat down for a rest, and Mirza Khán followed up the track step by step to the top. I watched him all the time, creeping along ledges of rock, turning very awkward corners and holding on with both hands like grim death when the footing was not sufficient; and I thanked my stars I was not following him! But 15 minutes later I was repeating his motions step by step along the very same dangerous ground, regardless of anything but the fact that the markhor were just below the ridge in front of me and within range! That was what Mirza Khán telegraphed after a careful peep over the hill top. The sun was hot—time about 10 o'clock. The markhor were resting within a semi-circular rocky enclosure and were apparently looking down intently right into the Búnjí fort, across the river, not a mile off! I was splendidly

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placed for a shot, but only one male markhor was visible, lying in a corner on a ledge of rocks that protected him from the sun. He was so snugly placed that I could not make him out for some time, though he was not more than a hundred and thirty yards off. The largest male, however, that we had spotted in the flock, when first sighted, was not visible: he must have been lying in a fold of the encircling rocks out of view. After a careful search for him, without success, determined to blaze at the one before me. Rested the rifle on a rock and took a careful aim; result—only a broken foreleg! A beastly shot indeed. Nothing better could be expected as I fired at the animal while he was lying down. He looked up stupefied: next shot I missed clean; the third broke a hindleg. These shots had disturbed the big one and he rushed down the rocks towards the river at a frightful pace. After going down about 200 yards he stood for a moment on a projecting rock and I had a snap shot at him—missed. I had put up the second sight and the bullet went over him. The wounded one was still standing on the ledge where he had been sleeping. He seemed to be paralyzed and kept shaking his wounded legs as if endeavouring to get rid of something that was holding him down! My fifth shot was a miss too, but it moved the markhor; he came hobbling down the rocks and stood in the sunshine on a smooth sloping slab of rock looking quite bewildered—not 90 yards in front of me. He gave me a good broadside and I put the sixth bullet through his shoulder. He rolled down the sloping rock for 50 yards, the horns rattling and banging in a way that made me think they would be smashed every moment. They escaped, however, with only two or three bad gaps along the edges

of the curve, and the tips were damaged somewhat. During the firing of these shots I was not in the least hurried or excited, and took most deliberate aim each time. So many misses disgusted me, and for a short time I looked on my two Henrys with anything but the eyes of affection, but when reason returned I knew that the darling companions of all my present wanderings were not in fault. How prone the hunter is at these moments of failure to curse the rifle and its maker while the cause of the failure is in most cases within himself! In this instance I made the mistake of keeping the muzzles of the rifles in the shade of a bush to prevent the foresight sparkling in the sun. The markhor was also in the shade, and I thought I was doing a knowing thing by keeping the sight shaded, but in my endeavour to effect this my position became awkward, and I remember distinctly that I could not truly place the foresight against the animal's shoulder—hence the misses. I perceived my mistake at the fifth shot. My last one was fired with the sight *in the sun*, and the bullet struck within three inches of the point aimed at. Dimensions of horns: Length, 33·5 inches; round base, 12 inches; divergence, 26 inches. The horns quite meet at the base behind, then curve out gracefully. They are massive, but the tips have been ruined by the fall down the rocks—about half an inch has been crushed in. Mirza Khán after examining the teeth said the buck was six years old—half the age of the 47-incher—but the horns of the younger one are much thicker. There were three or four females with these bucks. Mirza Khán and Jamála the coolie went down and did the “halál” properly this time, that is to say no objections were made by Sharofa, but the animal was of course as dead as possible before its

throat could be cut. The body was cut up on the spot and the meat stowed away in a hole and carefully covered with large rocks. Mirza Khán is very keen on the meat; he says he will send his brother up for it to-morrow. We brought away only the head and skin, but Mirza Khán had the heart, liver and saddle carefully packed up in the skin, as I afterwards discovered, for his dinner to night. He has a great capacity for meat and will eat any quantity of it broiled on the coals of the log fire in the evening, without any accompaniment—not even salt! I have not tasted markhor yet, so have ordered a leg of this one to be kept for my use and to be sent to the tent to-morrow. Returned on our tracks about 12 o'clock, the sun blazing hot. After going down some distance came to the bottom of a narrow valley with a small spring of water oozing from beneath a rock. Halted here and had breakfast at 1 o'clock. This is another shooting box of Mirza Khán's. Water is scarce in these barren stony hills, and the markhor have to come to this spring to quench their thirst. Just above the rock Mirza Khán showed me a small cave, nicely floored with grass, where he sits up and pots the markhor when they come to drink! He has shot several here. The spring is just below, so that the game come to within ten yards of his gun's muzzle before he fires! He can also command the hill-side all round his perch as far as the range of his matchlock. This is a most murderous way of slaughtering game. It is not surprising that markhor are fast disappearing when such unfair advantage is taken of them. After an hour's rest, which Sharofa improved by partially skinning the markhor's head, went down and along the hill-side for the appointed place where coolies had been ordered to make camp. The narrow valley had

been carefully pointed out to them, and Ghariba had been told to show them the way, so that there might be no mistake. We had a stiff ascent to reach the place, and as the sun blazed on my back all the time I was rather done when I reached—to find no sign of camp or coolies, and the sun would be down in another hour! Shouting and whistling were of no avail. There came no answering shout or whistle! Mirza Khán went up the wooded side of the opposite hill and shouted from the top, but without success. We were beginning to despair, and I was reconciling myself to the idea of passing the night in a stony nullah without dinner or bedding (not for the first time in my sporting career), when suddenly, far away up on the highest ridge, a thin dark streak appeared against the sky. It appeared to me to be the stump of a withered sapling about the size of a lead pencil, at this distance, but Jamála's sharp eyes soon made out the object to be a man standing on a rock. I had some dry grass ready for a signal; it was soon lit, the fire and smoke were at once discerned and the coolies reached us just as it got dark. Half an hour later and we should have been mutually ignorant of each other's locality, though only half a mile apart! Old Gharíba had lost the way and had misled the coolies a good distance beyond the camping place. The slopes of the hill-sides were so abrupt that there was no level or nearly level spot where I could spread my bedding, so was obliged to clear a space at the bottom of the ravine, in the dry water channel, and make the best of rather an awkward sleeping apartment; shikaris and coolies had to do the same lower down. If it had rained during the night we should have been uncomfortable I ween!

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*27th May.*—Started at 5 A.M. for the ridge above camp: saw nothing. There are some flocks of sheep and goats on the slope facing the river and the markhor have disappeared. This is the old nuisance that has so often before spoilt my sport in other parts. Went along ridge and then down to a stream: had breakfast and a sleep. In the afternoon followed the stream down for a short distance through pretty forest scenery that reminded Sharofa of his beloved “Kashír” \* (Kashmir). Turned up to the left, passed a goat-herd’s hut. Got some fresh milk and went along another small stream some distance up the hill-side—through fine forest all the way, and camped in a small patch under a splendid pine, just opposite the rock where I had spent such an uncomfortable night before I got the 47-inch markhor. There is a spur between us. This is a pleasant place and I feel very jolly among these grand old trees—the green grass and the murmuring stream close by—the most agreeable camp I have yet had in this valley. My happiness would be complete but for a ferocious little fly, hardly visible, that is punishing my hands dreadfully. Wherever it stings it leaves a minute blood spot that itches dreadfully and has to be squeezed constantly to let out the blood and watery fluid that collects in the wound. This is the only way to obtain relief.

*28th May.*—Started at 5 A.M. straight up from camp for ridge above—a stiff ascent of two hours. Had to remain on the ridge for an hour to allow the sun to get on the reverse slope. This is always a disagreeable business

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\* The natives never call their country Kashmir. “Kashír” is the word they use.

as it is generally cold and windy, and there is very seldom any protection; and one dare not move down the other side as the wind is blowing *downwards*, and every head of game, down to the bottom of the valley, would scent one before he had gone a hundred yards. When the sun has warmed the hill-side for a time the current is changed and the winds blow *upwards*. You are then safe and may walk up to a bear, if you are after one, and pull him by the ear before blowing his brains out. If the day is cloudy, however, you may as well give up stalking for the time. The wind is everywhere. The shikári constantly halts, pulls some fluff from his woollen coat, and floats it away on the wind, watching the tiny speck anxiously. Save your temper then, bring forth your largest stock of patience, and wait, sit, sleep or do anything but move about. The expenditure of temper and bad language on a cloudy day in the hunting grounds of Kashmir must be very considerable; and the recording angel above must have a busy time of it. At 9 A.M. descended the next slope, and soon saw two markhor feeding on the hill-side, near some birches, about six hundred yards off. Had we crossed earlier in the morning we should never have seen these animals as they would have got our wind at once. Made for them most cautiously as they were in low jungle. It took us some time to do this as they had disappeared from sight and we were not aware of their exact whereabouts in the bushes all around us. Cautious as Mirza Khán and Sharofa were, they, or rather the first, made a mess of the stalk. It could hardly have been otherwise in such bad ground. As we crossed the top of a swell, covered with bushes, there was a crash below us as of a large animal rushing down through jungle, but

we could only *hear* him. We had not rushed down five paces in the direction of the noise when we came across the fresh tracks of a large markhor! We followed the tracks carefully and cautiously and Mirza Khán again sighted the animals in an open space on the opposite side of a narrow valley. Down we went again. The slope was steep, the rocks were loose slates that made a tinkling noise every time I put my foot down. Where there was no rock the ground was slippery from the recently melted snow, and I had more than one agonizing slip; but Mirza Khán capped us all; when within 20 yards of the animals (out of sight though), he slipped completely off his legs and rolled down some distance! The markhor were off again. The No. 2 Henry nearly came to grief in Mirza Khán's hands. It was plastered with mud and showed some bad scratches on the barrels, every one of which were reflected from my heart as I contemplated them. These scratches remained on my mind for days afterwards. I could never look at them without a painful feeling; so must the lover feel when he sees his mistress' downy cheek disfigured by the cruel pin or hairpin! I gave up following these goats after this accident. They were again sighted but much lower down and going at a good pace. They did not seem to be very large ones after all—sour grapes! Had breakfast, then proceeded down the ridge we were on till we came to the spot where I had blundered in stalking the big brown bear a few days before. Kept along the same track and put up for the night in a goat-shed close to it.

*29th May.*—At 5 A.M. went up the nullah, above the hut, and sat in the sun and wind for more than an hour and had a cold time of it. Then a young markhor came



on to the ridge in front of us and about 300 yards above. He knew there was something wrong below him, but could not make us out as we were under cover. He kept under cover too. Had he come out boldly and given me a fair chance I might have been tempted, but he remained concealed on the ridge, behind some pine trees, and kept on giving his note of alarm for more than an hour. When the sun topped the ridge and had warmed us a little we gave him up and proceeded round the ridge and on to the hill-side above the tent on the main stream and below the precipices where I saw my first markhor a few evenings ago. We came across several fresh tracks but no markhor; so returned by the hut and down to tent by 3 P.M. It is very hot down by the stream now and the flies are a regular plague. The stream has risen a good deal and a bridge will soon be necessary for crossing it.

*30th May.*—Started at 3 P.M. up Salat stream by Mirza Khán's field, and camped on it about two miles from tent. Mirza Khán says this is his pet náli and that he will show me some real old bucks to-morrow.

*31st May.*—Started at 5-15 A.M.; crossed stream to right bank and went up a very steep and narrow gorge: took three hours to get to top of ridge. When we were more than half way up saw a markhor above us on the sky line; he had seen us long before and disappeared behind the ridge after rolling down some stones, from which the coolies had a narrow escape. Left these men behind in a depression and crossed the ridge. Came to patches of snow on a hill-side with broken rocks and had a very bad time in getting over this bit of ground. My feet seemed frozen. Then through a dense patch of young birch trees and had

a very bad time again in getting through. snow stream, then on to next ridge. Here the morning, who was lying in the shade on the ridge we had just crossed, but low, gave the alarm and disappeared on the other side whence we had just come. Disgusting! We had been looking for him all this time and he had been lying comfortably at the foot of a tree not a dozen yards from the place where we had last seen him as we were toiling up the gorge. Put up for the day under a rock overlooking a bit of dense pine forest. The two shikáries went lower down looking for game. Had a snooze; got tired of this so took out a *Civil and Military Gazette*, (more than a month old!) and read it word for word nearly to the end. Was just getting through a report on cholera by a Dr. Richards, and was wondering what "alvine choleraic discharges" meant, when a pebble fell on the paper! Looked up and could just see Sharofa's eyes peeping over the rock above me! Got round to him with all caution. He said there were three markhor just in front of the rock where I had been sitting reading the paper, not 200 yards off, but invisible from that point on account of the tall trees between us! Went lower down with the men and watched these markhor for more than an hour. They were in a bad place, and we could not get closer as the ground was covered with dry birch leaves, and they crackled loudly when the foot pressed on them. After a time the markhor moved, and we too had to do so. Got as far as we could with extreme caution, but they were still more than 300 yards off and were feeding up while we had come down, under the impression that the animals would feed down as their custom is. The sun too was blazing straight into my

a very bad time again in getting through. Breakfast at a snow stream, then on to next ridge. Here the markhor of the morning, who was lying in the shade of a birch tree on the ridge we had just crossed, but lower down, gave the alarm and disappeared on the other side whence we had just come. Disgusting! We had been looking for him all this time and he had been lying comfortably at the foot of a tree not a dozen yards from the place where we had last seen him as we were toiling up the gorge. Put up for the day under a rock overlooking a bit of dense pine forest. The two shikáries went lower down looking for game. Had a snooze; got tired of this so took out a *Civil and Military Gazette*, (more than a month old!) and read it word for word nearly to the end. Was just getting through a report on cholera by a Dr. Richards, and was wondering what "alvine choleraic discharges" meant, when a pebble fell on the paper! Looked up and could just see Sharofa's eyes peeping over the rock above me! Got round to him with all caution. He said there were three markhor just in front of the rock where I had been sitting reading the paper, not 200 yards off, but invisible from that point on account of the tall trees between us! Went lower down with the men and watched these markhor for more than an hour. They were in a bad place, and we could not get closer as the ground was covered with dry birch leaves, and they crackled loudly when the foot pressed on them. After a time the markhor moved, and we too had to do so. Got as far as we could with extreme caution, but they were still more than 300 yards off and were feeding up while we had come *down*, under the impression that the animals would feed down as their custom is. The sun too was blazing straight into my

face, while the markhor were in the shadow of the opposite spur. I had to make up my mind soon, so I decided to fire before they had grazed out of sight. Had *eight* shots at them, all at long ranges, over 300 yards, and missed every time! This was bad. I could not see the foresight at all through the blinding glare of the level sun and all the shots went high. I saw only two of the animals; one was a venerable old fellow with flowing beard and shaggy sides. I should have nailed him at the first shot. Came back to camp in the evening, cold and dejected. My bed was on the slope of the hill in a small hollow at the foot of a rock, but there was not room enough to stretch in properly, and very little space for placing things. The night was cold and very windy, and there seemed every chance of a down-pour, but luckily it did not come.

*1st June.*—Started at 5-30 A.M.; went along hill-side, the coolies following with the camp things. It was most difficult and dangerous going; we did not make more than a mile in two hours! Had to cross a ravine with perpendicular rocky sides, about 50 feet deep at least; a very dangerous job indeed. We had to scramble down rocks on one side and climb up a straight wall on the other. A fall perhaps would not have done much harm (unless from some distance up) as the bottom was full of snow; the danger was that if one did fall on the snow he was certain to roll down the very steep gradient of the ravine for about 20 yards and then drop over a sheer precipice of—heaven knows how many yards—perpendicular descent! Halted the coolies on the next ridge and went down the spur for some distance; saw nothing. It came on to snow and rain after mid-day with a very cold and cutting wind.

Saw lots of fresh markhor tracks, but the weather shut us up and we returned (snowing all the way) to the coolies and moved down to bottom of next valley; camped under a rock. Rain and snow till 8 P.M. I was snugly placed this time under a huge rock that overhung the hill-side for a sufficient distance to keep the rain and snow from falling directly on my bedding, but after a time the water began to trickle down the sides of the rock and drop over the edge. We remedied this by placing a waterproof sheet on the rock held down by stones and allowing it to fall over the edge a few inches. This arrangement carried off the rain and dropped it just beyond my bedding—there was no room to spare. After these elaborate arrangements had been completed the rain and snow ceased—about 8 P.M.

*2nd June.*—Under the same rock. Rain and snow again in the morning. Sent coolies down for some more food and the small kháki tent. Intend remaining up high for several days. For want of something better examined this journal and find I have made some mistake in my dates! Reckoning backwards I make this the 1st June! Sharofa says it is the 2nd! Cannot come to a satisfactory conclusion till I have examined last pocket-book, which is down at the tent. No sign of weather clearing to-day at all. Made another elaborate calculation of dates, and now find that this is the 3rd not the 1st! When the snow or rain ceases it becomes foggy, which is just as bad. Coolies brought up tent in the evening, but there is not level ground enough to pitch it on, though eight square feet would be sufficient. Have been obliged, therefore, to spread it on the rock like the waterproof and to tie a couple of ropes to a pine close by. This enables me to have more dry space but no extra room, as the hill slopes down very

abruptly from the edge of my blankets. Have made a roaring fire of birch logs under the pine, a few feet from my rock. When my back aches from lying under the rock, I get up and toast myself round this fire, but I have to *stand* and do it: there is no sitting room, and the wind is so uncertain that it never blows from one point for more than a couple of minutes, so a constant change of position has to be made to get out of the smoke, which from these wet birch logs is most pungent and trying to the eyes. My revolutions round the fire soon become tiresome and I am driven to the rock again. This has been going on all day; but the shikáris and coolies are much worse off. Sharofa is between two large rocks, the space between having been thatched for him by the coolies with large sheets of birch bark; but there is only room for him and his favorite coolie. Gharíba and Mirza Khán are stowed away in a hole under a small rock, a few paces off, just big enough to hold their bodies, folded up like a dog's when he feels very cold. It is wonderful into what a small space these people can screw themselves and remain, asleep and awake, in that position for hours! The coolies are managing in the best way they can; mostly crouched round a huge log fire covered with their blankets; there are no more rocks to afford protection from the weather.

*3rd June.*—Weather still the same. Everyone is getting very “táng” (hard up). After breakfast I could hold out no longer, so made the shikáries come along the ridge that goes down towards the main stream; but saw nothing, as usual. The weather I fancy has driven even the markhor under cover. The place we searched was the very one where the nine large bucks had been seen from the opposite side of the main valley a few days before. We saw

their tracks all over the place, and huge ones they were. I got on the top of a conical hill and remained there a couple of hours under my umbrella, while the shikáries hunted above and below. After that time became convinced that the rock and roaring fire were more comfortable than this exposed hill-top; so returned to camp. It drizzles, snows, hails, sleet and rains alternately, but not for long at a time. This variety must be charming to the clerk of the weather, but I don't see it. It makes one swear Alpha, Beta, Gama, Delta (these are ancient Greek oaths), but they have no effect on that hoary villain, the above-mentioned clerk: perhaps he has become used to them from the mouths of Englishmen, or these curses have become too old and meaningless to have any effect in these advanced days. Cleared up at night, but clouds still hanging about.

*4th June.*—A comparatively clear morning, so started at 5 A.M. for the ridge where I had missed the markhor eight times; over the same dangerous way, from last camping place. We all agreed it was best to make certain in that direction, as during this bad weather the markhor may have gone round there again. Had a very bad time, both going and coming. Saw nothing. We however came across the footmarks of some brutes that had actually walked *over* our tracks of a couple of days ago! The going was something infernal and frightfully dangerous in places, owing to the fresh snow and rain. Going, we went higher along the hill-side to avoid the perpendicularly-sided ravine we had crossed before: so got into the snow and among huge rocks half covered with it. We walked through this for some time, with frozen feet and aching fingers; then came to a steep hill-side, one sheet of snow, *slided* down

this and got frozen somewhere else! Besides various bumps on the same *tender* place from concealed rocks as we shot down. Coming back we funked the ascent through the snow above, so concluded to go lower down, follow the old path and take our chance over the dangerous ravine. I had a very bad time (only for *five seconds* however) crossing this ravine. Sharofa went first; he had better nerve on snow than Mirza Khán; then the latter crossed, but instead of putting his feet in the holes made by Sharofa (he was too proud for that) he crossed a little higher up. I followed Sharofa's track. About half way across Mirza Khán was just a few feet above me. The snow was loose and sodden at this point, and there was not much of it on the rock. Mirza Khán's feet slipped, and as he felt himself losing his balance and coming down on me, he uttered a despairing groan; no doubt, he thought he was slipping down into eternity over the precipice a few yards below, *and was certain to take me with him.* But Sharofa saved us. He was watching us from the edge of the snow, and saw Mirza Khán's dangerous position. He came back a few paces on his old track and held Mirza Khán up till I had passed round and behind him. Had Mirza Khán slipped a couple of feet more, he would have had me down too, and we would both have swished over the precipice in a second! There was absolutely nothing within reach to hold on by, and our hands were useless. Mirza Khán looked very yellow for some time after, and when he had to climb the side of the ravine to get on to the next slope, it was very evident that his nerves had been shaken. It has rained off and on during the day and has not cleared up yet. This blessed weather has played the mischief with my shooting in this direction. I am afraid I shall not have the chance



to bag another markhor as I cannot waste any more time in looking for them. I must turn my attention to ibex and get a couple of good heads before I have to leave this valley. It strikes me that the large fires we had and the smoke from them must have something to do with the disappearance of the markhor from these hill-sides. We have come across innumerable tracks, mostly a few days old only. I have been altogether unfortunate in this direction.

*5th June.*—Left the rock at last as the weather has cleared up. Started at 5-15 A. M. Went straight up the hill above camp till we came to the ridge, and had a last search for the nine large males that had tempted us in this direction. Though we searched most likely spots, not a horn was visible anywhere. So gave up the markhor for good and tried for ibex higher up the range, for the first time during this trip. Sighted a large flock of females but no bucks. Crossed down to a pleasant grassy hill-side and fixed camp in a green hollow. From this point grand snow views are visible on all sides. I am bilious and out of sorts, probably from my enforced idleness under the rock on the other side, and have no inclination just now to make notes of the magnificent scenery that surrounds me. The little kháki tent has been put up, and I am now in it for the first time. It is very snug, and just the kind of thing for this kind of work. How comfortable to be on the level with outstretched legs after so many nights of cramped sleep.

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## CHAPTER V.

*Journal continued.*

### IBEX SHOOTING.

*6th June.*—A storm of snow and wind last night, but the four-feet high tent bore it all! The shikáries and coolies had a bad time of it, as they had no shelter, and were obliged to crouch round a huge fire. It was very cold. Heard yesterday that the khidmátgár down at the tent on the main stream was very ill; large blisters on his stomach, pains in his loins and body swollen up! The men say he has been gorging himself with mulberry from the village and a whole leg of markhor, sleeping day and night and not moving an inch from camp all the time! He has absolutely no work to do and this is the consequence. I sent Gharíba down yesterday with five rupees to carry him down to the village, and get him treated by the local doctor as I hear there is one there. Started from camp early, and went a long distance over the grassy undulating slopes just below top of the ridge, looking for ibex. Saw a couple of small ones but let them go. About 10 o'clock, when the sun was getting hot, Mirza Khán sighted a flock of large males in a stony ravine a great distance ahead of us. They had evidently just finished breakfast and were now making for the rocks above to have their midday snooze. Watched them for some time; and when they walked out of sight followed them up and sighted them from the ridge they had last crossed. They

were on the opposite side of the ravine about 300 yards off, some lying down, some grazing, and a few going up the slope toward the top. They had evidently not yet found a comfortable place for their mid-day rest. Examined them carefully with the telescope. There, were two large fellows with horns between 40 and 50 inches, the rest were a little over 30. The biggest was the laziest, and was lying the lowest down; the other was higher up. The smaller ones were the most restless. After all had crossed out of sight, the old fellow got up too and followed them. They were all out of sight, but there was no following them straight across the ravine as three females had appeared on the ridge some distance above the point where the males had crossed, and were keeping a very sharp look-out in all directions, but above. They had so well chosen their position that we were quite under their eyes, and would have been discovered instantly if we had put even our heads above the rocks behind which we were lying concealed. They could not have been more than 800 yards from us in a direct line. This was most provoking, as we were forced to go back some distance, get a ridge between ourselves and the sharpe-eyed females, and then make a steady climb straight up to the dividing ridge; turn the flank of the females, go round and below the ridge out of their sight, and *then* come down again to the place where the males had last been seen. This was a most formidable task. I fortified myself with breakfast before attempting it, and so did the shikáries. It had to be done however, and we began the toilsome ascent about 11 A.M.—the sun blazing on our backs as we went up. It took me an hour to get to the top, and I was thoroughly done when I got there. After a rest crossed over and found ourselves on a vast

sheet of snow—the northern slope of the range! The sun had softened the snow and we sank above the knees at every step. This was very slow and tiresome work, and we had to do more than half a mile of it before we dared to put our noses even across the ridge. Coming up I had been almost melted by the sun; on *this* side I was nearly frozen by the snow, my feet were quite benumbed! Had another rest after crossing the snow, and getting under cover on the snowless side of the range. Then descended cautiously, as we had no idea of the exact locality of the bucks, and we were in constant dread of the watchful females. No ibex could be seen anywhere though we were nearly on a level with the spot where they had last been seen. We were certain that they could not be more than 150 yards from us; but whether to our right or left, or below, that was the question. The suspense, the extreme caution, and the very careful and slow pace we were forced to adopt, was playing the mischief with my nerves: and I knew I should make a bad shot if I had not time to recover myself when we sighted the game. I suppose the shikáries too saw this. Sharofa and I came to a halt, and Mirza Khán proceeded alone to spot the ibex. It took him about ten minutes. We followed and came up to the rock behind which he was standing. He signed to me to look over and there were the seven bucks, lying in all attitudes, perfectly at home on a small patch of sloping grass, about a hundred yards off across a small ravine—*my* first chance at ibex! How careful I was with the first shot, resting the rifle on the rock and taking most deliberate aim, and how cleanly I missed the largest-horned buck in the flock; and the next, and the next! Life was not worth living for the following half hour after this disaster. I had aimed

at the largest horned one while he was lying down—a very great mistake indeed. I was still bilious and out of sorts, and the ascent in the blazing sun that I had accomplished just before had not improved my nerves. The combination of these adverse circumstances was too much for me. The shikáries too looked very disgusted, and I am sure I have gone down several degrees in Mirza Khán's estimation. After a halt came down to stream at bottom of valley, and then along the next hill-side down to camp on the stream, in the evening. The khidmátgár at the main camp refuses to go to the village. The rascal I am sure is shamming. I will have him up here and make him rough it as I am doing myself; that will soon bring him round, and I shall have some warm food to eat!

*7th June.*—Started at 6 A.M., and went straight up the stream some distance. Then turned up to the left on to the spur dividing the two streams of the valley. Passed the hill-side where I made such bad shooting yesterday. Saw only one small ibex high up near the head of the valley; let him alone and went up hill-side on the left of the larger stream for a long distance. Went round head of stream on snow for more than a mile; then up a small field for half a mile to a stony ridge where we had seen some ibex yesterday evening as we were returning to camp. Found their tracks only; went up this spur to the very top, a rocky hill-point, on the dividing ridge of this valley to the east and had a glorious view all round. Mirza Khán only was with me as Sharofa had become ill and was lying down at the rocks where we first came to them. Nanga Parbat is to the south, its massy proportions giving it a right royal appearance in comparison with the low peaks and ranges about it. This is the reason why

it strikes the imagination so. Were there other peaks near the giant nearly as high, most of his grandeur would be lost. On the north and north-west facing Nanga Parbat, but with fifty miles of space between, were the snowy peaks of Rishi Poshi, Dobunni and Haramósh, only inferior in height to the mighty mass facing them on the south. These three peaks from this point seem to be on one range and almost in a straight line running east and west. Behind them, a great distance away, could be dimly seen another snowy range, which looked like a massive white wall from my perch. Below this shadowy range, on this side, were the districts of Húnza and Nagar on the other—*space!* No European can tell what is beyond except that Yárkand lies in that direction several days journey away. At our feet is a wide open valley, a level plain apparently for some distance down, a little stream running through it, the head waters of the Jagót valley, very stony, barren and desolate. In the valley beyond out of view, Mirza Khán says, there is a large lake. He visited it once and saw a strange animal on its banks, perhaps an otter or marmot. He is not strong in the vernacular of India, and his description of the beast is vague. He tried to shoot it but the animal would not allow him to come within range. He calls it “Shédi.” I am now standing on the extreme frontier of the British dominions in this quarter of the globe. Chilás and Darél are below the next ridge on my left. The Chilásis bring their cattle to graze here on the slopes before me in summer, a little later on. It is rather lucky for me they are not here just now. Mirza Khán gave me some particulars regarding the Húnza and Nagar people. The first are strongest in numbers, and their country is on the left bank of the river that divides the

valley which these two clans possess. The Nagarites are the weaker party, and inhabit the right bank. The two largest villages (Húnz and Nagar) face each other the river running between. The country grows fruit (*i.e.*, apricots) on which almost exclusively the people live. Very little grain is sown. All the other necessities of life have to be imported. The Maharaja subsidizes them. Their vakils (agents) go annually to Srinagar to get paid, and then and there are purchased their year's supplies. A few years ago they smuggled a "Kárigar" (artificer) from Kashmir into their country who could make *cannon*! Afterwards by degrees they secretly collected lead, iron, &c., and now they have *two* cannons! The Húnza people are very zabardast (high-handed), and extremely jealous of their country. They allow no one to enter it, not even a Nagarite! If one of these latter is caught on this side of the river the Húnzites beat their drums, collect the people on both banks of the river, bring their prisoner forward, cut his throat in the presence of his friends across, and throw his body into the river! They are so particular about the entrance of strangers into their country on account of a pass in the wall-like snowy range above their valley to which they attach great importance. It is extremely easy, and the only one into the unknown country beyond. They have built a fort on the road to this pass in such a position that any traveller wishing to cross must first go through the gates of the fort! This pass is used exclusively by the Húnza people; when they have collected a sufficient gang of slaves, they take these poor wretches to Yárkand for sale. It was the custom of these people a few years ago to come on kidnaping expeditions on this side, and sell the men they caught to the Yárkandis on the other.

They will not however sell Báltis, *i.e.*, men from Báltistan. They consider them "brothers" because they are Shías like themselves! I met the Húnza and Nagar vakils at Astór, on their way down to Srinagar. They looked a filthy lot, but I did not perceive any difference between them and the Dārd̄s of the country. Mirza Khán shikári says their language is quite different, and that there are "Múglis" amongst them. This may mean that the Húnza and Nagar people are Múgals.

Came down from the rocky hill-top and had breakfast. Then followed the ibex tracks down again. This must be the very flock I missed yesterday! They seem to have gone back to their old quarters. Ascended to top of low central ridge and carefully searched the opposite hill-side: saw nothing. Went along top of spur and came across the fresh tracks of a bear. He must have come *down* the same way that we had gone *up*; but we did not see him. Probably he was descending the spur this morning at the very time we were ascending the stream below! He had the advantage of us, and has no doubt made the most of it. Followed his tracks down some distance, then gave him up, for he was evidently travelling fast. Went along hill-side towards camp over some difficult ground, where Mirza Khán said ibex should be found. After crossing some dense scrub and bad rocky places, he sighted a buck coming in our direction, and then another a little distance from the first one. We went higher up the hill-side to get above the game and then began the stalk. After some cautious going, during which, on crossing a slaty ledge, the rock under my feet gave way and the slates went down with a terrible rattle that I imagined must be heard a mile off. The shikáries gave me reproachful



looks. I held on with both hands and found footing again, but I felt my arms strained. The ibex, however, had not been alarmed. We lost sight of them and had a most anxious time of it; but we did see one at last and managed to get within 150 yards of him. He was on the slope over and above which we had just come, and he was evidently proceeding to the rocky places we had just crossed for his night's lodging. But it was not late yet and he was in no hurry. He halted every ten paces and grazed about, sometimes looking to the right and left evidently for his companion, who was not visible. I took a careful aim and hit him at the first shot from No. 1 Express. This was a capital shot, and made some amends for my blundering yesterday. Mirza Khán shouted for joy when he saw the animal roll down. The ibex was looking *down* the valley, his left flank facing me. I aimed for his left shoulder. When the bullet hit him he rushed up hill with tremendous bounds for about 40 yards and then rolled down again. On examining the body the bullet hole *was found right in the centre of his chest!* He must have turned and looked in my direction just as I pressed the trigger, otherwise it was impossible that the bullet could have struck him in that spot. But I did not notice the movement, neither did Sharofa who was watching all the time. The buck is of enormous size, but young; horns, only  $32\frac{3}{4}$  inches. I never saw such a monster before. He was soon skinned and we started for camp as fast as we could go, as it was rapidly getting dark. Mirza Khán carried the hind quarters of the ibex, Jamála the head and skin, and Sharofa the two rifles. Mirza Khán led us down a precipice across the face of which was a goat path; then to the stream, before darkness came on. The moon however was

at the full, and though not shining into the valley at that time, the darkness was not so bad as it might have been. Went along the stream for a couple of miles, and at 8 P.M. reached camp at the foot of the central spur where both streams meet. I made sure of coming to grief among the stones and logs of pine trees lying in our path, but I managed to escape without even a scratch.

*8th June.*—An off day. Remained in camp. Sharofa has been suffering from severe headache, etc., for the last two days, something like myself. Manawar Khán, the sipáhi (my commissariat officer) came up to-day with a message from Wazir Búghdór Sháh to the effect that I should come down now to the village as there was a disturbance across the border among the Yághistanis (rebels), and they might come across and loot me! This inconsequent reasoning did not impress me much. I shall certainly remain up a week longer; so ordered Manawar Khán to take everything in the lower camp down to Damót. The khidmatgár is still very ill but able to move about and *can eat a little!* This man's illness is I suspect another plot and there is no doubt that all my party, above and below, are getting very sick of this rough shikáring business; and they are conspiring to frighten me down to the village with these stories. But I don't get this chance every day! I find that my servant had a whole leg of the last markhor I shot given him for *my* use. He ate up all himself, the glutton! I never had a bit. Every one says he is an enormous eater, though he has not a big body. His blisters have all burst and he has pains all round his body; he says he is dying and is always crying, etc., etc. These harrowing tales have no effect on my obdurate heart. His blisters may burst and he himself may burst, but I am

going to have my ibex hunt all the same. I think I have taken the measure of the gentlemen who are with me. I begin to suspect even Sharofa. His pains and aches too, I fancy, are put on. Manawar has gone back. The coolies brought in the remaining portion of the ibex early this morning; it had been safely stowed away by Mirza Khán for the night. I feel the want of my *cooking* servant a good deal. He has been quite useless as a cooking animal ever since I have taken to lodging out under the rocks in these upper regions. During all this time I have been living on chapaties, tinned beef and jams. My stomach yearns for something *cooked* and warm. Even my sleep is becoming disturbed by visions of splendid dinners that are only an exasperating memory when I awake. I am therefore going to try my "prentice hand" at ibex chops this evening, cooked in the cover of the only pot I have here. The experiment shall be on my own vile body, both as to the cooking and the eating; and I pray for success in both operations! I forgot to record in the proper place (a few days ago) my first experience of "black" dāl (pulse). It was an *agreeable* surprise to me. It is very palatable when boiled long enough (five or six hours), and is eaten scalding hot, after the shades of evening have fallen and the surrounding darkness softens the color of the dish you are about to absorb. Another ingredient is also necessary. I was almost forgetting it, contemplating the delights of the black mess; you must be thoroughly famished.

*9th June.*—Started at 5-30 A.M., crossed Bóin stream at camp and climbed opposite hill-side. Had not proceeded more than 15 minutes, when Jamála, the breakfast coolie, saw an ibex across the valley going up hill. Had

four shots at him, at very long ranges and missed. He was a small buck and evidently crossed over from our side a little ahead of us. The hill-side was so steep and slippery from the spines of the pines lying thickly on the ground, that I had no rest to fire from—not even firm standing room. Proceeded up last spur dividing the Bóin and Hasharai streams—splendid places for markhor below, and *above*, for ibex. Saw five small bucks of the latter and had a long and tiresome stalk after them, but they had disappeared by the time we neared the spot where they had been marked down. Descended in the evening to Hasharai stream, a most break-neck descent, very slow and most trying to the muscles of the legs. Camp is fixed on the banks of the stream below a large and gloomy cave, the entrance to which is blocked up by dense undergrowth. We had to pass by the mouth of this black hole and then push through these bushes to get to the coolies. The small kháki tent was pitched here under some grand pine trees not two yards from the brink of the stream, the deafening roar of which, echoed back by the cave above, made all speaking impossible. Business was carried on by signs. When these failed one had to go up to a coolie and shout into his ear what one wanted. They made a fire close to the tent against a fallen pine tree. There was a conflagration ten minutes after, and the whole of us were in danger of being roasted alive on one hand or drowned and dashed to pieces in the raging torrent on the other. We had a battle royal in subduing the fire with green branches and water from the stream; and I did without any log fire.

*10th June.*—Started at 5-15 A.M. and went up Hasharai, coolies accompanying. After going a mile, crossed a goat

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bridge over the stream. Sent back a coolie from this point with some spare things, tent, bedding, &c. I have now only four coolies, plus the two shikáries, and my flying camp is reduced to very small proportions. I have done this to lighten the loads and save the commissariat; the more coolies one has the greater the quantity of *atta* (flour) has to be carried for their food. Carriage and commissariat are *the two* difficulties in all expeditions, great and small. Went along stream which comes down from the left a little farther on, almost at right angles from its lower course. Proceeded a mile beyond this bend. There is an easy goat path from the bridge much used in summer time by the Ghór people. In fact I am now in their grazing grounds and they will be here in ten days more, so Mirza Khán says. I shall be down by that time. The village of Ghór is on the reverse side of this range, a short distance from the watershed above me. They are beyond the border and are rather turbulent; that is the reason why the Wazir and his people are so anxious to get me out of this place. The Ghórians have no right to feed their flocks on this side, as the country up to the watershed belongs to Damót; but they are the stronger party, and the people of Damót have to keep on good terms with them. Ghór is also a convenient asylum for refugees from Kashmiri oppression. A good many people from Damót and the surrounding villages have found protection there. Called a halt and had breakfast. After that cooked two days' food before making a dash for the head waters of the main stream. The Hasharai, I am told, is a good place for ibex, but the country is very open and undulating, and no fires must be made,—in fact could not be made as the head of the valley is a good

distance beyond the limit of forest and no firewood can be had there. We are camping now at the last birch trees. With the help of Jáfár Bata was very successful in making a *curry* of ibex seasoned with wild rhubarb! I must say however that Jáfár should get the most credit. One or two suggestions of mine as to the preparation of this dish were so beside the point that Jáfár treated them with scorn and could hardly conceal his contempt for my ignorance! After this I subsided into the position of his assistant, fetching the water, peeling the rhubarb, etc. Jáfár has become most invaluable to me since the collapse of my regular *chef*, or rather I should say "inflation," for I hear he is visibly swelling every day. In the first days of my travels Jáfár came to the front from mere force of character and was promoted from coolie to water-carrier. He then made himself very useful in the cooking tent and soon dominated the limp pseudo-Persian gentleman who presided there. When I cut loose from my regular camp, Jáfár again received promotion, and was appointed *factotum* in my rough shikári life. He became cook, water-carrier, body servant all in one. But I never discovered what a jewel he was in the first part, till just now when I tried to show him how to make a curry. I disdained his assistance the other day when I essayed the chops; but Jáfár having one attribute, at least, of genius—sublime patience—bided his time, and to-day he has become master of the situation, and, of his master, by "nobbling" his stomach. Only one drawback mars the happiness of this discovery. Jáfár is extremely filthy in his habits and clothes, the prominent characteristic of his countrymen! Twenty years of rough sporting life in India and the Himálayás have somewhat deadened my sense of delicacy

in matters of food, but I must draw the line at Kashmiri filthiness. The consequence is that I have refrained from asking Jáfár to display his culinary skill beyond that of cooking me *four* chapatties every evening, two for breakfast and two for dinner. However, nature cannot be denied any longer. I *must* have some kind of warm food. I shall make the highly accomplished Jáfár cook something as often as practicable and supervise his operations closely during the time. While my curry is being perfected the shikáries have not been idle. They are under the rock a few yards from me close to a sparkling little stream running at the foot of the rock, in a deep shady channel, bordered by flowers and tender young grass. A huge fire is blazing alongside. A coolie by the water is kneading *atta* (flour) in big lumps of six pounds and handing it up to another, who is beating it out between his hands into huge cakes of a pound each, more than an inch thick. Another, helped by Mirza Khán, is baking these cakes in the fire, and toasting them round and round—a very warm piece of work indeed! Sharofa is lending a hand generally. One coolie has fallen sick—has a pain in his stomach. I have just doctored him with some chlorodyne. The big cakes take a long time to cook—in fact they are only half cooked when they are laid by. The coolies say it takes too much trouble and time to make thinner ones! My curry, Jáfár's I should say, is a success; I had some at breakfast and it was really delicious. The rhubarb has given it a pleasant acid flavour that I appreciate very much. Our arrangements were completed in two hours. I am leaving all the coolies here for two days. The two shikáries, myself, Jáfár Bata (the indispensable), and Jamála (the breakfast coolie), five

with wood pulled out from the goat-shed; but as it was made on the floor of the shed and a snowstorm was raging outside, it could not disturb the game. I managed pretty well under the umbrella, and the waterproof spread over a corner of the shed; but the rest, who were crouched round the fire, had a bad time of it. The roof of the shed was no protection as it was full of large holes, and half of it was quite uncovered. I preferred this uncovered corner. I was quite protected by my umbrella and waterproof, though the space so protected was just enough to keep me dry while I stood or sat down! Having written up my journal and talked my companions dry, I was being hard pushed indeed for some occupation. In my despair I fell back on an old *Pioneer* (24th April) that happened to be in my blanket and read it through, sometimes sitting, sometimes standing! To sit down for any length of time in the pungent smoke, on a very hard stone, was impossible, so most of my writing, talking and reading was done *standing*, my head touching the ribs of the umbrella, and my eyes just on a level with the edge of the stone-wall of the hut! But the blinding smoke conquered me at last even standing as I was, and I had to abandon my paper, shut my eyes, and think what a fool I was to endure such discomforts for the sake of a buck goat! Just before dusk as the storm came to an end, I heard a bird piping joyously among the rocks close by—the only sound, and a very little one, that broke the silence which had suddenly fallen upon us. It was a weak note, and would have been inaudible 50 yards off; but the ring of joy in it was unmistakable, and I joined mentally in the little bird's song, for I knew he 'was the harbinger of fair weather. Darkness fell on us soon after, but I had time



enough to get out of my hole and have a look round. My musical friend was on a rock close by—a russet-colored little bird, very homely-looking indeed. He was sitting beside his nest, the partner of his joys keeping the eggs warm within. My heart “cottoned” to that bird. No other living creature, beside my companions, was within ken, and the scene round me, though grand, was depressingly desolate. Turned in for the night in the goat-hole between the fire and the rocky wall—Africa on one side and Iceland on the other! Had a bad night, woke a dozen times and had a series of dreams during each unconscious interval. Luckily there was no rain or snow. Saw the moon once shining brilliantly through the gap above me; next time there were only lowering clouds. Jáfár Bata slept next me; then Sharofa and Jamála. Mirza Khán elected to sleep above; there was no room for him below; he had the shelter of some logs piled on each other, and a fire all to himself, but it went out during the night, and this morning Mirza Khán looks somewhat frozen and woe-begone! Left camping place at 5-15 A.M., and went straight up hill to a point where Mirza Khán had seen some ibex (females) last evening. They had gone along the ridge *down* the valley, seeking some sheltered place from the storm; followed their tracks. The slopes of this open valley are now one sheet of snow from last evening’s storm. From the top of the ridge we examined carefully with the glasses every inch of ground up to the rocky wall at the head of the valley; not a single living thing is visible, and it is not surprising; the violence of the recent storm must have driven all the game away to shelter on the slopes of the Chilás valley, and they cannot return to this side till the snow

has melted. This beastly weather is most unlucky for me. I have lost the best chance I have ever had of bagging some large ibex. The upper Hasharai is of the usual saucer-shape, level and undulating below, and gently sloping—grass covered, in some places stony—hill-sides all round. The highest portion dividing it from the Chilás country is a rocky ridge, running round the head of the valley. Three streamlets run down to the bottom and then form the main stream. A path runs along its bank to the top of the ridge, beyond which is the Chilás village of Khiner about six miles distant, Mirza Khán says, from the goat-shed. Khiner is the next village in importance to Chilás itself. Sattár is the name of the chief of the place. I horrified Mirza Khán when I was in the extremity of despair in the goat-hole yesterday, evening by proposing to walk over and visit Khiner; he has been looking unhappy ever since! Came on to the ridge dividing Bóin from Hasharai. The former is a much more ibex-looking ground, and as I am *certain* there are some good bucks there, arranged to return to my former hunting quarters. Sent Jamála down to bring the coolies and traps round to camp of the 9th. I have only another week for shikár and then my return tramp must begin, so I had better make the most of the few days left. Breakfasted, and went down spur into Bóin valley. Had not gone far when a hurricane of wind and snow and sleet came on, and I had to crouch behind a rock not much larger than myself on the bare hill side; there was no other cover in sight, a few small birch trees were scattered about. Remained in this position for an hour; saw no hope of the storm abating, so made for camp straight down instead of going along the hill-side

towards the head of the valley. We were thus obliged to abandon the exploration of a most likely portion of ibex country. Had not gone far when the storm suddenly came to an end. We regretted much having come down so soon; but a Providence directs the movements of a solitary sportsman as well as the march of a nation. Sitting on the hill-side and scanning the central ridge of Bóin where I had shot the ibex, Mirza Khán saw three large bucks, not far from the spot where the first one had been bagged, but about 600 yards further down, towards the end of the spur, in the direction of camp! Had the shower not driven us down so low we would certainly have missed seeing these three! Two of the ibex were grazing about, the third was lying near a large flat white stone, a capital mark for guiding the stalkers. He was a few yards above the other two, and certainly had the largest horns of all. In a direct line, they were not more than a mile from us, but to get to them we had certainly to go double the distance, down to the bottom of the valley, across the stream, and up again over some precipices that, from this side, looked utterly impossible. It did not take us long to rush down to the bottom, but going up was much slower work. We had some trouble getting across the cliffs. There was luckily a goat path along the rocks that Mirza knew and followed. There were bad places in it here and there, but they were all crossed without a thought in the presence of the game above us. After this, going along the hill-side was easy enough, and I think we got into position *above* our quarry within an hour from our start. They had not moved from the spot where we had marked them down, and the large-horned one was still taking his ease near the white rock. By cautious

creeping we got within fifteen yards of the large one in our front, and about thirty from the other two feeding below us. This was a most exciting position to be in, but it was also a most uncomfortable and trying one for me who had to use the rifle. The slope of the hill was very abrupt, and I could not get firm footing on the crumbling earth. I was standing behind a rock, partially covered by the branches of a small tree. When I stood *on tip toe*, I could see the ibex lying down gazing steadily across the valley. There was a shallow water channel between us. When I stooped *down* I could see him indistinctly between the leaves of the tree. In neither position could I fire, and the excitement and uncertain footing were telling on my nerves! I bore this for at least two minutes, looking right into the eyes of the unconscious buck and admiring the splendid sweep of his horns. There was a far-off look in his large liquid eyes as if he were watching for danger on the hill-side opposite where we must have been under his view an hour ago; he certainly was not conscious of the danger within fifteen yards of him! Sometimes he would lazily shake his head and flap his ears to drive the flies off: then he certainly looked into *my* eyes, but the thick screen of leaves and the rock prevented discovery. The wind was, of course, in the right direction *for us*. There was a small round vacant space among the leaves through which I thought I could bring the sights to bear on the buck's shoulder as he lay, but I still had to raise myself on my toes a little, and that was not a steady position for a shot! There was, however, no other way and I had to chance it. Motioning Sharofa to hold up my feet with his hands, I stood on tip toe, took aim and fired. *Of course I missed!* The buck sprang to his feet and

stood confounded for a moment and I gave him the second barrel of No. 1. *I missed again!* The ibex vanished round the hill and I thought seriously of suicide; but Sharofa brought me to my senses by telling me to look out for the other two. I turned round and went down a few paces but no bucks could be seen. A minute after, as we stood motionless, ready for their appearance, one of them rushed from under our position to my right about 40 yards off. He was going at a good pace, but I tumbled him over like a rabbit with a bullet through his neck! Sharofa gave a satisfied grunt and we prepared for the third but he never showed. We crossed his tracks afterwards on our return to camp; he had rushed down some distance before turning along the hill-side. Reason having returned, I could not bring myself to believe that I had missed the big buck *twice* at fifteen yards. Mirza Khán said I had hit at the second shot, but the ibex went off with such a rush that I was extremely doubtful. However to make certain Sharofa went off to follow up his tracks. Mirza Khán had gone down to *hxlal* the second ibex. After ten minutes Sharofa returned and reported that he came on blood after following the tracks a short distance; a hundred yards further on he came to a place where the ibex had rolled; followed the traces till he came to the edge of the precipice, looked over and saw the dead ibex lying in the Bóin stream at the bottom of the valley! After rushing along for a hundred yards the animal must have collapsed and rolled down, shooting the precipice and falling plump into the water two hundred and fifty yards below! What terrible ill luck this is for me. Leaving Mirza Khán to cut off the second buck's head, Sharofa and myself returned on our tracks, got down to and followed the stream

till we came to the carcase. What a smash there had been! The body was divided in two and the horns were in several pieces; the lower jaw was missing altogether, and the skin about the head was much torn. I was in despair, and was lamenting the loss of such a fine head, when Sharofa said the horns could be mended, and the head fixed properly as the cores of the horns had not been injured. He cut off the head, and we picked up all the pieces of the horns we could find, and fitting them on found that none were missing. As the animal's throat had not been cut in the orthodox fashion, the meat was of no use, and the skin was in two pieces, besides several large gaps; so we left the mutilated body where it was and waited for Mirza Khán with the other head. I examined with the glasses the face of the precipice down which the ibex had fallen. A pair of large hill crows were busy picking up bits of flesh from the ledges of rock. By their movements I could judge exactly the line of descent. The body after toppling over the edge must have twice bumped against rocky projections before the final smash just above the stream, whence it rolled into the water. The perpendicular height is not less than two hundred and fifty yards, Sharofa says more. It is lucky for me that the head and horns have not been utterly ruined by such a tremendous fall. It was amusing to watch the crows flying down from ledge to ledge and picking up the flesh adhering to the rocks. When we began our stalk these birds noticed our movements, and at once divined our intentions. I am sure this was not the first time they witnessed an ibex stalk. They found the ibex at once and sat close by them on a tree cawing impatiently for the *dénouement*. The ibex apparently were quite used

to them. After I fired my first shot the crows disappeared and I never saw them again till I came down to the stream. This is not the first time I have noticed the intelligence of these birds. A pair of them always attend our camp and follow us when we go off on our shooting excursions. I do not think they are the same pair, however. I fancy a couple are permanently located in each valley. After we leave our breakfasting place, they invariably come down to it and make a thorough search for crumbs, etc.; but they are extremely cautious and cunning. I had tried several times to tempt them down by throwing pieces of chapati some distance from me; they would hover a few yards over the bread, or sit on a tree eyeing it intently, but would never attempt to seize the pieces while I remained on the spot. As soon as we had left, however, they flew down at once and cleared away all the crumbs before we had proceeded many yards. They have been present at almost every stalk I have attempted, successful or unsuccessful and I am sure have been as much pleased with my good shots as I have been myself. And on the other hand, I dare say I have heard *their* expressions of disgust at my failures, only I did not understand their language! They are most amusing creatures in their habits and customs, which I have watched closely, for hours together, lying idly on the hill-side empty of thoughts and ideas. This must certainly be their pairing season, or connubial affection has been cultivated among them to a very high pitch. When the female is any distance off from her lord and master he will take up a position on the thick branch of a tree and begin a series of calls with every modulation his jarring voice is capable of. First it is a wheedling caw of affection

accompanied by a gentle rustling of the wings ; soon it changes into a querulous complaint of neglect on the part of his life's partner. If this does not fetch her, he loses his temper and in a loud caw of rage *orders* her up. In this last stage his actions become most energetic, his head goes down at every utterance and his tail works up and down like a lever! All this means that he wants his head scratched! When the wife does turn up, she proceeds to business at once, rubbing his head all over with her beak, and sending the old fellow into ecstasies, every feather in his body quivering with enjoyment! Then he launches himself on the pure air of the mountains sailing in wide circles and scanning the hilly slopes from side to side ; then he balances himself on wings at an acute angle, and flies flutteringly from one side of the valley to the other and back again, uttering self-satisfied cries all the while. This I suppose is done to excite the admiration of his partner! The female is not so demonstrative. She seems always intent on business—household cares and toil have evidently made her sober. She reminds me of the women of the country whose whole life seems to be one long drudgery, all the enjoyments of life, such as they are, being apparently the portion of the male population. While I have been toiling up the mountain side, or painfully descending some awkward bit of ground, I have often noticed these crows. This circumstance has inclined me to believe that if one of these intelligent birds could be trained to spot the game for the hunter in the above manner, the latter would be saved many a weary trudge, and would have many more chances of making a good bag than he has now. Mirza Khán came up after a long delay. Sharofa said he was taking so much time because he was hiding



the meat; but Mirza Khán said he had left it all on the hill-side, bringing away the head and skin—and enough for his own dinner, *i.e.*, the liver, heart kidneys, etc. Reached old camp at dusk.

*12th June.*—Remained in camp to prepare the heads. Their measurements are as follows: The large head (much damaged) 45 inches round the curve. The smaller one is only 32½ inches. We have patched and tied up with string the broken horns and fixed them on their sockets. I can see now that they can be mended pretty fairly, The skin, too, of the head is not so much damaged as I thought. It will have to be patched and sewn in some places, and to complete the trophy a false jaw will have to be put in. Sharofa assures me that the Srinagar taxidermist will make up the head so well that hardly any damage will be perceptible. I hope so, for this is the second best trophy I have secured this trip. After breakfast, as we were consulting about our future movements, for I have three days more yet to spend up here, all our arrangements were brought to an abrupt end by the appearance of a messenger, Manawar Khán, bringing a letter from the Commandant of the Búnji Fort. This is a true copy of the document written on a dirty half sheet of letter paper:—

“Sir,—To-day received a written order on me that in Yaseen enemies reached for battle. Therefore I begs that you kindly return in Boonjee. If you cannot come then send me certification soonly. Your servant, Farman Ally.”

My friend Bagh Singh the commandant, had it seems proceeded in hot haste to Gilgit, so this missive was signed by the fort Adjutant now in command. On the back of this letter was a Persian one more in detail and much

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more understandable. "From Farman Ally, Adjutant. The General (at Gilgit) has informed me by telegram that Pehlwán and Múlk Amán, the rebels, have created a disturbance in Yásin and have collected an armed force. For this reason I request the favour of your at once leaving your shooting ground, which is close to foreign territory and most dangerous, and returning to Búnji. I have received very urgent orders from the General on this point. If you still wish to remain after this intimation, kindly send me a certificate to the effect that you do so on your own responsibility.—Firman Ali of the Dhiraj regiment." It was apparent also that our supplies had been stopped! I had sent down for a supply of flour for three days more. This messenger informed me that no flour was to be had—a sudden scarcity had fallen on the land. I was obliged therefore to give in at last, so packing up the skins and heads we made for the main stream at once. My shooting in this valley is over. I have been thirty-one days in it, and during that time have gone through much rough and hard work, bagging two markhor and three ibex. This is not a large bag, but I am satisfied with it. I have had a glorious time. The mountain air and vigorous exercise have been a tonic to my heat-enfeebled constitution worth a donkey load of doctor's stuff, and I feel as strong and healthy as I was when ten years younger. Got down to Hasharai stream in an hour and followed its course down through some pleasant shady spots along its banks. One place, however, was an awkward one. The path led along a precipice for some yards, first in an upward direction and then almost perpendicularly downwards. It seemed to me to be, in the absence of any excitement to distract my attention, the worst bit of ground I had ever crossed. To make

matters worse, Mirza Khán, who led, after going sufficiently high up the face of the precipice to get us all well on to the dangerous portion, called out that he had missed the way! We had to reverse action—a most disagreeable operation. I hear that the coolie whom I sent back a few days ago with the little tent had an accident here. He tumbled down into the stream below, but escaped with a good ducking and some damage to his face and nose. Two of the tent poles however disappeared down the stream, and my milk bottle was smashed. The drop from the path to the water is about thirty feet. The stream in flood no doubt broke the force of the fall; had the man fallen on rocks he could not have escaped from broken limbs. Going up was not half so disagreeable as getting down. Fortunately while we were in this awkward fix a party of coolies came up with the post and some *fresh* fruit from the village. These men brought another urgent message from the Wazir for me to return. Reached my old camping ground at 1 P.M. Halted under the trees for two hours and started again for village: got in by sun down. Found the tent pitched by the side of a pleasant water-course. Wazir Búghdór Sháh paid his visit and looked expectant of the promised reward for his assistance. I gave him twenty rupees in cash and a railway rug as a token to keep me in remembrance. He was perfectly satisfied. It was a much more difficult business squaring Mirza Khán. He had been with me a month and I paid him twenty-five rupees, but he was not satisfied. He had certainly worked hard and had served me right well. I thought that amount, however, sufficient for his trouble. He asked for payment for the goat's milk that had been supplied to me; I paid him three rupees for that, about

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double the actual value. He then demanded *sugar* for a sick child in some distant village, a palpable invention, I gave him more than a pound. At last, being at his wit's end for further excuses, he demanded from Sharofa that he should be paid for the logs of wood, that we had consumed at our fires on the mountain side! I drew the line here and the stream of my rupees dried up. As a parting gift I gave him the largest skinning knife I had. Several times in our tramps I had seen him admiring it with an envious look. He was gratified, but I am sure there was a regret lurking in his mind that he had not been able to dig into my rupees to a greater extent. On the whole, I was pleased with Mirza Khán. He is a man of middle height, compactly made and every inch a mountaineer. His steady-looking brown eyes, short speech and quick manner mark him as the true shikári. He has all the characteristics of his race and is a good specimen of the higher class among them. He is a connection of the Wazir's, and stoutly resists all attempts to carry the baggage of the rulers of his country, for whom he has an intense but very well suppressed hatred; he has threatened his Wazir to flee across to Ghór (where his brother already is, having sought refuge there after slaying his nephew in a fit of jealousy) if he is pushed too hard on this point. Carrying loads is the badge of servitude in this country. The lower classes perform the duty without a murmur. It is gentlemen of Mirza Khán's kidney who are mightily offended when an attempt is made to force them to undertake the distasteful task. Sportsmen travelling in these parts should bear this distinction in mind, and respect it, on all occasions. If the people discover that he is aware of the distinction and defers to it, he will rise some

degrees in the estimation of at least the better class ; and will obtain their services much more willingly and with better results to himself and the object of his travels. Without Mirza Khán's help my sport in this valley would have been very tame indeed. But for his good-will and willing exertions I am sure my bag would have been about as large as that of my predecessor who worked over the same ground for three weeks, or more, and had to leave at last without a single head of game of any kind!

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## CHAPTER VI.

### *Journal continued.*

#### AFTER BEARS IN THE MIR MALIK VALLEY.

*13th June.*—Up early in the morning and started for Búnji. After a short delay at the ferry crossed on the boat, and got over safely. The Kashmiris are great cowards on water. One young man, a traveller, strong and sturdy, amused me greatly. He was in abject fear from the time he put his foot in the boat till he jumped out of it on the other bank. He began his prayers as he entered, mumbling them scarcely above his breath. When the boat was cast off they became quite audible; by the time she was in the centre of the stream, buffeted by boisterous waves, his voice rose to a pitch loud enough to be heard on both banks; but as the boat neared the other side his voice fell in proportion as the danger lessened, and by the time we came to, had subsided again to a murmur! The passage is a somewhat rough, though short one, and the boat used for crossing most unsuited for such a river. It is in shape exactly like the boats on the Jhilam in the Valley, but longer and higher at the sides, the breadth not being increased. When the river is rougher than usual all crossing is stopped, sometimes for two and three days, and there is only one boat! I heard of a larger one somewhere, used on special occasions, but it was nowhere in sight. The boatmen are Kashmiris from the Jhilam, the timidest watermen in the world and perhaps the worst suited of all

for such a strong and boisterous river as the Indus at this ferry. A few years ago I was informed a boat was dashed against the rocks, and all in it drowned. The boatmen, however, are so timid that they refuse to cross when the river is at all high or rough; for this reason I should say accidents very rarely occur. The Búnji ferry is the most important point on the main route from Kashmir to the frontier post, the fort of Gilgit, and certainly it is the weakest. It is extraordinary that the Kashmir Government have not made better arrangements here, or do not fix upon a better and safer spot somewhere else. The cost of building a bridge, of course, precludes any hope of that solution of the difficulty, but half a dozen serviceable boats should always be at hand, and a sufficient staff of boatmen, accustomed to a turbulent river, to man them at a moment's notice. Perhaps a more convenient crossing place could be found some distance higher up, near the point where the Gilgit river joins the Indus. The time may not be far distant when this route to Central Asia will suddenly rise into extreme importance, and there will not then be any means at hand to strengthen this weak point at short notice. Reached Búnji at 10 P.M.; found here my invalid khidmát-gár. He was a disgusting object to look at. A dirty greasy sheet was wrapped round him—his only garment. The middle portion of his body, all round, was a mass of raw flesh; all his blisters had burst some days ago, but they would not heal, and matter was now running from them. He was plastered over with a black greasy ointment which he said had been made by a wise man in the fort that day, and he had just applied it for the first time. I vowed on the spot that I should never eat anything from his hands again; all my dreams of warm and

comforting food were not to be realized yet awhile. It is extremely hot down in this plain, and the flies in the apricot garden are a perfect plague. Sent things on ahead and started for Rámghat at 3 P.M. Camped on the Missigan stream,  $1\frac{1}{4}$  miles from the bridge; not a pleasant spot for a camp by any means, but much better than the stinking place by the bridge itself. There has been some rain about here, and clouds are hanging about still. This makes it cool and pleasant.

*14th June.*—Started at *mid-night* so as to be well up on the Huttu Pir range before the sun became too hot. Reached crest of pass at 7 A.M. after a halt of an hour for tea at 5 o'clock. Kept with the coolies all the time. I have been dreading this march for days, as the ascent is long and stiff, and the heat at this time of the year very trying indeed; but by starting in the middle of the night I have saved myself and the men with me from a very trying ordeal. The coolies from Damót dreaded the sun and heat as much as I did myself, and came along in the dark very willingly indeed. The first rays of the sun caught me just as I was topping the pass. Fifty yards down the other side I was in the shade of the mountain and pushed along for a good distance without being touched by the sun at all. Reached Dóin fort at 9-30 A.M.; the sun was hot enough *then*, and I was glad enough to rush into the small travellers' bungalow that is here, and get into the shade. I have returned by the upper or mule road. The heat on the lower road must be quite unendurable just now, and in that portion of it where those terrible ups and downs occur, heat apoplexy after 10 A.M. would be a certainty! The higher road, though it is longer and the ascent of the Huttu Pir a stiff one, yet,



it is much more pleasant to travel over. I would never try the lower one again, either going or returning. Left Dóin at 1-30 p.m. The road from this place descends gradually until it joins the lower path at the ridge overlooking the village of Dashkin. Got in at 7 P.M.—eighteen hours going—rather a stiff walk, but I am in such good condition now that I do not feel in the least fatigued, my feet only feel sore and hot.

*15th June.*—Started at 4 A.M.; met a sportsman camped near the first bridge just below the Garai valley. Stopped with him till 12 noon, having a long chat—the first English words I have spoken for more than a month. Started for Astór in the blazing sun and was nearly snuffed out by the heat. I think this is the hottest and most trying bit of road I have done yet. Had it not been for a little spring of water half way up to Astór where I had a good drink and wetted my head copiously, I am sure the consequences of this walk in the sun would have ended seriously for me.

Reached Astór at 1-30 P.M. Rózi Khán, Wazir, called in the evening. The silvery stream had to flow again. I had promised the Wazir a D. B. gun if he got me sport to my satisfaction, but as my bag was by no means large, I considered that he had not earned the gun, and presented him with twenty rupees in cash and my best double blanket instead. He was well pleased. Fancy “squaring” the chief official in a district in the plains with a similar present! On the other hand, the Magistrate and Collector in a British district does not cultivate life on the small salary of rupees forty per mensem! Presented Gharíba with fifteen rupees and my old ulster. Manawar Khán got ten rupees. Bought four maunds of flour, ten days’ supply, for

a ten days' expedition after brown bears. I have just that time to spare and will make the most of it. Found my old dâkwálá (postman) here, twenty-one days from the date he last left me! He is a rare old scoundrel, the only man of my party that has not given satisfaction. I have now degraded him and made him baggage porter. Some time ago Sharofa told me a romantic story of twelve Kashmiri soldiers who had been found napping in one of the posts on the Gilgit road, some years ago, and had all been kidnapped by a party of marauders from across the border! They were taken to Chitrál and sold into slavery. After several years' wandering and adventure they found their way one by one to Yárkand, but still in the condition of slaves. They were emancipated there through the influence of the Maharajah, *the whole twelve* reached Srinagar safe and sound after an absence of ten years. One of them named Gholám Mohammed is now a Jemádar (petty officer) in the Kashmir service at Astór. I was most anxious to see him and hear his adventures, but he seems to have been kept out of my way. I am sorry I have missed seeing him. I have no doubt his story would have been most interesting and well worth making a note of.

*16th June.*—Left Astór at 4 A. M., very cool and pleasant all the way, especially under the shade of the leafy walnuts at Gúrikót which I reached at 8-30. Green fields all round this place—green wheat in the middle of June! The wheat ears are even yet green and tender. The country about here at this time strongly reminds one of a home farm. I found it difficult to tear myself away from this pleasant spot when the coolies came up, especially, as I knew, that the road ahead was a hot one for several

miles. Crossed the river by a bridge, and proceeded along the right bank for a couple of miles, then re-crossed to left bank by another bridge. Halted under a tree at 1. P.M., and had breakfast. The sun was extremely powerful, and I was forced to seek shelter for a couple of hours. There is a striking contrast between the two streams that join below this road, a short distance from the first bridge. The larger stream, the one that takes its rise in the Burzil pass on the Gúrais route to Kashmir, is of a pea-soupy color, while the other and smaller one, that runs down into it on its right bank, is a bright and sparkling stream. The contrast in the two colors is very noticeable for some distance below the junction, the bright stream seeming to shrink from its muddy companion as long as possible. At 3 P. M. made another start, and reached Chhagám at 5-30. The muddy colour of this stream is caused, I find, by the large stream (the Rúpil) that flows down from Nanga Parbat, and joins the larger one at a point about a couple of miles below Chhagám; the Rúpil carries down a tremendous mass of mud in solution, quite sufficient to destroy the purity of the main stream, which has a volume several times larger than the dirty one. The river about its junction with the Rúpil is as bright and sparkling as the little stream it obliterates a few miles lower down. Met at Chhagám the gentleman who occupied the Buldar nála for some time. He has obtained two pairs of nice markhor heads. Those he showed me had horns of 39 and 37 inches. They are not long but very broad and massive, and have a graceful curve outwards. This morning at the "Idgah" (the polo ground of the village), about two miles on this side of Astór, I had the opportunity of witnessing half the garrison at drill. In fact, when I was leaving

Astór, the garrison too was turning out; but such a "turn-out!" The sepoys flocked down the path like so many sheep, the men of all the regiments mixed up anyhow, and in every variety of uniform and equipment. I was in the midst of the ruck for the whole distance, and could hardly get along owing to the crowd. Young and old, sick and lame, were all turning out. It seemed necessary for every one off duty to put in an appearance on the parade ground, as long as he could crawl that distance or carry a musket. I met some real veterans carrying their rifles in one hand while a stout stick in the other supported their steps! Undress uniform was evidently the order of the day: no two sepoys even of the same regiment were clothed alike. The accoutrements were of various colors and patterns. This parti-colored mass of "soldiers" resolved itself into three separate groups when they reached the polo (Púlú is the indigenous name) ground—a large piece of oblong green sward with pools of water standing in many places and enclosed by rough stone walls all round. Drill was in full swing, though parties of men were joining the various groups at each word of command. Each regiment seemed to have its own peculiar words of command in its own particular language. The commandant and drill sergeant took separate portions of their regiment, and drilled them alongside of each other, each bawling out different words of command at the same time. The manual and platoon exercise was first got through by word of command, then the men were ordered to do it themselves, and they went through the exercises with great energy to a sing-song tune, marking the time of "ek, do, tin," (one, two, three.) At the end of each exercise the commandant shouted out his "shábásh" (well done), and told his "children"

to rest. The Balbhaddar Regiment went through the bayonet exercise at the English words of command, first by word and then without. This was really a dangerous exercise, for several bayonets were thrown off their muskets to long distances, as the men made their points, and fell about very promiscuously. When this fatiguing business was over and all the lost bayonets recovered, the commandant ordered his regiment to rest, and they all squatted! He then came over to me and had a chat. A strange dog turned up during this conversation, the regiment at once broke after it and chevied it down the hill-side with the aid of their own mongrels that had also turned out in great force. The commandant is a pure Púrbiah (Southerner) from the Cawnpore district, and is a decent gentlemanly fellow. He introduced me to the major, a gentleman from Akhnúr, a hill-town not far from Jamú, who attained his majority before he was born according to the commandant's statement. The major's uncle, an officer of the same rank in the Maharajah's army, was killed before Chilás when that stronghold was stormed; he left no son, the worst misfortune, both in this world and the next, that could befall a Hindu. The ruler of Kashmir was grieved. He had the slain major's brother married, and gave orders that when a son was born he should receive his deceased uncle's commission! That is how this gentleman attained *his* majority. Each regiment had its band out and struck up whenever it saw a favourable opportunity. The musket stocks of the different regiments were dyed *different colors*! This is an idea that I recommend to H. E. the Commander-in-Chief. It is obvious that if the rifle stocks of a regiment are of a uniform brilliant color there will be no necessity for uniformity in the men's

clothing. What a 'considerable saving this would effect in the army estimates! The Balbhaddar regiment had black stocks.

*17th June.*—Up to this village I have been retracing the route by which I went up to my shooting. I am now leaving the beaten track again to have a few days úrin (wild sheep) and brown bear shooting. I am sending on my extra luggage by the Gúrais route to Bandpúra, under charge of the khidmátgár, myself only taking the usual kit for a ten days' outing at the higher elevations. Came in with five coolies up the Rattú nullah looking for úrin. Very cloudy during the day, and rain towards evening. Went over all the likely spots, and saw fresh traces of wild sheep in many places, but not a single animal. Reached some goat huts at 6 P.M., just in time to escape a wetting. These are miserable dirty huts and not at all waterproof. The roof is only four feet high, and the smells about are evil. The cold, too, is a caution, and I can have no fire. There is a roaring one *outside*, but the rain too is there. Had to spread the waterproof sheet on the top of the roof outside to prevent the rain from coming in.

*18th June.*—It has been raining all night. No signs of it clearing up, so started at 5 A.M. as we have some distance to go before reaching the next úrin ground, and it may clear up by that time. Went up right side of valley, and got to the ridge after some wet climbing. Found here a cold wind blowing furiously from the higher slopes; and our last condition was much worse than our first. We took a peep into the Mir Malik valley, and had a glimpse of splendid ground for úrin just below us; but the wind was blowing with such fury, shaking the rain to and fro, like a vast sheet of dirty colored cloth, that we were glad

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to bolt down hill some distance and get under the shelter of the biggest birch tree we could find. We made a fire under this tree, of wet birch logs, and sat and stood over it for *three* mortal hours. The trunk of the tree was just large enough to protect one person, and that was myself; but even I, after a short time, gave up the position in favor of the rifles. They were getting frightfully soaked, notwithstanding all the dodges resorted to by the shikári; the best one was to lean them against the tree-trunk and cover them with sheets of birch-bark. We were most miserable objects—eight souls in all. Every one had his own favorite position, some lying, some sitting. I was the only one who remained standing. It was impossible for me to sit in one position before so large a fire, so I stood and revolved slowly on my own pivot, toasting each side alternately. This too was the best position for keeping myself dry with the aid of my ever faithful umbrella. Had to eat my breakfast in this position, and under these circumstances—one of the most difficult performances I have gone through during this trip! The coolies, too, ate their cakes as best they could with the help of lumps of snow from the neighbouring snow field. The rain held off a little at 11 o'clock, and we made another start and crossed the ridge. We had not gone a hundred yards when the flood gates were again opened, and we were driven a second time by it under trees and rocks; but now we had the full force of the cutting wind right in our faces. Ten minutes of this was enough for the whole of us. We rushed down the slope to a clump of firs about a quarter of a mile below us, and made another huge fire, regardless of any game that might be above looking at us. The weather cleared gradually from 2 P.M. Started again;

went up the slope for some distance, then along hill-side—first rate places for úrin; but saw nothing. Camped at 5 P.M. in a very tight place under a rock; luckily it cleared up thoroughly at night. Rain in this position would have been really an awkward business.

*19th June.*—Rather a clear morning. The sun peeped over the opposite range for ten minutes, and then the clouds hid him again. Started at 5-30 A.M., and went along hill-side, slanting upwards, for a good distance. Disturbed a half-grown ibex not 100 yards from the place where we had camped! Saw some others shortly afterwards on the ridge above us. There were only two small males in the flock. Came to the spur running down to the village of Mir Malik. Saw no úrin anywhere. I am afraid I am too early on this ground for them. We should have tried above Chhagám. They have not come as far as this valley yet. Came down to the village at 12 o'clock; collected all the coolies, getting a couple of extra men from the place to carry supplies and show us the road, and started again, following up the Mir Malik stream. This is a most charming valley—the pleasantest I have been in during this trip. It is broad and open, the hill-sides sloping gently down to the stream, especially the range on the left. Vegetation is most profuse and water abundant. The ground is carpeted with thick grass, and has a turfy spring under the foot. Hardly half a mile of the path was passed without crossing a stream of sparkling water from the snowy slopes above. Flowers of many hues jostled each other in the grass to get a peep at the sun; especially the *yellow* crocus, which is in full flower just now. They grow in large beds here and there on the hill-side, and when looked at from a distance and at a



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certain angle they glow in reality like a field of cloth of gold. The main stream runs at the foot of the range bounding the right of the valley, thus giving the left a gentler slope down to the water's edge. Our path led over this gently undulating ground. Marched up steadily for five miles from the village, then crossed main stream by a snow bridge to the right bank. We have now left the usual path up the valley which leads to the Shótar pass and on to the village of Kél in the Krishenganga valley. Pitched camp under a rock. Rain with a cutting wind from the upper part of the valley set in at the same time. It had been drizzling off and on since we left the village, but now it began to come down steadily. The wind increased to a gale, and the cold became more intense as night came on. - Dinner again under difficulties. Had to leave the warmth of the fire and get under the rock where my blankets were spread. Dined here, covered by waterproof and umbrella, and crouched under the rock with a pot of rice between my legs! All the same, made a good meal off warm rice and "fine ox-tongue," and put an end to a jam pot with the help of a thick chapáti! Finished off with two stiff ones of whisky, and felt contented, though the scene around was not lovely; but the dreariest landscape becomes rose-colored when contemplated through a properly tinted modicum of Napier Johnstone! My blankets were laid right under the rock, which protected me from the wind but *not* from the rain. Got into my "Dutch oven,\*" then between two blankets and two waterproof sheets, one above and one below, and was asleep in no time. It must have cleared up soon after, for I was up

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\* An ulster of lambs' wool cloth, a quarter of an inch thick and lined; impervious to the intensest cold. Its weight is its only drawback.

in the morning dry and fit for anything. Some years ago this valley was overrun by the Chilásis and depopulated, only ten years ago, the village was rebuilt by the present inhabitants, the Dārds, who emigrated from Gúrais because they were on the high road; and the exactions of forced labor for carrying baggage and the post, were ruining them! Núra Malik is now the Múkaddam (head man) of the village, a civil and obliging man.

*20th June.*—Started up the Dabin valley at 5-30 A.M. This is on the right; on the left comes down the Chambil: both these valleys form the head of the Mir Malik. They are broad and open, very grassy, but bare of any trees except a few stunted bushes along the streams. The waters of these upper valleys unite about six miles above the village and form the main stream lower down. The path to Kél village runs up the Chambil to the Shótar pass. There is a path to Phúlwain up the Dabin: that is the direction in which I am going, a short cut back to the Krishenganga valley. The "Chambil" gets its name from a large split rock in the valley. In ancient times a passing traveller, as he stood before this immense rock admiring its grand proportions, said: "What a fine rock." As the words were uttered it split in two! This was related to me as an instance of the power of the "evil eye"—the most tremendous instance I should say on record! Had not gone a mile when Jamála, behind me, spied a musk deer in the clump of dwarf birch trees above us, about forty yards off. Sharofa was ahead making holes in the snow we were crossing at the time. The snow bed sloped very sharply down to the river thirty yards below us, rushing along at a frightful pace. The deer did not seem at all alarmed. Had a shot at him with No. 2, and missed;

he was looking down straight at me, and in that position did not offer a large mark, and I was standing on the steeply inclined snow bed, my footing very uncertain. The deer rushed up twenty yards further and stood again—this time with his right side to me, giving a fair chance. I hit him in the root of the neck with the second barrel and nearly severed his head from his body! Jamála rushed up, made a gash in the wound and said the animal had been properly *hallaed*! *Fresh* meat, after a month of tinned beef! This was my first thought. The deer was a young male, and had a small musk pod; his tusks were not long. Recrossed Dabin stream and made camp at the end of the spur that separates the upper valleys. Then went up the Chambil nullah, crossed the stream and toiled up the left hill-side for a long distance—no trace even of bears in any direction. It was 9-30 A.M., and I was thinking very much of my breakfast, when the voice of young Bruin was borne to us on the morning breeze from the far hill-side in front and above us! We all cocked our ears and laid them to the welcome sound like so many hounds. We heard it distinctly three times, and there could be no doubt that we were within hearing distance, at any rate, of a bear; but the faint and distant cry told us that we had a long and toilsome stalk before us. Young Bruin had no doubt lost sight of his worthy mother, and in thus yelling for her betrayed her! Sharofa searched the mountain sides in every direction with the glasses, but it was a long time before he could mark down the game. At last he spied the mother and her young hopeful a great distance off, and very *high up* indeed! The stalk began at once. First straight up hill for half a mile, then along the hill-side at a smart pace (often a run) for a mile, and

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we were at last above the family party, but they were still more than 200 yards from us. The wind was in the right quarter, and I had time to recover my breath and my nerve. We watched them for a long time, as the ground was so open that we could not approach nearer without being seen at once. Mother Bruin sauntered off to a shady rock and lay down there as the sun was getting warm. Young Bruin at once tried to improve the opportunity, and attempted to have a suck, a hulking beast nearly half grown! He got a clip on the side of his head from his mother's heavy paw that sent him off howling down to the grass, when he again began his search for roots. As soon as he wandered out of sight the mother was up, and they both gradually worked down the ridge grubbing up roots and eating the tender young grass in damp places. We worked down parallel to them along *our ridge*, and so gradually approached them. At last they crossed over to our side, and we slipped down to them at once and got within 50 yards of Mrs. Bruin. She had her right side to me looking down hill. The left barrel of No. 2 hit her just behind the shoulder: she rushed down the slope of the hill for a few yards and stood for a moment; second shot missed her; off she went again. Missed again with left of No. 1. She went very groggily now for a short distance, and stood on a rock, giving me a fair chance. The fourth shot took her in the small ribs on the right side again, and she fell over dead into a slit in the rock she was standing on. I could have bagged young hopeful too, but spared the rascal in the hope that he will give good sport another day. The shikáris were very anxious that I should shoot him too; and he deserved some punishment for betraying his mother with his loud

screaming; but I stayed my hands. It was exactly 12 noon as I went up to the dead bear. Mrs. Bruin was sitting bolt upright in the crack, which was just the exact size for holding her body up in that position! She looked so natural that for a moment I thought she was still alive. The stalk took us exactly two and a half hours, and hard going most of the time. This was not bad work for a hungry man who was just on the point of attacking his breakfast! Returned to camp at 3 P.M. A beautiful day—bright sun, intensely blue sky, fleecy clouds skimming over it, and such a delicious breeze—everything perfect for the proper enjoyment of existence! What a contrast to the last three days! A melodious lark began his even-song a few yards from my leafy hut, and kept it up long after the sun had left his last kiss on the highest hill top. The evening star, a blaze of light in the west, was illuminating the valley and casting distinct shadows on the green sward—wherever there was any object that could boast a shadow. The lark would make believe to drop to his nest like a stone out of the blue sky; but when a few yards from his nest he would mount again on quivering wings till he was out of sight once more in space above, splitting his throat with melody at every throb of his wings. It was glorious, and gave a finishing touch to the scene around that nothing could surpass.

*21st June.*—Started at 5 A.M. up the Dubin valley, coolies following some distance behind. Road blocked by bears! Had not gone half a mile when one was seen on the hill-side on right of stream. Had to go back some distance and cross on a snow bridge. Then mounted up for the stalk, but just as we were within range something disturbed the bear, and he bolted in *our* direction but a

little above our level. He was not more than 50 yards from me at one point, running up hill as hard as he could go, but I waited for him to stop to make sure of him. Fatal mistake—he never stopped, but went rushing on as if the devil were after him! At 100 yards or so I had two snap shots at him, and of course missed! A third shot at a much longer range was also unsuccessful. Altogether this stalk was bungled by the whole of us. We never discovered what had alarmed him. It could not have been our advance as he ran in *our* direction, and the wind was entirely in our favor. Probably he saw the coolies on the path across the stream, but the distance was more than half a mile and the men were lying still, not moving about. Went along right side of the valley and crossed a narrow gorge running down to the main stream. Had not proceeded half a mile beyond this gorge when *two* large bears were sighted on the hill-side opposite, across the stream, about half a mile above the path along which the coolies would presently be coming! One was a splendid animal with a very *bright* colored fur, and I set my heart on him at once. Watched them for some time through the large telescope. They were very hungry and also very playful. After very industrious grubbing for a time they would set to and have a friendly wrestle, then, as the sun was getting high and hot, they would rush off to the shade of a rock and sit there panting for some time. I could see their tongues lolling out quite distinctly through the telescope! After cooling themselves they would come out again and have another feed until they could bear the sun no longer. Their winter coats were certainly a nuisance to them now, and they would no doubt have liked immensely to take their breakfast in

their shirt sleeves, but nature was not so accommodating. Had to retrace our steps some distance before we could cross with safety. Crossed on a coolie's back, and then began a very trying ascent up the hill-side to get *above* the bears before attempting the stalk. Had to go half a mile straight up with the sun blazing on my back all the time—no wonder the bears felt it so much! After getting up a sufficient distance turned to the left and went along hill-side till we were above the place where the bears had been marked down. We had some anxious moments now as we could not make certain of the exact whereabouts of the animals after losing sight of them for such a length of time; but we knew that they had not left the spot, as the coolie left below to watch them signalled that they were still there. We crawled on to a large rock that jutted out of the hill-side and ended in a sharp point some yards in the air. This was a capital look out, and commanded the ground for some distance all round. We determined to remain here till we had again sighted our game. After some anxious watching both the bears turned a swell in the hill-side and came slowly towards the very rock on which we were so snugly ensconced! This was luck for once. They were grubbing up roots and feeding on the grass and taking their time over it. I had ample time to examine their coats and admire their fine proportions. They were less than a hundred yards off and were still nearing us. The light-colored one was by far the largest and had the best fur, I would have him *first*. They were now not 50 yards off, and Sharofa, who was lying close to me, became so excited and urged me so much to fire that I selected this bright-colored one and hit him in the proper place behind the right shoulder.

At the crack of the rifle both the bears rushed up to my right, turned and stood, and I again hit one in the left shoulder with the left barrel of No. 1. The light-colored one rushed round the slope out of sight. The other bolted across my front and then down the hill-side to my left, standing for a moment about 200 yards off. I missed him with No. 2, and he disappeared. The wounded bear after going about 30 yards had collapsed and rolled down the hill for a 100 yards. Discovered I had made a most stupid mistake. I had determined to plug the light-furred one with the *first* barrel and the other with the second; and I thought I had fired as I had arranged in my mind until after the slain bear had been skinned. There were *two* holes in his body behind each shoulder, exactly opposite each other. I had fired both my shots at the same animal! After the first shot both of them had got mixed, so in their confused rush to my right I mistook the one already hit for the unwounded one, and the poor beast got the contents of the *second* barrel that I had intended for his companion! As the bullet holes show in the skin it would appear that one bullet had gone right through the animal! But this was an impossibility, as the Henry bullet always smashes up inside, and in this instance, as both shots were fired at rather an acute angle from *above*, one bullet could not have made two holes directly facing each other on the bear's shoulders. Went down to the bear and admired his broad head and handsome fur and immense proportions for some time. I was loth to have him skinned. His head is the finest I have ever seen. I was greatly tempted to preserve it for setting up; but cutting the head off would have spoilt the skin. The length of his head from neck to point of



nose is 14 inches; between the ears,  $8\frac{1}{2}$  inches; length of hind foot, 7 inches. What a terrible smash the two bullets must have made inside! These bears take a good deal of killing. The one shot yesterday, hit behind the shoulder too, ran in the same way. This stalk began at 9 o'clock and ended at 10-30—one and a half hours. Came down to main stream, and stretched skin at once. Coolies came up soon after. This is the spot where a sportsman informed me I should get marmots; have not seen them. Went on again and camped at 6 P.M., where the valley turns at right angles to the right and the last trees and vegetation are found. This is the foot of the pass that we must cross to get into the Krishenganga valley. The turn to the right is quite sudden and unexpected. As you are travelling up, the valley apparently ends ahead of you in a semi-circular wall of rocks and a glacier peeping over it. A splendid waterfall, just opposite camping place, on the other side of the valley thunders down to the stream below, the only sound audible. The bottom of the valley is broad and level to the foot of the rocky wall. Saw a great quantity of trout in the stream as we travelled up; the coolies caught some with their hands.

*22nd June.*—Started at 5-45 A.M. for the pass; gentle ascent for two miles, then a very stiff grind to the ridge, which we reached at 9 A.M.—3-15 hours; snow on the ground every inch of the way. When we were about half way up saw a fox ahead of us gambolling about on the snow. He was enjoying himself thoroughly, though it was a cold and dreary place for a lark. There was absolutely nothing visible for miles in any direction but snow and glacier. The fox must have been travelling across the pass like ourselves. We tried to stalk him, but he was above

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and *ahead* of us and was master of the situation. The last I saw of him was his head peeping over a rock through thick mist; it looked as large and exactly the same shape as the head of the bear I had shot yesterday. The misty atmosphere magnified it immensely. The descent on the other side of the pass is very difficult and dangerous for a short distance from the crest. The coolies from the village led the way, then Sharofa. He had not descended many yards when he slipped on a rock concealed by a thin layer of snow, and went head over heels for some distance, bumping on rocks and rolling over the snow. He carried one of the rifles, and I made up my mind that the stocks at least had been smashed; but Sharofa, like a true sportsman, bore the bumps and knocks on his own body and saved the weapon. He was not hurt, but very much shaken. We passed a frozen lake, about half a mile below the crest. We had been warned at the village about this lake and told to be careful not to walk on it, so we gave it a wide berth. Snow all the way down; reached first birch trees at 12 o'clock. There were two bears' tracks on the snow almost all the way from last camp. We must have disturbed them last evening; the tracks were quite fresh and must have been made late; no sun had shone or snow fallen on them, and the impressions were very distinct this morning. Splendid looking ibex ground all along to-day's march on both sides of the pass, but we saw no sign of them anywhere. Camped at 1 P.M. under a large rock. I am now in the Gúrés district, watershed of the Krishenganga, and valley of Phúlwain. When we strike the river to-morrow we shall be one march below Táobat, the village I passed on my way up.

*23rd June.*—Rain towards morning, but the large rock under which my blankets were spread kept me dry. I did hear a rill of water flowing close to my head, but I was too snug to be disturbed by it, and it did not do any damage. Started at 5-30 A.M.. Went up a side valley on the right for some distance, but saw nothing; came back and went down main valley, which soon opened out with lovely views on every side. As the bears were in my way the other morning, so the lovely mountain and forest scenery are obstructions now. It is impossible to go ten steps without halting and looking round in admiration. Every prospect is so different from the bare hill-sides, rocks and precipices that I have been contemplating for the last two months. The first sight of this valley nearly put me off my head! I wish to camp and rest in every pleasant spot I pass, and my progress in consequence is very slow indeed. Far away on the sky line, rocky peaks pierce the air; their bases muffled in sheets of fresh green grass. Below them, on the steep hill-sides, hang forests of dark green pine and light green birch mingled in beautiful contrast. Farther down, the slopes fall in green undulations to level meadows glowing with the hews of a thousand flowers. Rivulets of sparkling water cut up the plain into variegated parterres. These little streams (foolish children) hasten down the sloping hill to join the roaring monster below, but frightened by his increasing roar they shrink from the coming contact, and stray murmuringly among the flowers of the meadows delaying the suicidal act by every ingenious twist and turn. But the time comes too soon, and the little ones are gobbled up in a second by the merciless monster, impatient for them below, and they disappear for ever. No wonder I make slow progress along

the path by the stream, where my eyes are rivetted on the landscape above me, and my feet are checked by the obstructive grasses below. From 7 o'clock in the morning to 12 noon I revelled in this valley, and found the time all too short. Reached at last the village of Phúlwain on the right bank of the Krishenganga. The village consists of four log huts and two fields! Saw no trace of game all the way. Sharofa says this is a good valley for stags when they first begin to call. Came across some fresh tracks of hinds in the upper portion of it. Even now, if we spent a week here wandering along the higher slopes, I dare say brown bear could be found, and perhaps ibex among the rocky peaks and ridges that bound the valley on the right, but I have not got the time to spare. Changed coolies (two only) and went on again. The path led up the right bank of the river. It was slow and very fatiguing work pushing our way through rank vegetation and over fallen forest trees. There was only a goat track, *never visible*; we had to feel for it with our feet at every step, and were continually losing it and coming to grief on the slippery grass. Camped at 5 P.M. next the stream—a very cramped place, but the only clear and dry spot we could get. My bed is only a few feet from the river. Splendid forest scenery on the left bank. The Machhál valley is just across the range before me, and I fancy I can see from this point the very spot where I smashed my knee cap ten years ago, rushing down after a bear that I did *not* bag! There was a violent shower of rain for half an hour just after leaving the village, which forced us to take shelter under huge pine trees that bordered the path.

24th June.—Started at 5 A.M. Same kind of going as last evening, if not worse. This is the most disagreeable

tramp I have had; and most dangerous in many places. Had to cross sheets of rocks going straight down to the water's edge, and I dare say a good many feet below it too! This had to be done in some places at more than a hundred feet above the river, and at others just at the water's level. At one point we had actually to walk for a few yards along a rocky ledge, a couple of feet below the water! There was no other practicable path. One slip in any of these places would have taken me straight into the water without any possibility of escape. The steep grassy slopes, too, were awkward places, the grass being very greasy and slippery. A slip here was just as dangerous as on the rocks. I was glad to get to the first village, Sirdári, where these troubles ended, at 9 A.M. Changed coolies and went on again. Passed through Halmatto, and Táobat and struck my old track at the bridge on the Gagai stream at 11-30 A.M. Beautiful landscapes on both sides all the way; the path passed through cultivated fields nearly the whole distance. Heard that a gentleman and his wife remained ten days at Halmatto. He shot two bears and four musk deer. They left for Kashmir six days ago. Started again at 1 P.M., and after two hours going made camp at road-side on left bank of Krishenganga, one and a half miles from village of Bagtour. I have a few days yet to spare, so have determined to spend them in the range above this village where brown bears are said to be plentiful. Sent for my friend the Lamberdár to arrange for flour and coolies. My camp is a beautiful spot, a few paces from the pebbly brink of the gently murmuring Krishenganga. Looking up in the direction of Bagtour three graceful curves of the river can be traced inch by inch. The course of the stream seems here

to be on a perfect level; it flows evenly along without a sound except where an obstructing rock makes it complain. The hills slope gradually down to the banks on both sides, clothed in green to the water's edge. The pine forest on the right bank has its very roots in the water. Upwards, the hills swell in great green waves of vegetation, one above the other, a knoll rising here and there to break the monotony of the green curves. Highest of all is a stony ridge crested with snow.

*25th June.*—Came on to Bagtour at 5 A.M. and got a man to show the bearish places above. Some time last night there was a thunderstorm. It came south and went north, right over the valley and my head as I lay on the hill-side without even a tree for shelter. I watched the whole business from the very beginning when the black and threatening cloud topped the range and began to swallow up the stars one by one. The storm came slowly along: its gradual approach appeared to me like a nightmare as I lay on my back in a half dreamy state watching its progress. I made sure that I was to be drenched, and quite realised the discomfort of lying in a wet bed long before the rain began. The big drops came at last hitting hard and viciously the waterproof I was tucked under, the faithful umbrella protecting my head. And lo! It was over in five minutes! I was as snug and as dry as ever between my warm blankets. The storm had passed on and the stars were again peeping out at its lower edge, slyly winking at the loud and blustering monster that had made so much noise and done so little; I joined them in their scoffing, blessed the storm for giving me such a bad quarter of an hour in imagination, turned over and fell asleep. So it is in our lives. The troubles that give us

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so much discomfort in their anticipation become our laughing stock after they are passed, and we have "found them out." Here is moralising for you in a Kashmir pine forest while I am waiting for that bear to turn up and be shot that rolled in this shallow stream yesterday. I hope he won't intermit his tub to-day. Cleanliness will then certainly be for him next to godliness, that is to say if Bruins go to heaven! He came not, though I lay dozing in the forest for four hours waiting for his arrival. Started upwards and climbed beyond the limit of forest to the undulating grassy slopes below the crest of the range. Saw nothing, though no better ground for bears could be imagined. Made camp at 6 P.M. in a grove of pines and birches. Sharofa was slow, sluggish and dull to-day. He says that last night when the thunder and lightning came, he started out of bed thinking the rifles were getting wet and so caught a chill! He makes himself out a very delicate fellow and is always ailing with some pain or ache, I think he has complained of every organ in his body. His head, his ears, eyes, back and legs have all been brought to my unsympathetic notice at various times during this trip, but he has received little comfort and less medicine. He was getting a bad fever once and my quinine bottle would have been soon emptied, but that the happy thought struck me to make him take his dose in my presence. Two doses cured him! Though his ailments have failed to touch my heart, it fetches the coolies immensely. Their sympathy, assistance in little kind acts, are very soothing to him. But I must give Sharofa his due and say that these little indispositions have never interfered with his work. When game is in sight, or he is on the stalk, these affectations are dropped at once, and

he is a sportsman every inch of him. He has the real hunting instinct, and has worked with me in the most pleasant and satisfactory manner throughout. I consider myself lucky in having secured his services.

*26th June.*—Started at 5 A.M., and went up to crest dividing Hánt valley from Bagtour. Shortly after leaving camp, going through the birch forest, put up a musk deer and missed him like a man at 30 yards, with left of No. 1! The rifle kicked disagreeably, and the bullet went high. I think its base was not seated on the powder in the cartridge, as I had not crimped it in with the machine for that purpose. This should never be forgotten, as cartridges get a good deal of shaking about in this kind of shooting, and if the bullets are not properly secured over the powder they work out a little; the consequence is a disagreeable blow on the shoulder and a bad shot at the closest range. Went on a few yards and saw the deer again. Hit him this time with right of No. 2 at 20 yards. The bullet blew the poor creature nearly into two. He was not a full grown buck. The hair and meat were blown about the place for several yards, a disgusting sight, but we were all keen on fresh meat, and the *halal* was, of course, successful! The striking power of Henry's .450 Express with five drams of powder could not have been better, though rather disgustingly, illustrated. The rending power of the expanding bullet *burst* the body of the musk deer, because it was so small and tender. The wound made in the body of an animal (a bear or tiger for instance), bulky enough and strong enough to keep all this rending power *within*, can easily be imagined. Went to crest of range, and climbed the Losar peak, where ibex are known to be. Saw nothing but five musk deer feeding on Hánt side of ridge. Did



not try for them for fear of disturbing ibex. Musk deer are plentiful here. The local shikári from Bagtour whom I have with me says that this year, as yet, he has shot only 20 males and *about* 20 females! They are still numerous he says. He shot two stags last October. Since the Maharaja stopped his yearly demand of stags' heads so many are not slaughtered. This has been for the last three years. Only a few are now shot here and there, and are sold to the Chamárwalas (skin-cleaners) in Srinagar at Rs. 5 a head! Musk pods are sold to traders at Rs. 2 and 5 each according to size. Ghaffár Bat of Bagtour gave me this information. He knows the country very well round about his village, but I am afraid he is not a hard worker. From the crest had a good view of the Hánt valley. It is a beautiful one, wide and open, and the left side very level, with a gentle ascent to ridge that divides it from the Machhal valley—my old shooting ground ten years ago. The right side of the valley has not such gentle slopes, but is more densely clothed with forest. It must be a good place for bears and stags. From the ridge I am sitting on I have a fine side view of Nanga Parbat straight in front of me. The proper name of this glorious peak is Daia Mar, the name of a village, I am told, at its base on the Chilas side. From my position only the highest points of the peak are visible; the continuation on both sides are hidden by a nearer and much lower range, serrated with a line of rocky peaks bare of snow. No other high mountain is in sight. People say Daia Mar is inhabited by Déos and Paris (genii and fairies), and the mountain has a sacred character even among the present Mahomedan population. This must be the survival of a heathen tradition. Every Friday the Chilásés wash themselves, put

on clean blue clothes and go out to the mountain to watch the faries and genii disporting themselves on the crags and precipices above. "Nanga Parbat" cannot be an ancient name. Probably it was called so (and very appropriately) by a Púrbia (Hindustani Hindu) khalási (camp follower) with the survey party that first took the bearings of the peak. Down the name went in the surveyor's note book: and now for all time this grand peak will be known by that name in all the maps of the world. Kinchingianga is a fine name for the highest mountain in the world. It takes as much time to pronounce it as it would to get to its summit; but Nanga Parbat for the third highest is certainly bathos. The second highest too is badly treated; it blushes every morning at the indignity that has been put upon it by the G. T. Survey. They have labelled that monarch K<sup>2</sup>! Went up stony ridge to Losar peak, where a cairn has been erected; a bare pole is sticking out of it—a survey station. This is where the ibex should have been, but are not; bad luck to them for a tiresome grind up in the hot sun. Their tracks in the snow, dung, and hair about the rocks, are plentiful enough, but they are not at home to-day. Came down to camp at 7 P.M. No bear anywhere within sight and a good many miles of country we did overlook from our points of vantage. Found camp in a most awkward spot: on a steep hill-side just below the ridge, a thin stream of water running down alongside my blankets. The ground was so steep that I found it difficult to eat dinner in *any* position, spilt my whiskey in consequence; and in endeavouring to prevent my glass disappearing into black space down below, nearly ruined the balance of my dinner. I saved my glass but lost my temper and Jáfar Bat the Useful got slanged, I am afraid, to a very unusual extent.

27th June.—Started at 5 A.M.; got up to ridge and went along it towards head of valley carefully searching both Hánt and Bagtour nálas. Saw nothing. A splendid morning with grand surroundings; a bracing cold breeze sweeping along these open downs carpeted with flowers, especially a yellow kind like the marigold. They are so plentiful and closely growing that I cannot help crushing a dozen of them at every step—awful, but unavoidable, desecration! I enjoyed this morning's walk exceedingly. The peaceful scene so impressed me that even a bear, had he come into sight, *might* have been allowed to pass. Such a time and such surroundings are not conducive to blood-thirsty thoughts. The rounded bosom of mother earth decked by nature in her gayest and freshest colors bred thoughts of a different complexion in my mind. The sentiment possessed me that when my course was run a spot like this, to mingle my dust with dust, would be the most pleasing to my spirit. Eternal rest under such a pleasant covering, watched by the everlasting hills, was a soothing thought. Suddenly we walked nearly over a rá<sup>m</sup> chakór (hen of the snow cock) and her brood of six chickens nestling among the flowers. Just the bit of life required to animate the scene. The chicks were fluffy and half the size of my fist: but they *could* run. They ran a few yards, crouched, and disappeared among the flowers. The mother too, ran, but limped and fluttered along in such helpless fashion that Jamála, the breakfast coolie, legged it after her with outstretched hand, at every step expecting to catch her! But she kept just beyond his reach. After a run of a hundred yards Jamála came up panting and looking very foolish—and the hen was following him! Her by no means “discreditable stratagám” (*vide* Keay's

libel case) was not successful, for our party was still standing a few yards from her callow brood! A finer illustration of maternal love overcoming natural timidity cannot be imagined. The hen came within five yards of us and circled round us at that distance with drooping wings, limping limbs, and ruffled feathers, the very picture of a disabled bird, inviting capture by its appearance of utter helplessness! The coolie this time was not taken in. We all stood motionless for some time lost in admiration of the bird, my companions exclaiming "Subhán Allah! Subhán Allah!" (Praise to God! Praise to God!). When these manœuvres failed, the hen settled herself on the ground, raked up a cloud of dust, fluttered her wings and clucked for her chicks to come under protection. By this time, however, the chickens had ran farther down the hill-side and were out of hearing. We left her still calling for them. Although I have slaughtered many heads of game in my time I felt at this time that I still had a tender heart. Went on and came across the tracks of an enormous stag that must have passed over this bed of snow last evening. His head will be a splendid trophy four months hence. Sharofa then spied a bear on the opposite side of the Hánt valley, coming down to the forest for his midday rest. Determined to visit him in the evening, so turned down into that valley, and here we are waiting for him to show up on the opposite slopes, when we shall go for him. The bear never turned up so we walked down to the Hánt stream to camp for the night. When a short distance from camping place a bear suddenly rushed down the opposite hill-side out of a clump of birches, hunted by a hill crow! What could this mean? Did the crow, seeing us coming, hunt the bear out to have him shot? It

looked extremely like it. This was certainly the bear we had been watching for all day; but he had kept under cover, long after the usual hour. The crow had been hovering about the birch clump and cawing for some time. Suddenly he made a dash down and out rushed the bear, the crow close to his back, almost touching it! A pair of these hill crows were, as usual, attending on us. This bird must have reasoned in his mind that until the bear *showed* himself to us there would be no meat, so drove him out! The coolies at once squatted, and the stalk began. The first thing to do was to get under cover, and this could be effected only by going down to the bed of the stream below the bear. We went slowly and cautiously within full sight of the game; he could not have been more than 500 yards across. Every time he put his head down to eat or dig we dashed along a few paces, and fell flat the moment he looked up. As the hill was steep and stony, and wet with slush from melted snow, we had a bad time of it. A slip would not only have spoilt our sport but the reward of our awkwardness would have been a good ducking in the very cold looking stream below! However we got safely to the bank; I mounted Sharofa and we soon crossed. A most exciting stalk then began. The bear was a short distance up the hill-side, but could not be seen till we were within a couple of hundred yards of him. The going had to be slow and cautious and in a stooping position. When he was sighted we had to be still more cautious, and in fact crawl on our bellies with our eyes fixed on the bear, stretching ourselves flat whenever he raised his head. At last we reached a rock about seventy yards from him and were in position, but I was thoroughly done and my nerves completely upset. In this

state I had to fire at once, and of course made a bad shot, wounding the bear in the foreleg. The bullet went low. He rushed to our left front and then straight up hill. Three snap shots at long ranges were misses also. We gave chase, and had a rough climb for some distance up and along the hill-side for half a mile through forest, rocks and rank vegetation, but had to give up in despair as the bear seemed to be going at a good pace, and it was getting dark. We returned and examined the place where the bear was feeding. The bullet must have broken his forearm a little above the paw. I was horribly disgusted with myself, not so much because I had wounded the poor beast and allowed him to escape in that condition. No doubt he would recover from the wound, but it was an uncomfortable thought that he had been put to unnecessary pain. He was a small animal little more than half grown. Crossed the stream on Sharofa's back and camped a little above it. Sharofa seems to be quite done, and is, I am afraid, really ill. He complains of a pain in his back and fever.

*28th June.*—Started at 5 A.M. with Ghaffár down the stream for some distance, across a snow bridge and up the left side of valley; saw many fresh traces of bears when we got above the limit of forest and on the grassy hill slopes. As we topped every swell of the undulating hill-side I made certain of sighting bruin, but met disappointment instead. As we emerged from the forest and came on to the flowery meads two hinds rushed out from amongst the trees and passed in front of us not more than a hundred yards away. Two crows had been cawing and playing about the forest for some time in the direction from which these animals came. I suspect they

were driven out by these very sporting birds as the bear had been last evening! They went up the hill-side for a couple of hundred yards and then stopped on our left front and a little above us. They were not more than a hundred yards off, but had not seen us as we crouched in the long grass. One of them was smaller than the other. The elder lady was inclined to be frolicsome, and tried to have a romp with her companion, but the latter was too intent on her morning meal and would not join in the play. Their movements were most graceful and full of gentleness. Their grey sides groomed by nature's hand shone again in the morning sun and flashed the light like a mirror at every movement. They did not see us for some time and were entirely at their ease—a very pretty sight indeed. Ghaffár Bat said, "shoot one for meat"—the beast! Imagine putting a bullet into those glossy sides! I can see them gently heaving with each breath and the reflection of the sun rippling along them in waves of light. Ghaffár himself deserved a bullet in his own ribs for such an atrocious suggestion! He got so excited that he pointed his stick like a gun at the animals. The movement caught the eye of the larger hind at once. She threw up her slender neck, gazed at us intently for a moment, then rushed away—her companion followed. Went along the meadows for some distance but saw nothing. Put up for the day at the highest clump of pines and birches on a grassy slope with a deep water-course close by; a small stream at the bottom of it. The flies here were an intolerable nuisance. In a short time I had several wounds on my hands, drops of blood oozing from them and very itchy. I could get relief only by squeezing them constantly, when a reddish fluid would ooze out, and

the irritation would cease for a few minutes. The fly was a very tiny one as to body but he had a large head, and his wings were of a whitish transparency. I was driven at last to shut up my pocket book as no writing was possible and put on my woollen gloves! As I was lying with my eyes closed heard a pitter-patter close behind me; turned round and discovered that I had been nearly run over by a musk deer, I wonder who was most astonished—myself or the little animal! He came from below and must have been disturbed by something as it was the hottest time of the day. I am sure it was the crows! The two had been flying about all the morning in our vicinity. They no doubt hunted out the hinds. When we came to a halt for the day they posted themselves in the forest below us and kept up a loud and disagreeable cawing for several hours. Then up rushed the musk deer and the crows came up immediately after! This is the third time in this valley that I have noticed the strange conduct of these birds. It surely cannot be a mere coincidence. I can plainly see *design* in their manœuvres, and that design is to have animals shot by us. How disgusted they must be at my want of success? Returned in the evening the way we came. Discovered a bear's lair at the foot of an enormous pine. There was a large round depression in the ground where the animal had evidently slept for several nights, and his droppings round about were plentiful; but he himself was not at home! My usual luck. Neither could we find him though we searched long and carefully. Probably he had winded or heard us in the morning and had given us his room in preference to his company.

*29th June.*—Sharofa is still very bad. He can hardly walk. He has rheumatism I think. Left camp at 4-30,



coolies following. Went up valley for some distance, then up a large side valley on right of main stream to the open plain near the top, a very gradual ascent all the way. Came across lots of bear signs—fresh tracks, droppings and ground where they had been grubbing; but no bears. Came back and continued up the main Hánt stream. Suddenly Jamála called out: "I see something black!" He said it was not far ahead of us, was small and had disappeared round a swell in the ground. It had run across from the right to the left of the valley. We all made for the same side and began walking briskly up the slope to cut the animal off. We had not gone a hundred yards when Ghaffár called out: "I see two men"—and there they were up the stream *with a large flock of sheep!* Thus ends the shooting part of my trip. The small black animal was a dog! A large flock of sheep was on the left side of the valley high up, and several others were scattered about. Went up to the men on the stream and found that they were giving salt to their sheep. In a wooden dish deep and broad a large quantity of salt is mixed with sufficient water to make a paste. A sheep is caught, thrown down, and a bolus of salt, about half a handful, is shoved down his throat and a dab of wet mud is plastered on his back. This mark is made to prevent a sheep from getting a *second* dose, which the shepherds told me would cause its instant death by poisoning. The bolus of salt is given once in twenty days or a month. Had breakfast here with the help of a tin pot full of fresh *goats' milk*—a very agreeable addition. Gave up all hope of seeing bears now; they make themselves scarce when they hear the first "baa" of the advancing flocks. I have fired my last shot on this trip, and what a sad

mess I did make of my last bear stalk! Wounding that bear still lies heavy on my conscience; I feel it more than any other mishap that has befallen me during this tramp. Started again at 10-30 and topped the ridge at 12-30. The last hour was rather a stiff ascent. The wind on the crest was blowing a gale and was disagreeably cold after the hot walk in the sun on the other slope, so I did not remain long to admire the scene, but started down as soon as the coolies and Sharofa came up. The latter looks very woebegone, and creeps along covered up in his blanket—a miserable object. He has utterly collapsed; it is hard to say whether in reality or in pretence!—a little of both I should say. Many flocks of sheep are scattered about these hill sides and many droves of ponies, all now making for the higher pasture grounds. This valley is the Gorai; I am now at the head of it. It is a dreary barren-looking place, flat below and not a single tree visible in it anywhere—a singular sight. Camp is near a bed of snow that has a tiny lake at its lower edge. Halted at 2 P.M. The green grassy slopes about this bit of water are the favorite snoozing place of vultures. Disturbed numbers of them lying about when we came up, and their feathers are scattered in every direction. It is a delightfully green little spot and a bracing breeze is blowing over it. The omnipresent hill crow is sailing round me as I sit writing these notes. This is the last time that my movements will have any interest for him. We part good friends. I am sorry I have not been more useful to him and his kindred who have attended me so constantly in my wanderings. My last evening at their altitudes, 10,000 feet,—for nearly two months. How I have enjoyed myself! The pure air and bracing exercise have

done more for my health than a dozen doctors. I am writing this sitting on a stone overlooking several wooded valleys on the Kashmir side—time 6 P.M., the sun low and sinking to my right front. A dense haze covers the scene like a gauze veil—its color deepening the lower it descends, till it throws an impenetrable purple darkness over the densely-wooded slopes at the bottom, Kashmir itself is farther off to my left front, quite hidden from view by the dense atmosphere which tells of the great heat below. Even massive Harámukh has been rubbed out, though when coming down this way to-day his grand proportions were the only objects visible in the distance. I can interpret these signs well enough; it is beastly hot down in the valley, and I shall be steaming in it to-morrow. The rains, however, cannot be far off. For the last four days I have been anxiously watching the atmosphere beyond the Panjáls for some sign of the advancing monsoon. To-day is the first time that this dense haze has appeared; hitherto the sky has been beautifully clear in the direction of the Panjáls.

*30th June.*—Started at 4-30 A.M. and reached Králpúra at 9-30. Camped in the apple garden by the stream where the globe-trotter had his tent when I visited him.

*1st July.*—Halt; packed up rifles and lightened baggage for the return journey.

*2nd July.*—Rain at 2 A.M. with a great noise of thunder and brilliant flashes of lightning. This no doubt is the beginning of the rains. No sign of its clearing up, so broke camp and started in the rain. Reached Bandpúra at 8-30 A.M. after a very wet walk indeed. Still raining at 11 A.M., heavy clouds hanging about, and it is pleasantly *cold*. Bahár Sháh was to have met me here with money and his little bill. He has not appeared and I am delayed. Cannot

remain in this stinking place any longer, so have taken a boat and am starting (2 P.M.) across the lake to meet Bahár Sháh. Passed up the Jhilum some distance and put to in the evening. Still no Bahár Sháh; this is very provoking.

*3rd July.*—Had a bad night on the river. The mosquitos, evil smells, the screaming and yelling of boat women and droves of the Maharaja's tattoos passing along the river bank, nearly drove me mad. In the morning started for Sópar, leaving a coolie on the bank to hurry down Bahár Sháh when he did appear. A strong wind on the lake blowing in our faces prevented us from making any progress when out on the lake. The boatmen were quite helpless and the two boats were driven by the wind into the weeds, where we stuck for more than an hour. When the wind abated we crossed over, reaching Sópar at 11 A.M. An hour after arrived Bahár Sháh's *servant* with the money and his account. Mahadû, the Srinagar taxidermist, also came with him, bringing all my skins and heads. They are done very well, but their cost is not a trifle—Rs. 75 for six heads and eight skins! Paid up Sharofa and gave him a good chit. He has quite recovered from his illness and is quite lively! Paid up coolies, etc., and then started down the river again. Reached Bara Múla at 7 P.M.

*4th July.*—Started with my things at 4 A.M. and began the dreary return journey. My journal might as well end here. I reached Murree at 6 A.M. on the 8th, having come along as fast as a sore foot and the usual delays for carriage would allow. I rode all the way. The heat on the 6th along the new road after leaving Tindáli was most trying. After 9 A.M. the sun pours his rays on the road with increasing fury till 4 P.M. when he drops behind the

range bounding the right bank of the river. The heat is positively dangerous for a European along this portion of the road at this time of the year—between 10 and 4 o'clock. The road now being made is a splendid engineering work equal to any of its kind in British territory. It is fit for traffic up to within a few miles of Tindáli. If no delay occurs, it should be completed at least as far as Uri before next season. If the portion between Murree and Kohála is finished by that time a tonga dâk could easily be started as far as Uri, and travellers would then reach the valley in a couple of days with great ease and comfort. The work without doubt is a most costly one, and the Maharaja's hoarded rupees are being spent along it like water; costly machinery of every description was lying along the road, a good deal of it apparently abandoned for good. The bungalows for travellers and officials, built and being built, are on a grand scale, and the thoroughness of their finish leaves nothing to be desired. If they are furnished in the same magnificent style they will be luxurious mansions to live in, and will tempt the future traveller to linger by the way much more than he is inclined to do now. But the rupees, the rupees, how they must be flying! How it must make the Dîwans' and Pandits' hearts bleed to see their master's money literally disappearing into the air in dust instead of forming a deposit at the bottom of their pockets, the ultimate resting place of a good deal of Kashmir coin! When this road is in working order from end to end (Murree—Bara Múla) the tourist flood will rage higher and higher, and the good old days of rough outing in the valley will be numbered in earnest. Kashmir will become one vast "hill-station," and Murree, Simla and Mussoorie will reappear on its lovely slopes; the only game to be had the frisky grass-widow and the only sportsman the elegant bow-wow!

## CHAPTER VII.

### *Analysis of Game Bag and Shooting.*

I HOPE the reader has shared my hopes, fears and disappointments in the preceding chapters. As the excitement is now over let us reckon up the results of the expedition, analyse the shooting, and inspect the trophies.

At the end of each day I recorded in my pocket book the results of the day's shooting (if the rifle had been used). I can therefore give the result of every shot I fired; it will be found in the following table. I cannot remember that any previous sportsman has made such a confession of failures as this table exhibits. If I am not mistaken it will be found that the "Old Forest Ranger," "the Old Shikári," the hero of "Seoni" and innumerable less distinguished handlers of the rifle and gun have always given prominence to the splendid shots that have brought game to the bag and have discreetly allowed to pass into oblivion the misses that could not add glories to their reputation. This is the tendency of human nature; our successes have always the most vitality. Let me at least rise superior to the rule, and prove it true by the exception!

TABLE.

| No. of stalk. | Game fired at. | Number of shots fired. | Apparent distances at which shots were fired. | Number of hits.   | Number of misses. | Number of animals bagged.        | Portion of animal fired at. | Portion of animal hit.          |
|---------------|----------------|------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
|               |                |                        | Yards.  |                   |                   |                                  |                             |                                 |
| 1             | Brown bear ... | 1                      | 40  | 1                 | 0                 | 1                                | Shoulder ...                | Shoulder.                       |
| 2             | Markhor ...    | 1                      | 200   | 1                 | 0                 | 1                                | Spine ...                   | Spine.                          |
| 3             | Ditto ...      | 2                      | 100   | 0                 | 2                 | 0                                | ...                         | ...                             |
| 4             | Ditto ...      | 6                      | 80 to 250                                     | 2                 | 4                 | 1                                | Shoulder ...                | Foreleg, Shoulder.              |
| 5             | Ditto ...      | 6                      | 80 to 100                                     | 3                 | 3                 | 1                                | Ditto ...                   | Do. (r.) Foreleg (l.) Shoulder. |
| 6             | Ditto ...      | 8                      | 200 to 400                                    | 0                 | 8                 | 0                                | ...                         | ...                             |
| 7             | Ibex ...       | 3                      | 100 to 200                                    | 0                 | 3                 | 0                                | ...                         | ...                             |
| 8             | Ditto ...      | 1                      | 150   | 1                 | 0                 | 1                                | Shoulder ...                | Chest.                          |
| 9             | Ditto ...      | 4                      | 200 to 400                                    | 0                 | 4                 | 0                                | ...                         | ...                             |
| 10            | Ditto ...      | 3                      | 20 to 40                                      | 2                 | 1                 | 2                                | Shoulder ...                | Shoulder.                       |
| 11            | Brown bear ... | 3                      | 60 to 100                                     | 2                 | 1                 | 1                                | Shoulder ...                | Small ribs, Shoulder.           |
| 12            | Musk deer ...  | 2                      | 40  | 1                 | 1                 | 1                                | Ditto ...                   | Neck                            |
| 13            | Brown bear ... | 3                      | 100 to 150                                    | 0                 | 3                 | 0                                | ...                         | ...                             |
| 14            | Ditto ...      | 3                      | 20 to 40                                      | 2                 | 1                 | 1                                | Ditto ...                   | Shoulder.                       |
| 15            | Musk deer ...  | 2                      | 15 to 20                                      | 1                 | 1                 | 1                                | Ditto ...                   | Ditto                           |
| 16            | Brown bear ... | 4                      | 60 to 150                                     | 1                 | 3                 | 0                                | ...                         | Paw.                            |
|               | Total ...      | 52                     | 20 to 400                                     | 17                | 35                | 11                               |                             |                                 |
|               | Average ...    | ...                    | .....   | 32·3<br>per cent. | 67·7<br>per cent. | 1 animal<br>for every<br>5 shots |                             |                                 |

I pulled trigger on sixteen different occasions, fired fifty-two shots and bagged eleven animals, or one for every five cartridges used. The number of days I spent on the various shooting grounds following game was forty, so that my opportunities for shooting occurred on an average every  $2\frac{1}{2}$  days. This, I believe, represents fairly hard work and a fair measure of success, though, of course, at the time, I had a feeling of disappointment that I had not had enough. The actual number of days I spent after markhor was twenty-eight, or an average of one animal bagged for nine days spent in its pursuit; after ibex six days, or an average of one for two days; after bears six days, or an average of one for two days. Nothing better than the above figures could illustrate the various degrees of difficulty that attend the hunting of the three kinds of game that I followed. At page 17 Ward says: "Big bags of fine ibex are made, but I have never heard of a big bag of fine markhor, and should think myself *well repaid by obtaining one fair shot for each fortnight on the shooting ground!*" He means perhaps the *bagging* of one "fair" trophy every fortnight, for in my poor experience a "fair shot" has not always meant an animal bagged. He would be a very ardent sportsman indeed who would undergo a fortnight's fatigue and privation at a time before getting a "fair shot." I consider my experience nearer the truth, and would lay it down as a rule that every nine days of hunting should furnish a fair *Markhor* head; a fortnight is much too high an estimate. But even the shorter period that I have fixed will be considered by most as quite too much time wasted after an old goat and that the game is not worth the candle. The number of shots that should be fired at each stalk is of course controlled by circumstances;



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but I am afraid there is a tendency to blaze away at a flock of animals, regardless of the chance of a hit, as long as the game is in sight. Sportsmen have told me of the wonderful hits they have made at incredible distances, but after a little enquiry I have, in most cases, discovered that these successes were the result of indiscriminate firing. This can hardly be called sport. Of course a certain feeling of desperation does come over the hunter when he has missed with his first two barrels; and he goes on wasting his cartridges in the hope of retrieving his ill fortune and redeeming the time and the labor he has for days been spending to get within range. I can point to one or two occasions when I have myself been guilty of such conduct; for instance No. 6 stalk in the above table. The markhor were out of range even at the first shot, but I had been working hard for several days, and I wasted eight cartridges in sheer desperation as a relief to my feelings! Nos. 9 and 13 also I consider instances in point. It is hard to learn self-restraint in this respect; but if the feeling can be controlled it is certain that the effort will have the best effect on the few shots, at reasonable ranges, that the sportsman allows himself. He will be sure to shoot steadier, and in consequence will certainly make more hits. I hope the beginner will take these remarks to heart and profit by them.

I put on record here for facility of reference the dimensions of the horns of the markhor and ibex that I bagged :—

| Animal. |     |     |     | Length along<br>the curve. | Girth at base. | Divergency at<br>tips. | Number of<br>spirals. |
|---------|-----|-----|-----|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-----------------------|
|         |     |     |     | Inches.                    | Inches.        | Inches.                |                       |
| Markhor | ... | ... | ... | 30½                        | 11½            | 26                     | 2                     |
| Do.     | ... | ... | ... | 47                         | 11¼            | 26¾                    | 4                     |
| Do.     | ... | ... | ... | 33½                        | 11¼            | 26                     | 2                     |
| Ibex    | ... | ... | ... | 32¾                        | 9              | ...                    | ...                   |
| Do.     | ... | ... | ... | 45                         | 9              | ...                    | ...                   |
| Do.     | ... | ... | ... | 32½                        | 9              | ...                    | ...                   |

Ward at page 15 gives the following dimensions of the largest specimen of *Astór* markhor horns that he measured:—

52 inches curve, 12¼ inches girth, 43 inches divergence, and a few lines before he mentions the “single twist which leads this variety to be considered by most people the handsomest of the four.” There are some remarkable differences between this description and the markhor heads I have. There is certainly more than one twist in my horns, and the “divergency at tips” does not exceed 27 inches, whereas Ward gives 43 inches for his, a fifty-two incher though it be. I have seen specimens with *one* sweeping curve; they were called the “Nanga Parbat markhor,” and I suppose are found about that mountain; but my heads were obtained not far from that locality, and the smallest of them even has certainly more than one curve. The 30½ inch horns have one complete curve and the second almost completed, while the largest has three

complete curves and the fourth almost completed. My experience of markhor is not extensive enough to decide these points.

My ibex horns have nothing remarkable about them; but the difference in girth is noticeable. Ward's 45 inches, at page 19, has a girth of 13 inches; my 45 inches gives only 9 inches.

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## CHAPTER VIII.

### *The Training Ground of the British Army.*

THAT rare old sportsman John Colquhoun, wrote twenty two years ago.—“The superiority in pluck and endurance of hardship which the British Islands have so long held over the other nations of Europe is pretty generally admitted to be in no small degree due to the love and practice of our out-of-door recreations. Nowhere is this more fully acknowledged than in our Army, where year by year additional facilities are given to Colonels of regiments from head quarters to permit those under them so much sporting leave as is consistent with attention to duty. Many of our most distinguished commanders have openly expressed their opinion, that although a man who devotes all his time and energy to Military duty may be an excellent and valuable parade officer, yet on actual service, when anything dashing was to be done, it was done, in nine cases out of ten, by those who loved the hunting field or the grouse-mountains far better than the barrack square, and that these were generally the most efficient officers in an arduous campaign.”

These words are well illustrated by the fact that hundreds of officers from the Armies in India proceed yearly to Kashmir in particular and the Himalayas in general, for sport: few can doubt the beneficial effect of these wanderings. The hardships endured, the perils confronted and overcome,

the many occasions for self-reliance, quick judgment and instant action are the best training that the British Officer can have for the greater business of his profession ; the mountaineering makes him familiar with travel in a mountainous country—and it must never be forgotten that the frontiers of India are bound by vast ranges along thousands of miles of country. If political omens are not deceptive, it is on this mountainous frontier, or in the ranges immediately beyond them, that the great struggle with Russia must soon take place ; perhaps a part of that struggle may have to be undertaken among the very ranges where the British sportsman now wanders every summer ! Can it be doubted that his sporting experiences and Himalaya training will stand him in good stead when he is facing the enemies of his country in these rough and elevated, but familiar, regions ? The policy of discouragement and hinderance which the Government has adopted for so many years, in this respect, is certainly short sighted. On the contrary, the readiest encouragement and even assistance should be afforded the numbers of adventurous spirits in our regiments who are constantly urged on by that indescribable British restlessness to explore unknown regions. It is to be hoped that the time is not distant when a change will be perceptible in this policy and that free access will be allowed to the unknown countries that surround us.

In this place I confine myself to certain suggestions for the preservation of game, especially in Kashmir territory, where the period of extinction is quite within measurable distance, and trust my advocacy will lead to effectual measures being adopted to that end, and thus one of the best training grounds in the world for the British Army

secured for that purpose. It is not the British sportsman who is hastening this extinction; the fell destroyer is the local "shikári." The promiscuous slaughter of animals by these gentlemen, in season and out of season, helped in no small degree by the mussulman population at large, is the principal cause of the rapid disappearance of game. The destruction of females, which are more easily got at and which are preferred as food, is the special weakness of these folk. Running down animals with the aid of dogs in the snow of winter, and clubbing them when brought to a stand is a favorite amusement. Whole flocks of ibex and markhor are massacred in this manner and many stags and hinds. The snaring of musk deer is a regular trade: every village shikári in the higher vallies can relate the story of the dozens he has shot and snared during the past winter, and during his rambles with you on the mountain-side will point out with evident satisfaction nooks and corners where he has been most successful. Were it not for the fecundity of these animals, which nearly equals that of the rabbit, the musk deer would have disappeared long ago. As it is, he has already become extinct in his favorite localities and is becoming a rare animal even in remote regions. Winged game is persecuted in the same manner.

These practices should be made to cease. During the period when Sir Oliver St. John was Resident, a set of rules were drawn up by him and "presented to the Maharajah of Jummoo and Kashmir for his approval and confirmation of the same as law." It was proposed (1) to form an association for the preservation of game, (2) to draw up a code of rules for the guidance of sportsmen (3) to form a committee, (4) to raise a fund by subscription,

(5) to present the rules to the Maharajah for confirmation and (6) to have one or two dinners during the season to discuss sporting matters. These steps were taken in 1884, but from reports which have appeared in newspapers from time to time, the above rules seem to have now become a dead letter. From the circumstances which surround Kashmir administration, and the disjointed relations which exist between it and the Supreme Government, one can guess that the subject of the preservation of game is not one of the burning questions of the day in the "Happy Valley." Residents come, and Residents go. They have a short tenure of office and lay themselves out for the enjoyment of the good things the Gods have placed before them. Watching over the lives of the wild animals of the mountains is not one of them. To please passing friends it is easy to hold committies, devise rules and regulations—and then pass them on to the Dīwan. The kind intentions of Sir Oliver St. John have gone no further. Steps no doubt were taken and orders issued; certain forests closed, the game within them ordered to be preserved, and the local shikári mulcted at higher rates than ever for the privileges accorded to them. It may be taken for granted that the increased flow of Kashmiri rupees into the pockets of officials, from this source, was the only tangible result of the movement recorded in "The Asian" of October 1884. Complaints of the decrease of game are as common as ever; a certain class of visitors who honor (?) the valley with their presence, still buy ready-stuffed heads in the city; and to complete the arrangements for the rapid extinction of game, it is now reported that "a European firm has already started business in Kashmir for trading in musk, bears-grease, skins and heads"!

Owing to the failure of Sir Oliver St. John's well intentioned rules, suggestions have lately again been made to make another attempt to stay the destruction which causes every British sportsman so much grief and concern. It is proposed again to memorialize His Highness the Maharaja and, I suppose, again "to present the rules for his confirmation." It is also proposed that licences "for which not less than fifty rupees should be charged"—should be imposed on all sportsmen, whether European or native. Major Ward, the author of "the Sportsman's guide to Kashmir and Ladak," has, in a late issue of "The Asian," supported these suggestions and given his opinion at some length on the subject. A safer guide than that experienced Kashmir sportsman we cannot have and he should receive the hearty support of all true lovers of sport.

The failure of the rules of 1884, the increasing ratio of destruction of Kashmir game, and the greater activity in the head-and-skin-trade in the valley, however, make it certain that the time for memorializing the Kashmiri Government is past. Measures, having the support of the Indian Government, and the pecuniary aid of all British sportsmen in India and at home, should now be adopted; and the patron of this movement should be His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief himself. That true soldier must instinctively and practically know the value of Kashmir as a training ground for the leaders of his armies and there can be little doubt that his powerful assistance will be willingly accorded to any organized endeavours that may be made. I would suggest therefore that the commanding officers of all regiments in the British armies be moved to submit a petition to His Excellency and that an influential committee be at once constituted for this purpose.



There are two ways in which the preservation of Kashmir game can be effected, either (1) by a system of licenses or (2) by a system of registered shootings.

Taking into consideration that Kashmir is independent territory and that its Government has hitherto been most obstructive, it will be politic to move in this matter with all due care and caution; the *forcing* of any elaborate rules and regulations on that authority should certainly be avoided. No mention should as yet be made of dividing the country into shootings. There is no doubt that the Kashmir Government would obtain a considerable revenue were the game vallies carefully mapped out, preserved and rented as is the case in European countries. But such an innovation, especially if pressed on them from without, would only create alarm and distrust. It is therefore more advisable that a set of rules on the licensing system be first attempted and that Europeans and natives without distinction be included. The introduction of even such regulations would secure a handsome yearly income to the Maharajah, and this important point is one to be brought well to the front in persuading his Government to lend their willing assistance.

Immediate action to be taken in this respect. A discussion must at once be begun in the Indian and English papers and a set of rules framed for adoption. "The Field" at home and "The Asian" in this country will no doubt open their columns for the discussion, and lend their valuable aid. Subscription lists should be opened in those papers for the expenses which it will be necessary to incur; the editors enlisted in the good work might be requested to collect the monies and guide our counsels. Commanding Officers of all regiments should be

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canvassed in a systematic manner and the subject brought before His Excellency the Commander-in-Chief in the most persuasive form it is possible to adopt. Sir F. Roberts will be found to be our staunch supporter, and his powerful advocacy with the Government of India and His Highness the Maharajah of Kashmir will make success certain.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### *The Sportsman's Paradise and how to get there.*

**A**S the Himalayan hunting grounds of the last and present generation of English sportsmen are on the brink of extinction as such, we shall soon have to look further a-field for suitable hunting quarters. They are at our doors, but these doors are very securely locked. The "open sesame" has not yet been found; probably it is on the point of discovery if political signs are to be trusted; and the key will most likely take the shape of the British bayonet. In the meantime a description of this sportman's paradise will not be out of place here. If there is not enough elbow-room in the old hunting grounds of the British Army, ample space, at any rate for a generation or two, can be guaranteed in the new sporting country.

The paradise referred to is the *Jángtháng*. The reader is probably as wise as ever, the last name conveying, perhaps, even a vaguer idea than the first! Know then that the paradise into which I am about to lead you is 14,000 feet above sea level; is 1,500 miles in length and 500 miles in breadth; is uninhabited by man, and is almost as inaccessible as all other paradises known to the human species. There are tracts of country on this globe that can bear comparison with each other; there are deserts and deserts, mountain ranges and mountain ranges. Other continents can boast of their Alps, their Andes and their Saharas; but there is only one *Jángtháng* on earth—and

Asia claims it for her own. At the distance where the highest points of other parts of the globe have their limits the plains of the *Jángtháng* begin. From their level shoot up mountain ranges yet another 10,000 feet higher. This is the pre-eminence, in more senses than one, that distinguishes the *Jángtháng*.

The *Jángtháng* is without doubt the "jewel in the lotus" of Tibet, and the universal prayer, "Om mani Padme haun" of its people is not more mysterious and incomprehensible than the country which is their fatherland. From time immemorial Tibet has been a closed book to all nations, and, its scattered inhabitants that girdle the great "Northern Plain" have well guarded the secrets of their home.

From the delightfully vague tales of Marco Polo down to the dry scientific details of Prejevalsky, this portion of the Asiatic continent has always exercised, in the highest degree, the imagination of Europe. But the halo of mystery and romance that has surrounded this region for so many centuries is being gradually dissipated, and if political omens are to be believed the time is not now far distant when the ubiquitous globe-trotter will unfurl his gingham in the streets of Lhassa in his pilgrimage from one show-place to another. The wonderful journeys of the gallant explorers sent out from time to time by the Trigonometrical Survey have well paved the way for this result. The exploits of these hardy travellers have been capped by the last of them, A. K. who performed a journey of more than 3,000 miles, and endured the utmost privations for more than four years in accomplishing his Herculean task. Well has he won the gold medal of the French Academy, and long may he live to enjoy that and other honors.

“Tibet, taken in its widest sense, comprises the whole region between the Keun-lun and Himalayas, it is at once the most elevated section of the Central Asiatic plateau and the loftiest tableland on the face of the globe. It forms a mass of irregular uplands, sloping gradually eastwards, but nowhere falling below 10,000 feet or 12,000 feet above sea level. Northwards, the Keun-lun escarpment falls rapidly towards the low-lying plains of the Tarim basin, while on the west and south the massive sweep of the Himalayan system forms a natural barrier towards British India. The eastern boundary has been crossed only at a few points, but here also the ‘Cross Ridges,’ roughly answering to the Yung-ling of Chinese geographers, serve as the frontier line towards China proper.”\* This elevated region is divided into seven provinces, has an area of 600,000 square miles, and its inhabitants number six millions. The climate of the country is noted for its extreme dryness. “For months together not a snowflake will fall in the elevated Tibetan plateau. It is a remarkable fact that the snow line descends much lower on the southern than on the northern slopes of the Himalayas, where Forsyth found the Cayley pass quite free at an elevation of over 19,000 feet. Owing to this absence of moisture, the passes between Kashmir and Yarkand are open throughout the year, and some of the most difficult passes elsewhere are lined with the withered or mummified bodies of yáks, horses or sheep which dry up where they fall without passing through the process of putrefaction. But notwithstanding the absence of snow, the cold is not the less intense, and this, combined with the ‘mountain sickness’

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\* “Asia,” by A. H. Keene, p. 525.

produced by the extreme rarefaction of the air, causes great suffering to travellers and animals in winter; even in summer the streams often freeze."\*

The mountain ranges that encircle this plateau, and in a manner, support it on their shoulders, deserve notice, because this series of mountain systems has no parallel on the globe. Beginning from the west at the Eastern Pamir and travelling northwards of the tableland, to the east, we have the Keun-lun range, 2,700 miles in length with elevations from 9,000 to 14,000 feet above sea level. Turning down south by the western frontier of China we have the Yang-ling, and cross ridges or ranges, between the Brahmaputra and Yang-tse basins where snowy crests rise to 20,000 feet, and where possibly some peaks may rival those of the Himalayas themselves.† Facing west and skirting the southern slope of the plateau we have our own familiar Himalayas, from the right-angled bend of the Brahmaputra round Bhutan to the eastern boundaries of Kashmir.

This is the setting of the "jewel in the lotus," our paradise, our Jángtháng. Now let us enter paradise itself. "The Jángtháng is a vast and marvellous expanse of high undulating land of which from various causes but little is known, and even this limited information is not put together,† The highland is only some 100 miles broad to the west near Skardo: it is widest on the meridian of 86° where it is some 500 miles across, from whence it slopes further eastwards, rapidly losing its characteristics and merging into the cultivated lands of China; its length is about 1,500 miles, and in area it is some 480,000 square miles; or say 3½ times the area of the United Kingdom

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\* "Asia," by A. H. Keene, p. 564.

† "Asia," p. 504.

of Great Britain and Ireland." This enormous tract of high tableland is believed to be generally some 15,000 or 16,000 feet above sea level, rising to a maximum somewhere in the vicinity of the Mánsarowar lake; in a word, it stands *above* the line of perpetual snow in Europe. Hence this expanse of land, which otherwise would be invaluable, is utterly unfit for cultivation, or, except under great restrictions, of any use to man. It is said to be similar in character *throughout* and to present a succession of easy undulations well covered with earth and almost free from stone; the knolls in places form into ridges which carry high and snow-clad heads, but invariably the inclines are gentle and there are no precipices; water is plentiful, and in places there are even large and handsome lakes as the Mánsarowar, Tingri, Nor, &c.; further, the whole Jángtháng is coated by a short succulent grass which from May to August covers the undulations with the softest of green carpets, extending far away and visible for even 50 or 60 miles in the clear crisp atmosphere prevailing. But beyond the abundant grass, *nothing* else will grow on this highland; there is no scrub or wood of any kind for fuel; and in a word, the products of the earth are solely suited for graminivorous animals which run wild in enormous numbers such as the yak, goat, sheep, deer, &c., and the weaker of these provide food for the wolf, jackal and yi (a large wild cat) to which the carnivora are limited. It is said the grass does seed and most probably is propagated by that means! But other seeds, such as wheat or barley, though they germinate and produce fodder for cattle, yield only seedless ears and hence no food for man."

"The northern portion of the Jángtháng is *wholly unoccupied* by man, being far too distant from lands where corn

and other products necessary for human life are produced in sufficient quantities to supply its wants: it is, however, as said, overrun by enormous herds of wild animals, chiefly graminivorous. This uninhabited belt borders on, both north and south, other belts which are dotted more or less by nomadic camps: the belt to the south is the continuation of the *Jángháng* and is peopled by *Tibetans* who live invariably in rectangular-shaped tents, black in color, made from the hair of the yak: the northern tract is beyond and below the *Jángháng* and consists of sandy wastes, not infrequently diversified by oases which are peopled by *Mongolians*, living in round white tents made of felt. Thus this uninhabited belt of the *Jángháng* lies between the *white-tented* Mongolian nomads to the north on the sandy lands, and the *black-tented* Tibetan nomads to the south in the continuation of the *Jángháng*; but beyond the common fact of residence in tents, similarity in feature and religion, there are wide differences between the white and black-tent nomads. The Mongolian is timid, peaceable and generous, little desirous of change and anxious only to be left alone to his own devices; his land produces, both corn and a variety of animals, and with them he is content and happy. Not so the Tibetan nomads, whose necessities alone tend to acquisitiveness, for unable to grow corn in their highland they must needs barter for it other articles with their southern neighbours. These black-tent nomads are called *Dokpas*; throughout the considerable length of their country they resemble one another closely; they all dress and arm alike and have similar occupations and habits; and in fact clans now in the vicinity of the *Mánsarowar* lake (where they are less lawless than elsewhere) claim that their ancestors migrated from the *Chiamdo*



Goloks, distant some 1,000 miles to the east. The Dokpas, though existing on the produce of their locomotive farms, are compelled, as said, to barter with their neighbours below the *Jángtháng*, for articles which their own highlands will not produce; but apart from this unavoidable association, they keep chiefly to their own clans, and most probably these highlanders have maintained in their semi-isolation the primitive manners and customs of their progenitors for many centuries past. Finally, they are all more or less robbers by profession; to them might gives right, always excepting the recognized law by which the property of a fellow clansman must be respected; and hence to pursue their business in a manner lawful to them, they roam in mounted bands far and wide in search of plunder. Notwithstanding their predatory habits, it must not be omitted that they all acknowledge the Dalai Lama as their spiritual head, and perform periodical pilgrimages to Lhasa in order to present themselves with due reverence to their high priest. But on these, as on all other occasions, they invariably keep an eye open to business proper, and the devotional nature of an errand is not permitted to interfere with convenient opportunities for plundering their neighbours. So the Dokpa comes to be trusted by none, unless perhaps by his fellow clansmen, and by these even only in the highland common to the clan.\*

In the next paragraph of this admirable report is mentioned the variety of wild animals inhabiting our paradise; but before quoting it at length let us refer to another authority. In Keene's "Asia," pages 566-68, the fauna of Tibet is alluded to in these words: "The great elevation

\* "Report on the explorations in Great Tibet and Mongolia made by A—K in 1879-82": prepared by J. B. N. Hennessy, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., Deputy Surveyor-General.

of Central and West Tibet is unfavourable to the growth of trees which are here represented chiefly by a few poplars and hardy fruit trees, in some places found at elevations of 12,000 and 13,000 feet." \* \* "Notwithstanding its scanty vegetation, Tibet which by some Naturalists is regarded as a chief centre of evolution for animal life, possesses a fauna of extraordinary richness. In the west Nain Singh met the antelope in herds of as many as two thousand bounding over the plains. Here the yak, gazelle, wild goat, various species of sheep, wild ass, fox, jackal, wild dog, white wolf and even a white bear resembling the polar bear in appearance are amongst the most characteristic animals." Let us return to the adventurous A. K. "At least a few words of special notice are also due to the vast numbers of wild animals abounding mostly in the large uninhabited tract of the *Jángháng*. They suffer diminution from only one cause, and that is occasional extreme severity of winter, when, deprived of grass, they die by thousands as their skeletons testify; but apart from this they lead the most peaceful of lives, multiplying and increasing in kind without hindrance; for enemies in the shape of sportsmen are practically absent, and unless disturbed by a robber troop, or by the rare passage of peaceful travellers, they have little cause for disquiet apart from their own family events." \*

"Indeed the vast numbers as well as the perfect unconcern of these wild beasts sometimes proved very embarrassing to A. K. in that portion of his returning route

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\* Having implied how very little these wild animals serve any purpose of utility (apart from the rare occasions when they may be shot for food) I am bound to notice that in one respect at least they are absolutely necessary; their dung, specially that of yaks, provides excellent and abundant fuel without which no traveller could cook his food (almost entirely of flesh) and live to cross the *Jángháng*—*Note to Report, &c.*

between Namohon and Niamcho where travellers but very rarely pass. Speaking chiefly of wild yaks, they were seen in such considerable herds that some three to four thousand beasts were visible at short distances and at *the same time*; handsome black brutes without a single speck of the white which appertains to domestication and bondage, and with long hair trailing so low as to conceal their legs, they presented to view remarkable, great dark moving masses of animal life. Occasionally a solitary monster bull with wicked eye and questionable intentions deliberately walked up to within only 10 or 12 paces and inspected the explorers inquisitively as if with a view to further proceedings, friendly or inimical. It was impossible to regard these attentions without respect, akin to awe, for the obvious considerable physical powers of the handsome, solid-looking brute, whose long hair, nearly touching the ground, gave him the appearance of enormous girth, and as if in fact he was *all* body from hump to hoof. His jet black coat glistened in the sunshine, and his small reddish eyes seemed dancing with mischief which the solid horns above were fully calculated to accomplish; he cocked his tail, whisking about its bushy, hairy, pendant, and pawing the ground vigorously, stood doubtfully regarding the travellers as to whether he should consider them friends, foes, are only curiosities; thus situated the explorers prudently steered their course as far from their visitor as circumstances permitted. A wild bull yak, adds A. K. will probably weigh  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to two tame ones, and his head and horns are a full load for a strong man.\* With this grand picture

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\*. "Report on the explorations in Great Tibet and Mongolia made by A. K. in 1879-82." prepared by J. B. N. Hennessy, Esq., M. A., F. R. S., Deputy Surveyor-General.

in his mind no doubt my sporting reader will be anxious to know how to reach this paradise. Alas! the road is long and difficult.

Endeavours have been made for centuries past, from all points of the compass, to effect an entrance into the mysterious country of Tibet; but success has attended few of them. Detailed information regarding these attempts will be found in Colonel Yule's edition of "Marco Polo" and in his introduction to Captain Gill's "River of Golden Sand." I will here barely allude to these expeditions and journeys of the past. The ruler of the ancient Kingdom of Magadha sent an embassy to China *viâ* Tibet in A.D. 641. An invasion of the latter country was attempted by Bakhtiar Khilji, King of Gour, in A.D. 1204. The army is said to have reached the open country of Tibet probably by the valley of the Teesta river, but strenuous resistance was met with and the army had to retreat. The king himself escaped with difficulty and with hardly a hundred horsemen. Another invasion was organized by the Emperor Mohammud Tuglak in A.D. 1337. A large force under distinguished Amírs and Generals was sent to the mountain of Karajal to subdue their inhabitants, but the Hindus closed the passes and cut off its retreat. The army was destroyed, and but ten horsemen returned to Delhi to spread the news of its discomfiture. A great Empire is again about to invade the mysterious country. Let us hope that it will be more successful than its predecessors. We next come to Marco Polo who travelled from China at the command of the Emperor and took the route that was centuries after traversed for some distance by Captain Gill. Then followed the Jesuit missionaries and Capuchin Friars. Several of them made successful journeys from the direction of

India by Kashmir and Ladak to Lassa and *vice versa*. Antonio Andrada in the seventeenth century reached that city by way of the Punjab, Leh, and Radok. Horace Della Penna, the Capuchin, made several journeys between India and Tibet *via* Kashmir and Ladak. Even a Dutchman was among the successful travellers. Samuel Van de Putte went from India to Lassa and thence to China, the only European who has made the "through" journey. After him come the unfruitful political missions of Warren Hastings who deputed George Boyle, now more than a hundred years ago, and after him Turner. Then followed Charles Lamb's eccentric friend, Thomas Manning, the only Englishman who has succeeded in reaching Lassa. In later times we have the journeys of the Abbé Huc in 1845, the attempt made by Captain Blakiston and his two companions in 1861 to reach India from China *via* Tibet, which failed even before they reached the borders of the latter country; the journeys of the Abbé Degoudins from 1855 to 1861, and several expeditions from the Assam and Burma frontiers. The brilliant attempt of the lamented Gill must not be forgotten, nor the persevering endeavours of the gallant Prejivalski who, though a Russian, has all the pluck and doggedness of the Englishman.

These historical attempts, most of which were failures, prove too convincingly the extreme difficulty of exploration in the high table land of Asia by Europeans; on the other hand, the success of the well-instructed and well-prepared native explorers sent out by the Survey Department of India shows how easy it is for this class of travellers to pace the country from end to end. The valuable information collected by these men has been embodied in maps of the whole country by Mr. Hennessey of the Indian

Survey, whose most interesting report has been so largely quoted.

To the failures of the European traveller should be added those of the British sportsman, who year after year, for the last quarter of a century, has been endeavouring to penetrate our Paradise, but who has always been driven back by the conservative inhabitants of the country. The impossibility of access to the real hunting grounds of Tibet has been the greatest difficulty in the way of the ardent hunter in his pursuit of Tibetan game, and he has consequently been confined within very circumscribed limits in a corner of Kashmir territory, that is to say, from the Changchêmnô valley to Hanlé, in the province of Ladak, a distance of not more than one hundred miles. The valley is within the southern edge of the Jángtháng. The yak, ovis ammon and other Tibetan game that wander westwards into this district from the great "Northern Plain" have been hunted here for the last twenty-five or thirty years, but I am sure no British sportsman can boast of ever having bagged these animals further east. Another short stretch of country has also been visited by sportsmen from time to time, but it is situated entirely in Tibet, and the adventurous hunter has always been in the end discovered and "conducted to the frontier" by the guardians of the country. His elaborate arrangements to ensure secrecy, the privations he has endured, the bribes he has lavished right and left, have always ended in this backward promenade under the surveillance of Tibetan soldiers. This hunting ground is beyond the passes above Nilang, Badrinath, Milam and the sources of the Ganges. But the uninhabited plain described above is two hundred and fifty miles from this part of the frontier, and no European sportsman could by

any possibility penetrate to it from this direction. Attempts have been made from the Darjiling and Sikkim side also from the frontier village of Shipki beyond Simla, and doubtless from other points; but failure has always been the result, and the baffled hunter has been obliged to return with the longings of his heart unsatisfied.

The direct prohibition of the British and Indian Governments and the obstructions placed in the way of the traveller, explorer or sportsman, by the Chinese and Tibetan Governments, have been sufficient hitherto to prevent Englishmen from making any serious attempt to penetrate the country, at any rate from the direction of India. Why this should be, as far as the first two Governments are concerned, it is difficult to understand in the face of express agreements between the British and Chinese nations with respect to travel and exploration in China and Tibet. By Art. IX of the treaty of Tien Tsin, Englishmen can travel in China as a *right*. "British subjects are hereby authorized to travel for their pleasure, or for purposes of trade to all parts of the interior under passports issued by their Consuls." Captain Blakiston and his party were the first to attempt the exploration of Tibet upon the conclusion of this treaty; but he failed entirely. In September 1876 the "Agreement of Chefoo" was signed—the result of the lamented Margery's murder. One of the articles in this agreement provided for a British mission of explorations by way of Peking to Tibet or from the Indian frontier to Tibet. It is under this agreement that the mission under Mr. Macaulay was formed—*twelve* years after its ratification! The misplaced solicitude of Her Majesty's Government for the lives of her subjects has no doubt been the reason why they have hitherto baffled the attempts

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of all adventurous Englishmen (travellers or sportsmen) to explore the mysterious country. But there are signs that this nervous tenderness, at any rate on the part of the Indian Government, is passing away. The present viceroy, with a better appreciation of the situation and a more steadfast confidence in the tact and energy of his fellow-countrymen, has not hesitated to despatch parties of explorers commanded by Englishmen, in various directions towards the North in a quite unprecedented manner. Colonel Lokhart's expedition to Chitral and Kafristán; Mr. Ney Elia's journey from Leh, *via* Yárkand and the Pamir, to the boundary commission in Herat; Mr. Carey's journey from Yárkand eastwards, through Mongolia to China, along the Tien Shan range of mountains; and Mr. Young-husband's explorations from the opposite direction, all show clearly that a radical change has come over the policy of the Indian Government in this respect; and sportsmen can now venture to hope with some confidence that permission will be accorded by the Government of both countries to a hunting expedition in the Jángháng, provided that an assurance can be given that its members have been carefully selected, and that its progress will be conducted with due regard to the safety of the party on the one hand, and the kind treatment of the people of the country on the other. The gallant author of "Large Game in Tibet" has experienced perhaps more than any other sportsman the difficulties of following the splendid game of the Tibetan plateau in their native wilds. If the ancient fire of the true hunter still burns within him, as it assuredly does, there is little doubt he would be the first to take advantage of any concessions in this direction and be eager himself to lead the first sporting party into the heart of



the great "Northern Plain." And there are many others, good men and true, scattered up and down the length and breadth of this land, upon whom I now call to lend their aid to push this matter wherever and whenever they may have an opportunity.

Permission of both Governments having been obtained and their countenance secured, the principal difficulty in the way of the sportsman will have been removed: but other difficulties, only less in degree, remain which must be surmounted before success can be attained. Even if the road to our Paradise is opened, the journey itself is a most formidable one by reason of the mountain ranges to be crossed, the long distances to be travelled and the length of time required for the expedition. The great expense, the rigors of the climate of those elevated regions, ignorance of the people's language, and of their country, are other obstacles which should be well considered before the attempt is made.

After a study of various maps of Tibet and its surrounding countries, and the books on the subject that are accessible, the conclusion is forced on one that the longest route to the Jángtháng would be, in the end, the most practicable, and give more chances of success than the more direct roads leading from India over the Himalayas into Tibet. The inhabitants of the country from the Himalayan edge of the plateau to the southern edge of the Jángtháng are called Dokpas. They are to a man robbers by profession, are well armed, possess a considerable degree of courage and enterprise, and travel immense distances on horseback on their filibustering expeditions. Huc says they "combine agility and suppleness with strength and energy, have the reputation of being frank

and generous, brave in war, extremely superstitious and fond of display." They are thus described by Mr. Hennessey in his report on the explorations of A. K: "The tribes from which large numbers adopt robbery as a profession are all of Tibetan nationality; the most numerous, powerful and best mounted bands are those from the Cheamo Golok and Bana Khatum tribes, south-west of Siling: these roam to the north in Mongolia and west to Tibet, but not to the east or south where cultivation more or less exists. The western robber-tribes are those of the Shunshung, Nag Chapka, Jama, Ata and Yagsa; these roam so far and wide apart that A. K. had often heard of their performances in the distant west even up to the Mansarowar lake when he was travelling in that locality. All the tribes are nomads of the kind known as Dokpas or dwellers in black tents; they are all armed alike with matchlocks, spear and sword, and are invariably well-mounted as the risks of their lawless profession require." Another authority, Mr. Baber, the well-known Chinese traveller and explorer says of them, as quoted by Col. Yule, that "the obstacle to the admission of European travellers is the jealous hostility of the Lamas, jealous of power, jealous of enlightenment, jealous above all of their monopoly of trade. It is evidently a mistake to suppose that the main difficulty lies in the Chinese aversion to open the landward frontier, real as that probably is." To get to our Paradise by the direct routes across the Himalayas it would be necessary to pass through this population. On some routes for distances of more than two hundred miles. I cannot but think that even with both Governments on our side and their passports in our pockets, our hunting party, were they to take any direct road, would have but small chance

of reaching their objective, and that failure and disaster would certainly be their fate if they pushed matters to extremities. I therefore advocate a more circuitous journey which would enable the expedition to avoid these obstructive people and bring it into our paradise over its *northern* edge and through a Mongolian population. The character, habits and customs of this nation would seem to give solid grounds for expecting success, though the physical difficulties in the way would be considerably increased. A. K. through the medium of Mr. Hennessey, thus describes these people: "Along the routes followed in Mongolia the population are all nomads \* \* \* These nomads resemble the nomads of Northern Tibet in several respects, including general appearance: they are, however, more amiable and certainly more honest, and in fact the Mongolian (or Mongolee as he calls himself) ascribes his immunity from lightning to his own truthfulness and respect for his neighbour's property and points with an air of superiority to the robbers of Cheamo Golok and Báná Khasum, from whom he suffers grievously, and who, he says, *therefore*, frequently suffer from thunderbolts. The Mongolian is naturally very friendly. \* \* \* Like his Southern brethren he owns spear, matchlock, and sword with which in times of *peace* he exercises dilligently: but unfortunately he is deficient in nerve. \* \* \* It is doubtful whether, if unable to run away, he would fight even for himself much less for his cattle and property when the bold Dokpas fall on him and his!" Another authority (Keene) says: "He is always mounted, a skilful horseman and extremely fond of racing, in which the whole encampment takes part \* \* But vanquished, disorganised and broken up into hostile factions, the nation has even acquired a sense of its helplessness."

They are given to degrading superstition, gluttony, indolence, filthy habits and other vices. "The most striking trait in their character is sloth." These Mongolian characteristics lead one to hope that once our party reached these people its onward journey and subsequent sporting operations would be a success.

The following details will show in what manner it is proposed to reach them and by what route. The most convenient point of departure from British territory would be the hill sanitarium of Murree in the Panjab: the next stage would be Srinagur in Kashmir; then Leh in Ladak; Shahidulla on the trade route to Yárkand; Khoten in Chinese Turkistan; Polu in Mongolia on the northern borders of the Jángháng. These five sections of the journey can be travelled as follows:—

|                           |               |               |          |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|----------|
| 1. Murree to Srinagur ... | 135 miles ... | 12 marches in | 14 days. |
| 2. Srinagur to Leh ...    | 254 „ ...     | 19 „          | 22 „     |
| 3. Leh to Shahidulla ...  | 316 „ ...     | 24 „          | 27 „     |
| 4. Shahidulla to Khoten   | 140 „ ...     | 16 „          | 18 „     |
| 5. Khoten to Polu ...     | 100 „ ...     | 12 „          | 14 „     |
|                           | —             | —             | —        |
| Total ...                 | 945 „ ...     | 83 „          | 95 „     |
|                           | =             | =             | =        |

Probably a halt of a week or ten days would be necessary at Srinagur and at each of the large towns of Leh and Khoten for laying in supplies, &c. According to these calculations a period of four months should land the party without any difficulty on the northern borders of the great "Northern Plain," amongst a Mongol population. The base of operations for hunting purposes would be Polu.

The first two divisions of the journey are so well known that nothing need be said in explanation of them. The

*Zojila* is the only difficult pass that has to be crossed, but it is generally practicable by the middle of May. The third section will certainly be the most trying though it is a portion of the common caravan road between India and Yarkand. Many of the marches are long, the general level of the road ranges from 11,000 feet to 19,300 feet above the sea; four passes have to be crossed—the Changla 18,000 feet, the Marsimik-la 18,400 feet, the Katal-i-diwan 17,500 feet; fuel and grass at some camping grounds are scarce; but of the three routes available in this section of the journey, this, though the longest seems the easiest one and can be travelled even during winter. The western, or Kara Koram, route (called the summer route), though 90 miles shorter, is much more difficult. The intermediate one is also more direct, but the difficulties are only less in degree than those of the Kara Koram. However, the obstacles even on the selected route are formidable enough, and the description of the journey given by Shaw, Henderson, and other travellers is by no means re-assuring. It should, however, be borne in mind that these hardships are *yearly* undertaken by a large number of traders from both countries, and that the difficulties, great as they are, have been surmounted by them with profit periodically. The two last sections are much shorter and do not present any difficulties that can be compared with those that precede them.

The last point to be reached in the large Mongol settlement of Polu which according to Prejivalski, is inhabited by the eighth generation of the descendants of a Tsar of Western Tibet, named Khoten, who fled from his people to beyond the mountains “mixed in marriage with the local Machinians and founded the settlement.” The people

of Machin are Tibetans by descent and Sunni Mussalmans in religion: they are agriculturists as well as nomads and are well-to-do.

This is the place and these are the people which the expedition must reach before any hunting in the Jáng-tháng can be had. Polu must be the base of their operations and the Machinians must be so bought over as to give willing help in the way of furnishing supplies, guides, &c. Success in this respect will depend entirely on the tact and ability of the leaders of the expedition in dealing with Asiatics.

Time as an element of success, or failure, must next engage our attention. It has already been shown that the entire journey would occupy at least four months: what time of the year would be best suited for it? As the Zojila is not practicable till the middle of May, this fact must govern the date for the start of the expedition from Murree. This should be early in April. A long halt at Srinagur will have this advantage that ample time will be given for arrangements and the first opportunity for crossing the pass could be taken. If this can be done by the 10th of May, Leh should be reached by the 1st of June. After a halt of a week here, the twenty-fifth of that month should find the party at Shahidullah. By the middle of July they should be in Ilchi, the capital of Khoten, and by the 1st of August they should have reached Polu. The hunters would then have at least two clear months for sport and opportunities for selecting the most convenient locality in which to fix their winter quarters. These might be at Polu, Kiria or even Ilchi itself. Kiria is situated in an oasis 100 miles north of Polu. Of course as their principal object would be sport the facilities for indulging in it during the winter months would decide in a great

degree the location of the camp. Inquiries during the autumn hunting time and the experience then gained would enable the sportsmen to fix on the best spot. If it is possible to winter in the Jángtháng itself, perhaps some sheltered locality on the Kiria river near its source would be most convenient. Placing the winter camp in this situation would have another advantage: the party would be most favorably placed for a start on the return journey, for after passing the winter in the great "Northern Plain," the return of the expedition should be made straight across the plateau to the Pangong lake, which lies to the east of the Changchenmo valley. The distances are as follows:—

|   |     |     |       |                   |
|---|-----|-----|-------|-------------------|
| From source of Kiria river to the eastern end |     |     |       |                   |
| of Pangong lake                               | ... | ... | ...   | 150 miles.        |
| To western end of lake                        |     | ... | ...   | 75 „              |
| To Leh  | ... | ... | ...   | 50 „              |
|   |     |     | Total | ...               |
|   |     |     |       | <u>275 miles.</u> |

This route has been travelled by one of the Indian Survey explorers. The entire journey would probably not take more than a month, giving ample time for shooting *en route*. But it is more than probable that bands of Tibetan robbers would be met with, and this further spice of danger would be added to the physical difficulties that would be encountered. As the eastern end of the Pangong lake, the nearest safe point on the southern side, is only 150 miles distant from the sources of the Kiria, a small party with a week's provisions and a good compass to steer by, could possibly by a dash reach the lake in three or four days if necessity compelled such a movement; but it would be a hazardous enterprize, not to be undertaken without the gravest reason for doing so.

Beginning the return journey from the sources of the Kiria about the first week in May, Leh should be reached by the end of the month. Thence down to India the party could take its own time, either back through Kashmir, or by the Lahaul route to Simla. Taking these calculations as a basis, a year and a half would be sufficient for both journeys and would allow the hunters ample opportunities for sport. Any less period would probably cripple the action of the expedition to a very great extent and defeat its object.

But for those who are not bound down to time, and who have the adventurous Saxon spirit sufficiently developed, as well as a healthy development of pocket, there are other possibilities which I will just allude to. After wintering in the vicinity of Polu, our hunters, instead of returning to Leh as detailed above, could make a bold dash for Lassa itself, diagonally across the broadest portion of the Jángtháng and right through the lake country. The distances are as follows:

|   |     |     |            |
|---|-----|-----|------------|
| From Polu to 1st lake   | ... | ... | 125 miles. |
| to 2nd lake   | ... | ... | 125 "      |
| to 3rd lake   | ... | ... | 200 "      |
| to 4th lake on southern edge of the<br>Jángtháng                  | ... | ... | 50 "       |
| to Senjajong settlement on one of the<br>routes from Leh to Lassa | ... | ... | 85 "       |
| to Tengri Lake (15,190ft. above sea<br>level)                     | ... | ... | 85 "       |
| to Lassa  | ... | ... | 130 "      |
|   |     |     | Total      |
|   |     | ... | 800 miles. |

a Journey which could be very conveniently undertaken from May to August. From Polu as far as Senjajong, a distance of nearly 600 miles, the route is unexplored.



The possibility of success in this direction would have to be gauged during the winter residence at Polu. Special permission would have to be obtained from both governments, and protection of some kind would have to be provided against the bands of Tibetan robbers that would certainly be met with during the latter portion of the journey. And above all, the location of an English embassy or at least a British Consul at Lassa, must have been securely established before this somewhat hazardous journey could be attempted. Perhaps this contingency is at last within measureable distance of accomplishment.

The question of expense must not be lost sight of. Of course it will depend entirely on the strength of the party and this must be first considered. A large party for a journey of such length and difficulty would be out of the question. Two or at most three Englishmen would be the most convenient number of sportsmen, and two trained attendants (Goorkha Sepoys by preference) by way of bodyguard, and one menial servant for each gentleman should be the limit of followers. This would make a party of eight or twelve, all of whom would start from India itself; other necessary attendants (interpreters, guides, shikáris) would have to be engaged along the route as required. Ammunition, medicines, a selection of notions for presents, and certain supplies not procurable on the way, would also be taken from India. For the rest, the common necessaries of life, clothing, bedding, &c., would be most cheaply obtained at the large towns on the roads, as necessity dictated. Carriage of every kind would be procurable on the road and every member of the party would have to be mounted before attempting the journey beyond Leh. Taking everything into consideration, perhaps, it would be best

to confine the party to the smallest number. The expenses of the expedition should then not exceed twelve thousand rupees for the whole period of one and a half years, so that each sportsman would have to provide six thousand for his share of the expenses. Two thousand rupees should be spent on equipment and the balance made use of during the journeys and the sporting period. According to these calculations each sportsman would be liable for three hundred and thirty three rupees a month, an amount that is well within the furlough allowances of a large number of Indian Officers.

Now, is this game worth the candle, or in this instance—the money? It certainly is but I can refer only in the briefest manner to the noble animals that range in thousands the plains and mountain ranges of Central Tibet. A reference to Col. Kinloch's "Large Game of Tibet" will convince any true hunter that no nobler sport, in no grander country, can be found in any portion of the globe. A bare list of the game that will probably be found is given below:—

|    |  |     |         |            |
|----|--|-----|---------|------------|
| 1. | <i>Poæphagus Grunniens</i> (Yak.)                | ... | No. 467 | Sterndale. |
| 2. | <i>Ovis ammon</i> (Gigantic Wild Sheep.)         | ... | 439     | "          |
| 3. | <i>Gazella picticaudata</i> (Tibetan Gazelle)    | "   | 459     | "          |
| 4. | <i>Pantholops Hodgsonii</i> (Tibetan Antelope.)  | ... | 460     | "          |
| 5. | <i>Nemorhædus Edwardsii</i> (Tibetan Capricorn.) | ... | 453     | "          |
| 6. | <i>Ovis Vignii</i> (Vigni's Wild Sheep.)         | ... | 442     | "          |
| 7. | <i>Ovis Brookei</i> (Brooke's Wild Sheep.)       | ... | 441     | "          |
| 8. | <i>Ovis nahura</i> (Blue Wild Sheep.)            | ... | 445     | "          |
| 9. | <i>Cervus affinis</i> (Sikkim or Tibetan Stag.)  | "   | 477     | "          |

So little is known of the fauna of this portion of Asia that the discovery of hitherto unknown animals during an extended expedition would be certain. Wild camels are known to roam the deserts bordering the Kuen Luen

range; stags hitherto unnoticed by naturalists are sure to be found in favourable localities; and it may be taken for granted that several individuals of the Felidæ would be found where so much toothsome game exists. Will the money be uselessly spent in exploring this virgin field?

As these closing lines are being written, the following appears in the *Pioneer*:—

“It is understood that General Prejivalski has stated that Lassa is unapproachable from the north; that if Russia is to reach it, she must take possession of Kashgaria including Khoten and Kiria’—(London correspondent of the *Pioneer*.)

In the above extract may be found the key to the translation given below from *Le Nouveau Temps*:—

“*Kashgaria*.—They write to the Persian paper *Nusrat* from Samarkand as follows:

“Russia has great reason to hasten the construction of the Trans-Caspian Railway, which will, in any case, be taken on to Samarkand, as it may be the intrigues of the English in Central Asia, especially at Kashgar, will prove extremely unpleasant and even be an element of danger to Russia. It is known what colossal sums and how many arms England sent to Yakub Bek, the powerful ruler of Kashgar, in the hope that he would at once oppose the steady advance of Russia on India and under circumstances eject her from Central Asia. Yakub Bek’s death frustrated these hopes. Now the English are seeking a *rapprochement* with the Chinese, the new conquerors of Kasgharia. English engineers, too, are helping the Chinese to now establish an arsenal and a rifle factory at Kashgar, having previously taken part in the erection of a fort. English engineers are likewise fortifying

the mountain passes leading into Kashgaria, and it is well known at St. Petersburg that all this is directed against Russia, and that the Chinese are only doing what the English counsel them to do. Hence it is possible that should a Russian army advance on Herat, a Chinese army would make its appearance on its rear, and in rear of the Chinese there would again be a Russian (English?) army."

No one's opinion on such a subject is entitled to more attention than General Prejivalski's. The great explorer's dictum is a very timely and appropriate confirmation of the judicious selection made of the route by which our party is to reach its hunting ground. There can be no doubt that the Khoten, Kiria, and Polu line is the very best that could be adopted by any expedition that had Central Tibet for its objective, whether for sporting, or other purposes. The collection of mis-statements in the second paragraph could have been put together only by a Russian newspaper. They, however, show clearly enough that Russian attention is fixed even on this remote corner of Asia. She sees possibilities even in this direction, and may be enabled by judicious political manipulation to create friction enough in these remote regions to cause another running sore in the side of England's Asiatic Empire which may require millions of her money and rivers of her blood to keep just in a healthy condition, as is the case on the opposite borders of her dominions. From this point of view perhaps the Indian Government would consider it rather opportune than otherwise were a hunting expedition to explore the northern edge of the Jángháng and spend a couple of winters among its people. Other business besides sport could of course be done. With this suggestion I conclude.

## CHAPTER X.

### *Hints for Travellers and Sportsmen.*

A chapter of hints to sportsmen and travellers will appropriately wind up the mechanism of this book. The best battery for Kashmir shooting is the first and most important subject to deal with, and I have now the opportunity of paying that tribute to the maker of mine which he so richly deserves for placing such perfect weapons in my hands. The pleasure that my two pet rifles have given me during these travels I can never forget. Their performances, under all circumstances, have always exceeded my expectations and I can say without the least exaggeration that each shot I fired raised them a degree higher in my estimation and affection. Mr. Alexander Henry of 14 St. Andrews Street, Edinbro', is an address that is familiar to sportsmen in every corner of the world where the crack of a rifle has been heard. Those who have handled his weapons will understand at once that I have solid grounds for my admiration and gratitude when I say that my rifles are his handiwork: I have used those of several of the best English and American makers for the last twenty years and have tested them during several expeditions into the Himalayas—I can therefore say with some knowledge and experience that Henry's rifles are the best weapons for shooting in those regions. The only fault that can be found with them is that they are somewhat more expensive than the ordinary class of weapons found in the hands of sportsmen. But a few

extra pounds spent on your battery at the outset will certainly be the truest economy in the end. Every sportsman knows how much depends upon his weapons when he is proceeding upon a distant expedition, far away from the civilization and associations that have surrounded him for years his weapons are the only companions he brings with him. If his rifles fail him in remote wilds after he has wearily carried them several hundred miles over several ranges of mountains, what a bitterness rises up in his heart and how he curses the reputation of the maker that misled him! The enjoyment that he imagined so often to be in store for him, and to compass which he has perhaps undergone many privations in the plains, is changed to the deepest disappointment: the plan he laid down with such care and forethought, the expenses he has incurred in pushing so far, have all been in vain just because he has not been sufficiently careful in the selection of his weapons, or for the sake of saving a few pounds in their purchase. If his means are not equal to the purchase of the best weapons for this particular sport, my advice to the would-be Himalayan sportsman is leave shooting in the Himalayas alone.

The following extract from "The Modern Sportsman's Gun and Rifle" by Mr. Walsh, Editor of "The Field" and the best living authority on sporting arms of all descriptions, will add weight to my remarks on this point. "The questions involved in the construction of a first rate double sporting rifle are of a very complex character and demand for their successful treatment, the possession of a high order of skill and considerable experience on the part of the rifle maker; and further, it is not in the nature of things for us to expect that such a combination of science and art

as is embodied in a really fine rifle should be available at a low price; and in this matter a few pounds judiciously laid out in what appears to be the extra charge of a good gun-maker is most certainly money well spent."

My rifles are a pair, weight  $8\frac{3}{4}$  lbs., bore .450, charge of powder 135 grs., (5 drs.) lead 270 grains, solid brass bottle-necked cartridge: Henry's patent hammerless breach action, with lever under guards; the opening of the action cocks the hammers, safety bolt on the handle. Sights for 150 and 200 yards. The rifles are interchangeable and are perfection, one cannot be distinguished from the other, except by the numbers engraved on barrels and stocks. The workmanship is first-class throughout. I will not state the amount of money that these weapons have cost me for fear of scaring my readers. They were made specially to order and as they will last me the rest of my sporting existence, I do not grudge the expense. But I am certain Mr. Henry will supply exactly similar weapons, plainly finished, without cases for £50 each, a really moderate figure for a perfect weapon. My advice to the future Himalayan hunter is to secure one of these weapons as early as possible and having obtained it—to stick to it. Mr. Henry, though I heartily wish him long life and success, cannot last for ever and a real "Henry express" in the future will be a rarity.

Mr. Henry makes a perfect .400 bore express also that I have tested in Himalayan shooting and can speak of in the highest terms. I think it superior (for certain kinds of game) even to the .450 express. I have shot Tehr (*Hemitragus Jermlaicus*) with one, also blue bulls. The effect of the bullet on these huge and hardy animals left nothing to be desired and I am sure Markhor and Ibex

would go down in the same satisfactory style. I was most anxious to try the little rifle on bears in the Himalayas, but never got the chance. The charge is 110 grs. powder and 250 grs. lead: weight of weapon (d.b.) 8 pounds. The trajectory of this rifle is flatter than even that of the .450. There is yet a smaller rifle that comes from the same shop the .260 express: weight 7lbs., charge of powder 60 grains, lead 190 grs. I have one now. It is perfect for all game (antelope, etc.) on the plains, and I would not be surprized if it gave satisfaction in the snowy ranges. My ambition is to bag an Ibex with it!

Walsh in his book quoted before, says (page 26) that a real express rifle must have a muzzle velocity *not less* than 1,750 feet per second, that this will give a trajectory not higher than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches at 150 yards, that this can be obtained with charges varying from 1 of powder to 2 of lead—to 1 to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  according to the bore; that with this the accuracy will be sufficient to hit a vital part, the heart or head, at 150 yards. Let us take the rifles of some well-known makers, compare them with each other and apply the above test.

| Gun Maker.          | Bore. | Charge.                                 |             | Proportion of powder to lead. | Weight of weapons.  |
|---------------------|-------|---|-------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|
|                     |       | Powder.                                 | Lead.       |                               |                     |
| No. 1      ...      | .450  | $5\frac{1}{2}$ Drams, or<br>145 grains. | 270 grains. | 1 to 1.82.                    | 10 lbs.             |
| No. 2, Henry    ... | .450  | 5 Drams or<br>135 grains.               | 270 grains. | 1 to 2.                       | $8\frac{3}{4}$ lbs. |
| No. 3      ...      | .450  | 110 grains.                             | 350 grains. | 1 to 3.18.                    | 9 lbs.              |

Here we find that the first maker has overdone the proportions. The muzzle velocity of his rifle is 2,000 feet per second, its trajectory therefore is a little lower than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches



at 150 yards, accuracy perhaps equal to hitting the "vital parts" but the weight of weapon equal to a 12 bore rifle! Henry's, the second weapon, has a velocity of nearly 2,000 feet per second; a trajectory certainly flatter than  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches and an accuracy equal to hitting the "vital parts:" the weight most pleasant to carry. The last maker's muzzle velocity must be somewhat lower than the standard of 1,750 feet per second: the trajectory somewhat *higher*, accuracy equal to Henry's,—but I am doubtful on this point, for the recoil of the nine pound rifle from the heavy bullet must somewhat disarrange the aim. Henry, it seems to me, has found the golden mean. Of course the other two rifles have advantages which his do not possess to an equal extent but it must be remembered that I am recommending the best rifle for *Himalayan Sport*. Henry's I think the best.

My advice to the Himalayan hunter is: insist on the following qualities in the rifle you select whether the maker be Henry or any one else.

1. Muzzle velocity, 2,000 feet per second.
2. Trajectory,  $4\frac{1}{2}$  inches at 150 yards.
3. Ten consecutive bullets to be placed in a 3 inch bulls eye at 100 yards.
4. Weight of weapon to be under 9lbs.
5. Price, with bullet mould, not to exceed £50.

These are the *essentials*: you can add anything more you may desire—and pay extra for the same.

A pea rifle of .295 bore for picking up your dinner *without any noise* will be useful. The report of a shot gun in your shooting ground may ruin your sport for a week. On the other hand pheasants, hares, pigeons, etc. are often met with and would be welcome additions to the

pot if they could be placed in it *noiselessly*: the tiny bore rifle will do it. A shot gun out of the Kashmir valley itself is a useless burden. The pea rifle should be detachable from its stock, easy to pack away anywhere. Price with a good stock of ammunition should not exceed £10. The new .220 bore American rifle 10 or 15 grains of powder and 45 grains lead is however much superior to all the pea rifles of English make, the accuracy of this toy is marvellous up to quite 150 yards and its effect on game not less so. I have bagged more than one black buck with a .220 bore Maynard! Load the cartridges of your big game rifles *most carefully with your own hands*; and, dont load too many at a time: 50 should last you for a couple of months if game is very numerous, 200 cases with material for loading them, should be amply sufficient for a five months trip.

Do not take gun cases with you. My plan is as follows: place stock and barrels separately in very stout canvas bags, (lined with flannel) fitting tightly: tie the mouths closely: place stock, barrel, cleaning rod, 20 cartridges (in two bundles of 10 each) together and tie them tightly with stout string. Roll them up tightly in a blanket, carefully folding in the ends, then tie securely with cord again. If this is done neatly and *tightly* the rifle will not be injured even if rolled down a hill. The bundle can be carried in your bedding or in the kilt and it will serve very well for a pillow at a pinch.

The Himalayan sportsman will soon find himself face to face with the three difficulties that have hampered the best generals of the present age: commissariat, carriage and followers—the inexperienced one will start with large supplies of luxuries, a camp kit sufficient for half a dozen

hunters during a six months trip, a large staff of servants—and will be hopelessly stranded before he has gone half a dozen marches from his starting point with the total loss of all his stock of temper and patience! He will then begin to drop his things at each halting place and by the trail of his abandoned baggage his onward course will be plainly traceable. My advice is from the first point of your departure limit yourself rigidly to 6 coolie loads, equal to 4 maunds or 160 seers or 320 lbs. of luggage. This must include everything, excepting the absolute necessities of life, which are procurable in Srinagar and on the line of march. When you reach Srinagar, or the valley, the stores and things you will have to lay in there will equal four loads more. Thus your extremest limit must not exceed 10 coolie loads. You will then be in sufficiently light marching order to go anywhere for any length of time and your success as a Kashmir sportsman will be half assured. Ward's hints and details in his book at pages 5 to 7 are so practical and to the point that they cannot be improved upon; the inexperienced should be guided by them: Kinloch's directions too are a safe guide.

Do not take a single box of any description. Waterproof kit bags, hold-alls and swiss ruchsacks will contain all your belongings. Have a coarse gunny bag made for each coolie's load including even the tents, to fit not too loosely, and insist on each load being securely tied up in its bag before starting on your march. *See this done yourself.* The gunny bags will preserve the waterproof from injury: will keep out a good shower of rain and at night will make good sleeping mattresses for your servants.

Tents I must say are a bore. I always grudged the carriage for them. The Himalayan climate is so perfect

during the shooting time, that no canvas shelter is really required during either day or night. But no *beginner* will venture into these elevated regions without some protection of the kind—tho' after his third or fourth experience he will certainly come round to my view. The best and lightest tent is a "Khaki" colored tent of extra thick drill 8' × 8' × 6' single fold, open at both ends, with poles to join in the centre: both ends to lace up with cord. *One* fold of the toughest drill is enough; it secures *lightness*. For wet weather a couple of thin waterproof sheets thrown over the ridge pole *outside* will be enough to keep out the rain, and pile on in the same way all the blankets of your bedding to keep out the sun's heat: tie down with cord if the wind is high. Have a similar tent 6' × 6' × 4' for your servants. These two should be a light coolie load including poles and iron pegs.

The beginner will of course take a table, chair, bed, wash stand, etc., but he will be sure to drop them somewhere in his wanderings when the carriage and commissariat difficulties become pressing. Get into the habit of doing without these appliances as quickly as possible. By so doing you will save a couple of coolies who can be more profitably employed in carrying the necessaries of life.

An important requisite for the proper enjoyment of travelling in Kashmir is a colloquial knowledge of Hindustani. The vernacular of India is now so generally understood beyond the Pir Panjal that an acquaintance with the Kashmiri language can be dispensed with. But the traveller and sportsman *must* have a good smattering of Hindustani. It will make intercourse with the natives pleasant and instructive and will save him from being at the mercy of some rascally English-speaking servant who, in nine

cases out of ten, ruins his master's reputation with his tyranny and extortions, while he defeats the objects of the sportsman's journey. As he proceeds from village to village he plunders his confiding employer with one hand, while he performs the same operation on the country people with the other. If this does not happen, his ignorance of the language will throw the trusting Englishman into the clutches of the other, and perhaps greater, rascal, the Kashmiri shikari.

The sportsman must be most careful in the selection of that most important individual; if sport is his principal object, success or failure will depend entirely on the judgment he exercises in picking out the proper man from among the crowd that will pester him the moment he sets foot in Kashmir. *After* this has been done, pay him well and trust him well. In showing the ground, stalking, direction of wind, and such matters he must obey *him*. In all else he should see that *he* obeys him, for a Kashmiri with power, let loose among his countrymen, is a far more terrible tyrant than even the Hindustani-speaking servant from the plains of India.

It is useless swelling this chapter with a repetition of hints already at the disposal of the Englishman in Ward's Guide and Kinloch's magnificent work. Of course no sportsman will proceed to Kashmir without making them a very important part of his Kit. Very pleasant companions will they be found when he is lying on his back in his tent, or on the hill-side, enjoying a well earned rest, while the men are pegging out the bear-skins or preserving that splendid markhor-head that he earned the day before, not only with the sweat of his brow, but with the copious perspiration of his whole body!—FINIS.



Valetra. Mussoorie

N. W. Provinces

India

2. May 1868

Dear Sir,

(3) I received  
from last month a  
copy of your book  
"Astronomy of Kashmir (with)  
a journal of Sport &  
Travel in the  
Kashmir region."  
I trust the same  
will be awarded to

My object in  
publishing the book  
is briefly noted in  
it and I have  
marked your aid

no furtherance  
of that object. I  
trust you will  
take up your powerful  
pen in the behalf  
of all true sportsmen  
not only in this  
but in the old country  
for the Habbis valley  
is visited yearly  
by increasing numbers  
of sportsmen from  
home & from European  
countries. If an  
energetic effort, and a

Crucial one, is  
not made soon,  
the famous holding  
grounds of Habbis  
will soon be no more.  
"Habbis" has been  
generally renowned  
in this country  
the leading daily  
papers and Jan  
are entering by  
the notice in the  
"Asiatic" when I  
shall deal with  
the subject in future



... .. a very nice  
return will appreciate

Can I offer you  
my services as a

consultant to the Dept.

I will gladly receive your  
assurances of success  
operating tours in  
the Himalayas +  
Tibet, your thanks  
shall be worth my  
while to do so.

Yours truly  
Edwin J. Your Truly  
"The Field" Mescomb  
London