JUNGLE TRAILS AND JUNGLE PEOPLE

ASIA

·CASPAR WHITNEY·

JUNGLE TRAILS
AND
JUNGLE PEOPLE

TRAVEL, ADVENTURE AND OBSERVATION IN THE FAR EAST

BY

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JUNGLE TRAILS AND JUNGLE PEOPLE

CHAPTER I

THE KING'S MAHOUT

HE was not impressive as to face or figure, yet Choo Poh Lek was a notable character. Of his class he was one of the few energetic, and the only ambitious native little man with whom I became acquainted in the Far East. And, quite as wonderful, he did not gamble. Unquestionably he came honestly by his active qualities, for Choo was a Simo-Chinese; his father, Lee Boon Jew, being one of the many thrifty Chinese that, thirty-five years before, had found their way, from the crowded Canton district of China, with its desperate daily struggle for mere existence, to Bangkok, whose half million people prefer mostly to leave the business of life to Chinamen. Lee began his commercial career humbly as a peddler of fruit and vegetables; and he prospered. In the very beginning he had carried his daily stock in two

heaping bushel baskets hung from a bamboo pole which he swung from shoulder to shoulder, as, staggering under the really heavy burden, he called aloud his wares through the Sampeng and other narrow land streets of the poorer quarter. In one year he had done well enough to enable him to buy a small dug-out, which he paddled through the klawngs* and on the Meinam River, making new acquaintances and new customers, while a plook-pee† compatriot in his employ supplied the already established trade from the baskets. In three years he had four boats; and in two more, or five years from the day of his landing, Lee Boon Jew had a shop in Sampeng, one on the Meinam,—which, in addition to a general stock, did a little trading in bamboo and rattan—a small fleet of boats—and a Siamese wife. In due course a son came to gladden the Chinese heart that always rejoices in boy children, and by the time the fond father was permitted to pridefully exhibit the gaudily dressed infant in the nearby floating shops, the little son came to be known as

* Canals.

† Plook-pee is the poll tax exacted of Chinamen, who emigrate to Siam and do not enter Government service. It costs four ticals and a quarter with a tax seal fastened about the wrist, or six ticals and a half (about $3.90) for a certificate instead of the wrist badge. Lee had paid the extra ticals in preference to wearing the visible alien sign.

Choo Poh Lek, after a celebration which quite dimmed the customary New Year festival.

Meantime not only did the business develop, but Lee Boon Jew, who was now one of Bangkok's merchants, attained to such prominence among his compatriots that by the time Choo was fifteen, Lee had become Collector in the Bird Nest Department of the Government Revenue Service; a post for which he was eminently fitted by both name and nature.

The cares of office did not, however, necessitate abandonment of the trade, grown now to an extent that kept several large boats of his fleet solely and constantly engaged in rattan and bamboo, for which they made long trips up river. It was Lee's dearest wish that his son should succeed to the commercial enterprise which so confidently promised to make wealthy men of them both; especially since his most intimate associate, Ho Kee Peck, had been recently appointed Farmer, under the Government, of the Onion, Bees Wax and Rattan Department.

Truth to tell, Lee had dreamed rosy-hued celestial dreams of Choo Poh Lek's opportunities, and the possible prosperity that might easily come to a business having two silent partners in the local revenue service. Between the good offices of the Bird Nest and of the Onion, Bees Wax and Rattan

departments, how much profitable trade might not, indeed, and readily, be diverted to the boats of Lee Boon Jew & Son!

But Choo proved a sore disappointment to his ambitious father. He had, it is true, given all of his boyhood and much of his young manhood to Lee's boats, and in fact, was accounted among the shrewdest traders and most skilled boatmen on the river. There were even those who thought the son more astute than his non-talkative but deep thinking Cantonese parent. At all events, Choo attained to such efficiency that his father sent him frequently up the river on the more important mission of trading for rattan and bamboo. And it was on one of these trips inland that Choo crossed the trail of the elephant catchers, and fell under the influence which was to govern, not to say guide, his life's star thereafter and forever more.

From that day, it seemed to Choo that boats were the most uninteresting things in all the world, and trading the least ambitious of all professions. He felt the spell of the elephant catchers, the silent mystery of the jungle, the excitement of the chase; and then and there he determined that an elephant catcher he would be. Choo was naturally of an adventuresome temperament, which is decidedly unusual in one of his race; but

Choo was an unusual type, as already I have intimated. The humdrum life of the fruit and vegetable boats, of haggling over trades in rattan, and of, between times, pulling a heavy oar, had become as iron in his soul long before he found the real trail in the jungle. Deep in his heart was the realization that life for him lacked the spark which makes it worth while; yet until that eventful day far in the forest, he knew as little of what he really wanted as did his father. On the day he found the elephant encampment, however, Choo found his spark and his vocation.

Now filial duty rules strong in the Asiatic son, and Choo had no thought of deserting his father; but by Oriental cunning he brought it about that the rattan business, necessitating up-country trips, became his chief concern in the firm of Lee Boon Jew & Son, while the vegetable and fruit end of the firm's interest fell to subordinates. Thus it was that Choo took up the double life of elephant catching and the more prosaic, if profitable, occupation of rattan trading. It must be recorded that he neglected neither and prospered in each; to such a degree, in fact, did the rattan and bamboo interests develop that Lee, the father, found his position in Bangkok advanced from small trader to one whose shipments were solicited by the local steamship company.

Meantime the son rose from one of the half hundred beaters employed in elephant catching to mahout, for which he seemed to have marked aptitude. Indeed his quick and sympathetic understanding of elephants, and ready comprehension of their management convinced the head man, who had served the king for twenty years, that in Choo he had found a mahout of exceptional promise.

It came to pass one day that Chow Chorn Dumarong—who was a cousin of one of the children of one of the forty-seven wives of the king, and something or other in the War Department—chanced to be at the encampment of elephant catchers and a witness of Choo's really clever handling of a tame tusker just ending a period of "must,"* during which it had been somewhat difficult of control. Choo's work astride the neck of the unruly bull, which he had finally subdued, had been so courageous and so intelligent, that it impressed the king's cousin and he forthwith commanded Choo to be regularly engaged in Government service. So it came about that Choo did more elephant than rattan hunting, increasing his prowess and reputation in one as his activity in the other decreased, much to the mental anguish

* "Must" is the temporary madness which now and then, though not invariably, overtakes the male elephant when kept apart from his mates.

of his father, Lee Boon Jew, who, although waxing opulent between his own post in the Bird Nest Department and the sympathetic co-operation of his wise and understanding friend Ho Pee Peck, the Onion Farmer, was aggrieved to the depths of his frugal Chinese soul by the unexplained falling off in the rattan and bamboo branch of his up-river business.

But one day, after two years more of mental perturbation, and gradually diminishing rattan profits, the father's heart leaped for joy under the word brought him at Bangkok, that Choo had been summoned into the presence of Krom Mun Monrtee Deeng—another one of the king's multitude of cousins, as well as a high man in the Interior Department—and regularly enrolled among the royal mahouts who drive in the periodical elephant catch or parade on festive occasions, or personally conduct the jaunts of the king's children when one of his majesty's several dozen goes forth on an official airing. And so ended the double life of Choo Poh Lek; for henceforth there was no further pretence of attending to the rattan business. Choo's soul was freed from trade bondage. Incidentally I must however add, because I became much interested in Lee, quite a character in his way, that the honor reflected upon the father through this appointment of his son, and the em-

ployment of a capable man to look after the up-country rattan interests, combined to place the name of Lee Boon Jew & Son among the foremost traders of the city.

I knew Lee weeks before I met Choo; and the first time I saw the latter was in the royal stables within the king's enclosure where I was giving rather disrespectful scrutiny to the sacred white elephants, which, notwithstanding surroundings and attendants, impressed me only because of seeming insignificance in their washed out hide and pale blue eyes. I immediately lost interest in the elephants on discovering Choo. Even had his obviously at home air failed to attract my wandering gaze, his dress would have arrested my eye, for it was the most resplendent thing in the way of native costume I had seen outside the palace. Not that it was so rich or remarkable in itself, but because the average Siamese is poor and dirty and inconspicuously, not to say sombrely, clad; whereas Choo was clean and brilliant and well fed. He wore a red and blue check panung,* a yellow

* The panung is a strip of cloth or silk three yards long and a yard broad. It is put on by a turn about the waist, the end being then carried between the legs and up through the waist and down through the legs again before fastened finally to the waist, to thus make a pair of loose, baggy knee breeches that, however, open up the back of the leg as the wearer walks. Fashioned in this way, the panung is worn by both men and women.

silk jacket fastened to the chin, with buttons made from silver half ticals, a round piece of Siamese money worth about thirty cents; and was bare of head, and legs from knee down to stockingless feet.

He was an important looking personage; nothing like him in fact had I met in the royal enclosure, where I had gone seeking the unusual. But my attempt to engage him in conversation was a failure, for he spoke no English.

The second time I saw the king's mahout was a few days later, in Lee's shop on the river, where I was making purchases for my hunting outfit which I was then getting together. Lee knew English fairly well and I often chatted with him, though he had never spoken to me of his distinguished son, so that when I saw Choo walk into the shop and make himself very much at home, I naturally asked about him; then Lee opened his heart, for he was very proud of the boy, and told me the whole story as I have told you.

Choo at once became a very interesting personality to me; because of the unusual type of Asiatic he represented, and on my own account because, having seen something of elephant catching in India, I wanted also to see the work of rounding up the elephants in the jungle preparatory to their being driven into the kraal at Ayuthia, the old Siamese capital, for what is called the "royal

hunt," but what is nothing more or less than a means of adding to the work-a-day elephants kept in the king's stables.

Lee comfortingly assured me he thought it could be arranged for me to make a trip with Choo to the elephant encampment; and sure enough it came about in due course that as his Majesty, Phrâbât Somdet Phra Paramendr Mahá Chulalongkorn Klou, otherwise and more briefly known as Chulalongkorn I, had commanded a royal hunt, Choo and I in season set out on our way up the river in a canoe, carrying no provisions, for we were to stop the nights *en route* with friends of the firm of Lee Boon Jew & Son.

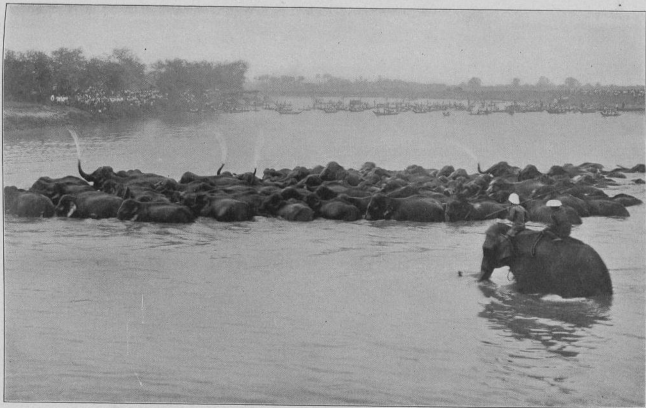
Choo's journey to the jungle resembled the triumphant march of a popular toreador. 'Twas fortunate we had given ourselves ample time, for we tarried often and long; not that I objected, because I am always on the lookout for human documents, and this trip was full of them, many not altogether agreeable, but interesting, for these were the real people of Siam. Now, the real people of Siam are not always pleasant to live with; too many of them are poor, and dirty, notwithstanding the river flowing past the door—though, speaking of dirty things, it would be difficult to find water farther from its pure state than these rivers which serve to sewer and to irrigate

Siam. Also the houses as often as not are in wretched condition, for it seems to be traditional with the Siamese not to repair them, but when they have tumbled about their ears, to vacate and build another: not a particularly expensive plan, since the house consists of loosely put together bamboo raised on stilts six to eight feet; and bamboo grows at everyone's back door in Siam.

Siamese food principally consists of dried, frequently rotted fish, and rice, done into curries which comprise a little of about every kind of condiment, and especially a very popular sauce called namphrik, a chutney-like and thoroughly mixed thing made of red pepper, shrimp, garlic, onions, citron, ginger, and tamarind seeds. The only reason for the fish being putrid is because the natives like it so, for fish are plentiful in the rivers and fishermen numerous, though their ways of catching are rather amusing and antique. One favorite method, borrowed from the Chinese, is beating the waters with long bamboo sticks to frighten the fish into an eight or ten foot squarish net which is lowered into the river from a framework on the bank by a system of wheels and ropes and pulleys; and hoisted up again when the catch is complete. I must confess that when the fish in the curry chanced to be dried instead of decayed, I found the concoction toothsome. In fact a really

good curry is in a class apart; but one must go to India or the Far East to get it at its best. Sometimes the natives eat pork and oftentimes chicken, but for the most part, rice and the fish curry constitute their chief diet, supplemented by the fruit of the country, of which there are many kinds—mangosteen, mango, pineapple, banana, orange, bread fruit, and that most healthful of all Siamese fruits, the papaya, which grows back from the water and is a greenish oval melon that suggests cantaloupe when opened.

We did not get really outside of the Bangkok city limits the first day of our up-river journey, as we spent the night at the home of one of Choo's admiring friends, in the centre of a little floating community, where a "poey" was given in his honor. Now a poey may take several different directions of hilarity, but is always an excuse for eating and gambling. The poey in honor of Choo included about everything on the entertainment catalogue. First was a feast which overflowed from the house of Choo's friend into adjoining ones, attended by two dozen men and women who sat in groups on the floors eating a loud smelling fish sauce with gusto—and with their fingers; neither wine nor spirits were in evidence—the Siamese as a rule drinking water. Then came adjournment to the river bank, where on a raised



THE FINAL STAGE OF THE KING'S ELEPHANT HUNT IN SIAM.

A popular holiday; spectators flock to the scene by the thousands and where the herd crosses the river the stream is covered with boats.

platform, roofed, but open on its four sides, three girls danced and posed after the gracefully deliberate Siamese fashion, accompanied by the melodious, always quick time, though dirge-like, music of a small native orchestra. The dancing was of the usual Oriental character, not, as popularly supposed among Occidentals, of the "couchee couchee" Midway variety, but a posturing in which hands and arms and shoulders played the prominent part. In a word it was a kind of slow walk-around to exhibit and emphasize the movements of arms and hands, the supreme test of the dancer being suppleness of wrist and shoulder; some of the most expert could bend back their hands so that the long finger nails almost touched the forearm. The band itself consisted of a group of metal cups, ranging in size from five to fourteen inches in diameter, a series of hollow bamboo sticks, also arranged to scale, two drums and a kind of flute; and the musicians sat on the floor.

Nearby, and attracting at least an equal number of spectators, was another platform level with the ground, where gambling proceeded industriously.

Siamese silver money seems to have been fashioned to meet the native passion for gambling. It ranges in value (gold) from six cents up to sixty cents, and in size from a small marble with its four sides flattened (which describes the tical),

down to that of a French pea. There is also much flat money made of copper, glass and china, running into fractions of a cent. The favorite game is a species of roulette, for which purpose the money is admirably suited to the rake of the croupier. Comparatively recently the Government has been issuing flat ten cent silver pieces, and the extent of gambling is suggested by the great number of these coming to one in the ordinary course of the day's business, that have been cupped to facilitate their handling on the gaming board.

After four days on the Meinam we turned off on a smaller river somewhere below Ayuthia, and took a northeasterly direction through heavy foliage, and more monkeys than I had ever seen. The first night we stopped at a house dilapidated rather more than ordinarily, where inside a lone old woman sat weaving a varied colored cloth, while outside on the veranda-like addition—which is practically half of every up-country Siamese abode—were a girl and a boy making water buckets and ornaments of bamboo.

I often wondered what these Far Eastern people would do without bamboo. It is a pivot of their industrial life. Growing in groves ranging from twenty to forty feet in height, though I have seen some higher, it varies in diameter from two to fifteen or even more inches. The tender shoots of

the young bamboo are good eating, while the tree in its different sizes and conditions of growth provides a valuable article of export, the timber for house making, the fibre for mats and baskets and personal ornaments, while, in hollowed sections, it is made into buckets and water pipes.

Another day's travel on the smaller river brought us to the encampment of the elephant catchers. Here were about one hundred men, bared to the waist, and a score of tuskers; the former divided among a small colony of elevated bamboo houses, and the latter scattered at graze in the surrounding jungle, wearing rattan hobbles around their feet, and bells of hollow bamboo at their necks. This was the home camp, where preparations had been making in leisurely and truly Oriental fashion for the start toward the interior; but on the evening of our arrival a moderate state of excitement resulted from a native bringing in the report, which he had got third hand, of a large white elephant seen in the jungle.

The day was in Siam when the lucky man who discovered a white elephant was raised to the rank of nobility, and in case of its capture, very likely was given one of the king's gross of daughters in marriage. In the old days the catching of such an elephant was a signal for general holiday-making and feasting; nobles were sent to the jun-

gle to guard it, and ropes of silk were considered the only suitable tether for an animal accustomed to the deference of a populous country.

When My Lord the Elephant had rested at the end of his silken tether sufficiently to become reconciled to his encompassed condition, he was taken in much glory to Bangkok, where, after being paraded and saluted, he was lodged in a specially prepared palace. Here he was sung to and danced before, given exalted titles, shaded by golden umbrellas and decorated with trappings of great value. In fact the white elephant was once made a great deal of, but never really worshipped, as some writers have declared. Because of its rarity it is still very highly prized by the king and though capture is unusual enough to create excitement, yet popular rejoicing and honors for the catcher do not nowadays attend the event. But the white elephants continue to stand unemployed in the royal stables at Bangkok—where western ideas are becoming evident in electric lighting and trolley cars. There were four in the royal stables at the time of my visit, leading lives of luxurious ease. The real local consequence of the white elephant rests in it being to Siam what the eagle is to America, the lion is to England—a national emblem. On a scarlet background it forms the Siamese imperial flag, and gives name to one of

the highest orders of merit in the gift of the king.

So while the little colony of catchers in the jungle lost no sleep and missed no fish curry on account of the reported white elephant, which, let me say here, did not materialize, yet the movement toward the interior began on the day after our arrival. We moved slowly—very slowly, for the elephant normally does not travel faster than about four miles an hour—through heavy, rather open forest, and stretches of thinnish woodland, where the jungle undergrowth was so dense that even the elephants avoided it. Quite the most interesting jungle thing I saw on these several days of inland travel was the Poh tree, sacred to the Siamese because, it is said, under its shade Buddha had his last earthly sleep.

At night we camped in groups; the mahouts divided between two, the beaters or scouts, who walked, scattered among a dozen others. The whole formed a large circle, of which the inner part was filled with little bamboo platforms raised four or five feet above the ground for sleeping. Outside this circle was a larger one around which flamed the many separate fires of each group of mahouts and beaters, that were used first for cooking, and kept burning throughout the night as a danger signal to prowling beasts, and as an inade-

quate protection against mosquitoes, of which there were myriads. Choo and I made a group of our own, and although he did not exactly fill the roll of servant to me, he did my cooking, and kept the fire burning. Beyond the outside circle of fire grazed the hobbled elephants in the nearby jungle.

The king's mahout had offered me a seat behind where he rode on the elephant's neck, with his knees just back of its ears, but I preferred to walk, and was well repaid by the little side excursions I was thus able to make and the many closer inspections afforded of small red deer, flitting insects and flying birds. For a week we continued our north-easterly travel by day and our mosquito fighting by night, slowly drawing closer to the section where the scouts reported wild elephants in several herds; for always as we moved in the day the scouts kept well ahead, prospecting. Finally, one night Choo made me understand that our outposts, so to say, were in touch with the enemy.

And now began the, to me, only interesting work of reconnoitring the elephants; of obtaining positive knowledge as to the number of herds, the location of each with relation to the others and to the surrounding country, the number of elephants in each herd—their size, and their apparent temper collectively and individually.

Elephant catching in Siam differs quite materially in procedure and in difficulties from catching elephants in India, where also its economical value is appreciated. The Indian Government maintains an official department, with men well paid to study the ways of elephants and the best method of catching and subsequently training them; which means training schools scattered over the country. In India no systematic attempt is made to consolidate two or more wild herds, but when the scouts have discovered one it is stealthily surrounded, and held together by a ring of men, two about every forty feet, who keep the elephants intact, as well as in control, by days of exploding guns, and nights of crashing gongs and blazing fires. Meanwhile a log keddah (corral) is building close at hand with all the speed possible to be got out of several hundred natives by a terribly earnest white headman who sleeps neither day nor night. In fact no one sleeps much in the few anxious days between surrounding the herd and constructing the corral. From two to four days are required to build the keddah, which when completed is an eight to ten foot high stockade formed of good-sized logs, one end planted firmly in the ground, and the whole securely bound together by rattan, thus enclosing about an acre of partially cleared jungle, with the big trees left standing.

Into this keddah, through a funnel-shaped runway reaching to the human circle, the frightened, scrambling, grunting herd is urged by the beaters on tame elephants; once within, the wild elephants are noosed one by one by the legs and tied to trees by the catchers mounted on the tame elephants. All the while the human circle is in evidence around the outside of the keddah to help on the deception played upon the huge beasts, that they cannot escape.

The native way of catching elephants both in India and in the Far East, is usually by the simple means of digging pitfalls along their routes to the rivers; for the elephant is a thirsty beast and when in herds makes beaten paths to water, always returning by the same way. Thus easily they fall into the waylaying pits, which are about eight feet wide on the top, six feet wide at the bottom and eight feet deep.

In Siam, catching elephants is a different and an easier game for several reasons; because (1) the region over which they roam is much more confined than in India, and (2) as the so-called hunt is a periodical event of many years' standing, large numbers of jungle elephants have been rounded up and corralled so comparatively often as to have become semi-tame. Of course there are many in every drive that have not been corralled, and some

that do not take kindly to the king's utilitarian and amusement-making scheme. Aside from the white elephant, which is an albino, a freak, there are two varieties in Siam: a smallish kind with tusks, quite easily broken to work if not too old; and a larger, stronger, tuskless species that is not so easily handled, is something of a fighter and is avoided in the royal hunt in favor of the smaller, some of which, however, carry ivory of splendid proportions. The Siamese elephant belongs, of course, to the Asiatic species, which in size both of body and tusks, is inferior to the African. Of the Asiatic, the Siamese averages neither so large as the Indian nor so small as the Malayan; and sometimes its ivory compares favorably with that of any species. The largest tusk ever taken from a Siamese elephant measures 9 feet, 10½ inches in length, and 8 inches in diameter at the base, and is now in the Royal Museum at Bangkok. Incidentally I wish to say that almost never have I found tusks of any kind of elephant of the same length, one showing usually more wear from root digging or what not than the other.

So soon as the scouts brought back word of our being in touch with the herds, camp was pitched and the tame elephants hobbled; and then the entire force spread out till a full one hundred yards separated one man from another, making a pains-

taking and wide survey of the country within a five-mile radius. The camp and the scouts were kept some distance from where the elephants had been located, and withdrew from their immediate neighborhood so fast as others were discovered—because the elephant, being mostly nocturnal and hence with its senses of smell and touch very acutely developed to enable it to distinguish the various kinds of trees and shrubs upon which it feeds, would be warned by the man scent and move off. For that reason our advance party, through all the manœuvres of locating the elephants, became a thin brown line of scouts. It was not so difficult to find the elephants, moving casually in herds of varying sizes up hill and down, for they are very noisy and destructive; the difficulty was to escape detection, which in this preliminary survey might result in frightening them away.

Working in this way the scouts had within ten days located one fairly sized herd and two smaller ones, besides some scattered, making altogether about two hundred and forty. And this successful and rather speedy result was not to be credited entirely to their efforts on the present hunt; a large share being due the system in vogue. These men are more or less in touch with the elephants most of the time; in fact, in a measure they are to the elephant haunts what the cowboys are to the

cattle range. In a broad sense the elephants are practically always under their eyes—a very broad sense, of course, but they know where to find them and the direction of their migrations. Yet sometimes weeks and months are spent by these elephant catchers in rounding up and heading straying herds preparatory to starting the final gathering for the drive toward Ayuthia.

With the three herds located, perhaps five miles separating the one on the extreme north from the stragglers at the extreme south, the plan of consolidation was begun. For this purpose the thin brown line stretched its two halves, one across the north and the other to the south of the herds, while the tame tuskers and their mahouts covered the east approach. As the big herd was at the south, the plan was to form a junction by driving the two smaller ones and the scattering individuals down to the larger. Beginning unobtrusively, it was three days before the individuals had joined the smaller herds, and it took two days more before all these were headed south. Short as was the distance, it required six days longer to consolidate those herds; patient days and anxious nights, for the danger in elephant catching is the beast's nervous, fearful temperament which subjects him to ungovernable fits of panic. Writers of romance to the contrary notwithstanding, the elephant is

a most undependable beast. Hence everything is done quietly, with no sudden movements to startle the elephants, or any unnecessary directness of approach. The entire effort of gathering scattered herds is furtive as much as the circumstances will allow. Once the elephants have been got together into one herd, the line of scouts may become a circle with a human post and a lurid brush fire alternating every ten yards around its length; or it may simply herd the beasts according to their temper. But no noise is made except in cases where elephants move too closely to the limits of the enclosure; elephants have broken through and escaped, but rarely.

Choo's fitness for the post of head mahout was evident from the day of leaving the home camp back on the little river; but only when the drive of the consolidated herd toward Ayuthia began, did his consummate skill manifest itself. His handling not only of his own elephant, but his executive ability in placing the other elephants, and the beaters, made perfectly easy of comprehension why he had advanced so rapidly among his fellows. Although he was kind to his elephants, Choo never showed them the slightest affection; holding them under the strictest discipline and exacting instant obedience under penalty of severe punishment. A trainer of reputation with whom in my boyhood

DRIVING THE HERD TOWARD THE KRAAL.

The shifting, daring crowd of spectators hang constantly on the heels of the elephants.

days I was on terms of daily intercourse, once told me that there are two things you must never do with an elephant if you wish to control it. First, never disappoint, and second, never show affection for it, as the animal's own regard for you will be sure to diminish in proportion as you are demonstrative. Certainly Choo achieved brilliant success with just such methods. Often, however, he talked to his elephants, sometimes encouragingly, sometimes sharply, as the occasion warranted, but never tenderly. His usual tone was a complaining one, and though I could not understand what he said, I have heard him for several minutes at a time in an uninterrupted high-pitched oratorical effort, rather suggesting a father reading the riot act to a sluggard son. Perhaps it was my imagination—and at all events I do not offer it as a contribution to the new school of animal story-tellers—but it always seemed to me that Choo's mount showed unmistakable contrition in the, as it appeared to me, absurdly abashed expression which came into his face, and the droopiness of the pendent trunk. Often I went into roars of laughter at sight of Choo leaning over the elephant's ear solemnly lecturing, while the beast blinked its uninviting little pig eyes. At such times the king's mahout included me in the tale of woe he confided to the elephant's great flopping

ear. Always Choo wore an amulet of jade and now that he had doffed his yellow silk jacket and, like the others, wore a cotton panung, with bare upper body, I noticed that he also kept around his neck a tiny human image of a kind I had seen Buddhist priests making of tree roots and selling to ease native superstition.

Choo's plan of driving the herd was masterful; there was no confusion, nor any sign to indicate that the task was difficult. Perhaps a half mile area was occupied by the gathered elephants when the final drive began, and it was not possible from one side of the herd to see the other side of the jungle. Choo placed four of his largest tame tuskers, two at each opening, as extreme western outposts of the driving line, and somewhat closer to the herd. The remaining tuskers were divided among the north and south sides and the rear, with more of them at the sides than in the rear, where were the most beaters. So far as I could see, the only apparent anxious movement was in getting the herd started, and that was finally accomplished by half a dozen tame elephants taking positions at the head of the lot. In fact, Choo kept several of these at the head of the herd throughout the drive to the river. Sometimes the elephants would move steadily as though really travelling with an objective in view; again they fed along leis-

urely, scattered over the considerable enclosure within the driving lines. Sometimes several would come against one side of the driving line and be startled into sudden retreat, or stand in questioning attitude before backing into the main body. But always the herd moved on, day and night, though sometimes not over five miles would be covered in twelve hours. It was a leisurely saunter, but never a moment did Choo relax his vigilance.

There was not the amount of trumpeting some of us have been led to believe. Once in a while the shrill trunk call of fear would be heard, but more often the low mouth note, a sort of grunting or questioning sound—and not at all on the drive toward the river was heard the throat roar of rage. It was, in fact, because of Choo's generalship and individual skill, a very well behaved herd of elephants that pursued its snail-like course riverwards without accident.

On the tenth day Choo brought the herd to the jungle at the river's edge just in front of Ayuthia, and early the following morning four Siamese imperial flags floated above the kraal as signal for him to begin the final drive into the enclosure. Instanter the camp was in a buzz of serious-faced preparation for the final, and in some respects the most difficult, stage of the elephant catching; weeks

of patient toil and a successful drive might be lost by mishap in getting the herd across the river and the remaining couple of miles. The king's mahout prepared for the test with the apparent confidence and thoroughness that had stamped all his work on the drive. First he put two men on each of his score of tame elephants, the second carrying a bamboo pole; then he sent three of the tuskers thus equipped into the side of the herd nearest the river. These made their way slowly, never hurriedly, yet always determinedly, among the wild ones, cutting out a group of eight which they headed riverwards. Then two other tuskers entered the herd and began similar tactics; and simultaneously the tuskers guarding the outer circle, and the beaters crowded forward. Sometimes one of the wild ones, being moved outside of the herd in the lead, would escape and return. Then shone out in bold relief Choo's unflinching grasp of his business. There would be no chasing of that escaped elephant, no hustling movements by any one to suggest that the unusual had occurred; but three other mounted tuskers would work into and through the herd in apparent aimlessness, yet always toward the truant. The escaped one might shift about among its fellows, might dodge, but sooner or later it found itself between two of the tuskers, with the third at its

stern; and eventually it was back whence it had broken away, all without fuss or excitement by either the tuskers or the mahouts on their backs. Sometimes an hour would be consumed returning such a one; but return was inevitable.

Choo knew, with the river once in sight, at least half his troubles would be over, for elephants take to water like ducks; so he maintained the arrangement of beaters and the several tuskers in the lead, the lot travelling at not more than a mile an hour, until the bank was reached, where the tuskers slipped to one side and the entire herd was soon in the river, bathing and blowing water through their trunks, to indicate in elephantine way their joy of living. With spectators on the banks and afloat in numberless small craft, the drive out of the river into the wings running down to the kraal entrance is always a critical period, so Choo permitted the herd to wallow and squirt water over themselves to their heart's content; for nearly an hour in fact. Then he placed fully half his tuskers at the head of the herd and with the remainder covering its rear, began the move toward the kraal, less than a quarter mile distant. Happily for Choo the bath had put the elephants in a very comfortable frame of mind and they moved forward, following the tuskers unhesitatingly out on to the bank, despite the fact that all Ayuthia and many

besides were holiday making within a few hundred yards. As the herd swung ponderously along into the funnel-shaped enclosure—which is made of massive twelve-foot high posts firmly planted every two feet and leads directly to the gate of the kraal—Choo withdrew from the lead to the rear all save two of the tame elephants. The herd moved peacefully however until a big female, with its little calf walking almost concealed under the mother's stomach, endeavored to break back from the side, and made quite a commotion when checked by the rear guard. Although no general panic resulted, the row seemed to get on the nerves of the elephants, whose questioning, expectant expression of countenance suggested painful timorousness. As the herd neared the kraal, getting more compact all the time in the narrowing runway, the elephants appeared to sense a trap, crowding together and breaking into groups against the heavy posts, so that Choo had to bring up several of his tuskers whose mahouts prodded the obstreperous ones into harmony. It was pretty much of a rough-and-tumble scramble at the kraal gate, large enough to admit only one elephant at a time. Perhaps a third of the herd followed the leading tame tuskers into the kraal, but the remainder got jammed, and the ensuing scene of confusion and of wild endeavor to get some-

where, tested the rear guard to its utmost and must have given the king's mahout at least a few uncomfortable moments. At length, however, the kraal gate closed on the last elephant, and Choo had brought his part of the royal hunt to a successful conclusion.

The Ayuthia elephant kraal was built over one hundred years ago, not long after the seat of the Siamese Government had been moved from this ancient capital to Bangkok. It is an enclosure about two hundred feet square, surrounded by a brick wall averaging perhaps fourteen to fifteen feet in thickness, with a height of nine feet. On each side is a parapet forming an excellent promenade under the shade of some large trees. About twenty feet inside the brick wall is a smaller enclosure made of huge teak logs, planted firmly, so as to leave just space enough between every two for a man to squeeze through, and standing above the ground full twelve feet. In the centre of the kraal is a little house strongly surrounded by logs, which sometimes the superintendent in charge uses to direct the selection of elephants to be caught, and sometimes becomes a house of refuge; and always it serves to break up the herd rounded about it. Three sides of this great square are reached by steps and open to the public. Along one side of the wall and over the centre of it is a covered plat-

form which contains the royal box, and other more democratic accommodations for natives of nobility and foreigners. There are two entrances to the enclosure, both guarded by very strong heavy timber gates hung on pins from crossbeams above, which, closed, reach below the ground level, where they fit into a groove. Opened, they make an inverted V, just large enough to permit the passage of one elephant at a time.

The attitude of a herd on first realizing that it has been trapped and cannot escape, varies according to the temperaments of its members, and is enlightening, not to say enlivening, at times, to the onlooker. For the herd, which without serious opposition has permitted itself to be taken from its jungle and driven, uttering scarcely an objection through days and nights, will, when once in the kraal, throw off its good manners and become rampant. Some fight the posts, some fight one another; in groups they surge against the stout sides of the enclosure, grunting prodigiously, and wherever a venturesome spectator shows a head between the post, he is charged. Not all the herd are so violent. Some show their perturbation by thrusting their trunks down into their stomach reservoir and drawing forth water which they squirt over their backs; others express contempt for things generally by making little dust piles which

NOOSING AND DRIVING THE HERD AROUND THE KRAAL SO AS TO SINGLE OUT THE ROPED ELEPHANTS.

they blow over everything in sight, including their own legs; some utter the mouthing low note; some rap the ground with their trunks, thus knocking out several peculiar rattling crackling high notes. The calves squeak through their little trunks shrilly and frequently.

The programme extends over three days; on the first, after the herd is corralled, the head mogul of the royal stables points out the young elephants to be caught; on the second the selected captives are noosed; and on the third day the remaining elephants are driven out and across the river and into the jungle to wander at will, until such time as his majesty issues commands for another royal "hunt."

The most interesting feature of the performance in the kraal is the work of the trained elephants. You would never think from the peaceful, mild countenance of the tusker, that he is in league with the men on his back. He is the most casual thing you can imagine, sidling up to the victim in manner unpremeditated and entirely friendly. It is the same unhurried, unrelaxing work he did in the jungle under the eye of Choo, who is now no doubt viewing proceedings critically from the covered platform. Sometimes a cantankerous elephant is looking for a fight; and then the tusker is a business-like and effective bouncer, and such "rough

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house" as results on this occasion you have not elsewhere seen. The tusker moves not swiftly but with overwhelming momentum, and not infrequently an offender is sent quite off its feet surprised and wiser, rolling in the dust.

The actual catching consists in slipping the noose, held at the end of the bamboo prod by the second mahout, over the elephant's hind foot. When the noose is successfully placed it is at once pulled taut, and the end of the rope which has been attached to the tame tusker's rattan girdle is let go, to be subsequently, as occasion offers, carried by a dismounted mahout to the edge of the enclosure, where other attendants fasten it to the post, and take in the slack as the captive is pushed back by the tuskers. When the victim is snubbed fairly close to the post comes the putting on of the rattan collar, which is accomplished by mahouts mounted on two tame elephants that hold the victim between them. With the collar lashed on, the captive is butted out through the gate, where he is pinned between the tuskers and fastened to them by the collars they also wear for this very purpose. Then, thus handcuffed, with noose rope trailing and a third elephant behind to keep him moving, the captive is carried off to the stables and securely tied up. And so endeth the liberty of that elephant.

Sometimes the mahout drops to the ground under cover of his tusker and slips the noose; and it is not so easy as it reads. The elephant's foot must be caught off the ground before the noose is thrown, and sluggish as he seems, the elephant kicks like chain lightning; the kick of a mule is a love pat by comparison. It is a curious but substantiated fact that, while at times there is much fighting, with mahouts, tame tuskers and the wild elephants in mixed mêlée, it is rare that a mahout, so long as he is mounted, is injured. Although the mahouts could easily be pulled off their perches, the wild elephants never make even an attempt to do so in the kraal; but the dismounted mahout needs to look out for both trunk and feet. Accidents are rare, although sometimes when the elephants are being driven out one will break away and require a great deal of prodding and rough handling before brought back into the herd. Sometimes in little groups of twos or threes elephants will rush at the shifting spectators who crowd near them; for the Siamese are rather fond of running up, by way of a dare, to an elephant coming out of the narrow gateway and dodging its short-lived pursuit before the mahouts head it back into the herd. This is not so dangerous a game as it sounds, for the elephant is by no means the swiftest thing on earth and a man can easily dodge

it if the ground is smooth and firm. Yet fatal accidents have occurred to the over-confident who did not dodge fast enough. And there have been times, too, when, enraged at their failure to catch the tormentor, the elephants have wreaked their vengeance on nearby fences or buildings or anything happening to be within reach.

The process of elephant catching in India as well as in Siam tends to rather undermine one's settled notions of elephant sagacity, and to create instead the feeling that a lot of sentimental nonsense and misleading, ignorantly conceived animal stories, have been put forth about My Lord, the Elephant. The literal truth is that the elephant, for all its reputed intelligence, is driven into places that no other wild animal could possibly be induced to enter; is, in its native jungle, held captive within a circle through which it could pass without an effort, and is bullied into uncomplaining obedience by a force the smallest fraction of its own numbers. Part of this is, no doubt, due to its exceedingly suspicious nature; the other part because of its lack of originality, which latter defect, however, has great value for man since it accounts for the elephant's notable amenability to discipline.

CHAPTER XI

THE TRAIL OF THE TIGER

THE tiger stirs imagination as does no other beast of the earth. When the superstitious native of the Far East refers to the dreaded cholera, he speaks awesomely of " the sickness "; and when the craven-hearted Bengali of India, with hushed breath and deprecatory gesture, tells of man or bullock carried off in the night by tiger, he alludes to the marauder deferentially as " the animal." For the tiger is a personage in the Orient to whom the fearful build propitiatory shrines, and whose influence upon the people of the soil is as mysterious as it is potent. The stealth of the great cat's approach, the deliberate savagery of its attack, its swift force, its sudden coming and going—like visitations of lightning—make compelling appeal to the impressionable nature of the Indian who fills his jungle with fanciful deities to safeguard his path and to divide his tributes. It may be only a little raised platform—bearing a soiled, fluttering rag, or a crudely carved, or painted, or even plain stone set up in a clearing under some tree; but no native traveller

passes without adding his mite or raising his voice in supplication to the gods that stand between him and the conjured terrors of the silent, fearsome jungle. If hunters would have success the offering must be a goat, or a bullock that has, perhaps, outlived its usefulness; to neglect such sacrifice is to forfeit protection in favor of the tiger. On the Brahmapootra I fell among people that even deified the beast in itself; and on the Jamna I heard of a resident "man-eater" which none could kill because it bore the spirit of a one-time victim who directed its attacks and warned it against unfriendly hunters. I heard here of a tigress with forty-five human lives to her credit.

Over all the Far East the trails of the tiger are many and devious; but despite notorious reputation and an annual murder record of some length, it is not the unavoidable domestic necessity of foreign India as many, who have never visited that wonderland of color and human interest, appear to think. Indeed only a small percentage of resident white men ever see either a tiger on a snake outside the zoo, for man-eaters do not invade English houses, and the fox terrier and the mongoose keep the immediate premises free of snakes. Of the bare-footed and bare-legged jungle-living natives, however, it is a different story. They pay the toll. Yet is the native fashioned on such

strange lines that though he dies in large numbers from attacks of poisonous snakes, he avoids killing the cobra, the most deadly viper of them all.

Year by year records are published of the destruction of human and cattle life by the wild beasts and snakes of British India. Last year 24,576 human beings and 96,226 cattle were killed, and of the people 21,827 deaths were attributed to snakes, while of the cattle, 86,000 were killed by wild beasts—panthers being charged with 40,000 and tigers with 30,000 of this total; snakes accounted for 16,000. And this is but a trifling percentage of the actual annual mortality, as it excludes the feudatory states, with their about 700,000 square miles and 60,000,000 inhabitants, where no records are obtainable. Nor do the fatalities grow materially less notwithstanding the efforts of sportsmen and rewards by government, because the development of roads and railways as the jungle is reclaimed for agriculture means continuous invasion of the snake and tiger infested territory.

Last year 1,285 tigers, 4,370 panthers and leopards, 2,000 bears, and 2,086 wolves were killed; of snakes, the real scourge of India, no record is possible, and, unfortunately, comparatively few are destroyed. However deplorable and costly is the taking of human and cattle life, the descent upon promising crops by deer and pigs and monkeys

would be even more serious to India and more expensive to the natives were it not for the tiger, panther and leopard. This formidable trio of the cat family practically police agricultural India where it pushes into the jungle, and make it possible for the poor native to exist through cultivation of his fields. So after all, it is a question whether, speaking very broadly, tigers are not more beneficial than harmful. Undoubtedly the depredations of the tiger are over-estimated, because he is so feared that wherever he prowls invariable panic spreads widely to his discredit. On India's last year's death list, 2,649 are credited to wild beasts, and while all of these are laid up against the tiger, panthers and wolves, especially panthers, should be charged with a very considerable share. The fact is that the panther and leopard, which, except as to size, are about alike in spotted pelt and temper, are as much under-estimated as the tiger is over-estimated. The smaller leopard devotes itself more largely to goats and pigs and monkeys, while the panther attacks deer, gaur, cattle and man—for the panther also, on occasions, becomes a "man-eater," and when he does he is a fury, insatiable. Panthers are bolder in attack, more active and more generally vicious than tigers; yet they inspire nothing like such awe among the natives. Indeed, I have seen natives rally to the

defence of a dog, of which leopards are particularly fond, when, had the intruder been a tiger, they would have been paralyzed into inaction from very fear. Based on my experience, I consider panther hunting quite as dangerous as tiger, up to a certain point, and that point is actual close conflict. The panther is the quicker to charge because of shorter temper and less caution; and he is less apt to bluff. But the charge home of the tiger is incomparably overwhelming. There is no turning it aside. It may have false starts and move with studied care, but when it does come nothing human can withstand it.

While their pelts differentiate slightly in markings and in length of fur according to habitat, there is, I believe, no scientific classification of tigers other than that given to the single species, *Felis tigris;* although that mighty hunter, Doctor William Lord Smith, who spent 1903–04 hunting in Corea, Java and Persia, tells me he thinks he can establish a sub-species. Be that as it may develop, at this writing the tiger family is really one, from the heavy-furred Siberian, to the Chinese, Corean, Malayan, Indian, and Persian, which latter Dr. Smith says does the family no credit in the matter of courage. The Chinese and Corean are the same and both fighters; the Indian and Malayan are practically identical, and the most beautifully

A GROUP OF INDIAN BEATERS.

With the panther successfully driven out and bagged.

marked as well as the most ferocious. So far as known, Siberian, Chinese, Corean and Persian tigers prey on deer, cattle, pigs, goats, dogs, according to locality and opportunity. I have not heard of a habitual man-eater among any of these members of the tiger family. But the Indian, which is, also the Malayan, is divided according to its predatory habit into three classes:

(1) Cattle killers.

(2) Game killers, and

(3) Man-eaters.

The cattle killer is the largest, and the most powerful of the three, but the least to be feared by man. He is, in fact, by way of being sociable, prone to take up his abode in the jungle nearby a settlement where, on terms of easy friendliness with the village people, he lives and levies tribute of a cow or bullock from every three to five days, according to the size and condition of the victim. Sometimes if disturbed in his stalk or at the killing, he increases the number, apparently out of pure wantonness of spirit, as a warning that he must be left alone under penalty of death. I have heard of tigers killing in this way as many as eight or ten animals, one after the other, and in each such case to come to my personal knowledge the natives have attributed the depredation to a particular tiger that had been interrupted in its cattle killing

during the formation of its habits in early youth. It is passing strange how tigers are given individuality in the hill districts of India, where the natives tremble at the mere mention of the terrible name.

The cattle killer is not a wide ranger unless hunted. Usually he confines his work to few villages, taking toll of them with impartiality and with regularity, and killing about seventy bullocks a year, of an average value of $8 to $10 a head; for it is to be remembered that the tiger usually gets the least valuable, the stray or the weakly cast adrift after outliving its usefulness. The more valuable are not so often raided, because in India cattle are very carefully herded.

The game killer is usually lighter, always the most active of the three, keeps himself well in the jungle, especially in the hill districts, and away from villages and men, except when on a deer or pig trail that carries him to cultivated fields. Thus the game killer ranges widely through the jungle, and is the one less often encountered by the sportsman.

Whether or not tigers hunt by scent is a question that has caused much discussion at one time or another, and while there can be no doubt that their sense of smell is less keen than that of deer, elephant, rhino, or the various species of gaur, yet

that it is well developed has often been proved by the winding of sportsmen sitting up on a platform over a kill. I have had such personal experience three times. There is no evidence, however, of a tiger hunting on the trail of its prey with nose to the scent like the wolf, or any of the dog family; and it is true, also, that very largely the tiger and others of the cat family lie in wait for their victims, or stalk upon them at familiar haunts or feeding ground. Once as I hunted seladang in Siam, I glimpsed the stern of a tiger plunging into the jungle at my side; and found the well-defined squarish pugs of a big male that had lain in ambush perhaps for the very animal whose tracks I followed. I had passed within ten feet of the tiger, which evidently was not looking for two-legged game.

On attack the tiger seizes by the throat with its powerful jaws and by the shoulders with its claw-armored fore paw. After a swift rush it kills with this grip by twisting its victim's neck until broken, and it is so strong that it can almost always bring down the gaur cow, though often beaten off by the bull whose neck is too massive and whose shoulders are too powerful to be wrenched. At such times the tiger resorts to subterfuge by crawling head on, to invite a rush which it as repeatedly evades, awaiting its chance to emasculate the bull

by a swift attack from the rear. Such, when dealing with tigers is the favorite method also of wild dogs, which are swift and hunt both by sight and scent, never leaving the trail once it is entered upon. They never make a frontal attack, or lay themselves liable to the hoof or paw of what they are pursuing, but tirelessly follow, awaiting opportunity to swiftly overwhelm by numbers, or, in the case of tiger, to leave the beast emasculated and to slow death. I heard of tigers killed by these dogs in a scuffle, but never came upon an authenticated case, and in the absence of such proof, must doubt it. So also do I question the reported instances of a boar successfully sustaining the attack of a tiger, though a fine old boar that was laid low after a gallant fight, by a pig-sticking company of which I was a member, had deep fang marks at the back of the head and on the chest, unmistakably made by a tiger.

When the tiger fails to seize the throat, it pursues and hamstrings the bullock whose body it then drags to a retired spot, where after sunset it will feast—invariably, on the hind quarters first, the thighs being an especial delicacy and often eaten in the first night. Its first meal is usually an orgy, at the close of which the tiger seeks the nearest seclusion to doze off that " well filled feeling "; thereafter it eats day or night as inclined

until the carcass is finished, drinking largely of water between and immediately following meals. Water and shade are the two needs of well-regulated tiger life.

The " man-eater " is the jungle nightmare of India, and numerous are the theories to account for its abnormal appetite. Commonly it is said to be an old tiger which has found game too difficult to bring down, or a sickly tiger which has resorted to man-killing in its weakness as the easier method. The consensus of opinion among experienced hunters and observers is, however, that a man-eater is an ex-cattle killer which in conflict with herders, who are often quite brave in the defence of their cattle, has discovered how much less work it is to kill man than cattle—for the cattle killer is usually fat and lazy. Nothing has been found, so far as I have discovered, to suggest appetite for human flesh as the impelling motive, or that man-eaters reject all flesh not human, or that the cubs of a man-eating tigress inherit the man-killing propensity. Rather is it a case of contempt for man bred of familiarity, and more often the lust lays hold of the tigress, very likely because in foraging for her cubs (as she does until they begin to hunt for themselves at seven months) and in their defence, she has come more frequently in contact with man; or it may be because the female is more numerous

than the male, or because she is by nature the slyer and more vicious. Certainly she is a fiend incarnate when every second year she gives birth to cubs, usually two, which do not move about with her until six weeks old; and no doubt her disposition is not improved by the necessity of concealing the youngsters from the tiger who else would devour them.

It is a curious and unexpected development that the cattle killer, turned man-eater, ceases to be indifferent to man's presence and becomes cowardly. Yet on occasion it is bold beyond all record of other animals.

I came to a hamlet in northwestern Bengal, where a journeying ryot (farmer) at the very edge of a settlement, in broad daylight, was bumped off his scared bullock and pounced upon and carried off by a tigress. In the little settlement of Teen Pehan, to the west of the Ganges, I saw a mother whose five-year-old boy had been snatched up in the full noon of day while at play not fifty feet from where she bathed in a nearby stream. In Sumatra I saw the palms and the soles and the distorted face—all that remained of a fourteen-year-old girl who had gone forth in the early morn to collect herbs in the more or less open jungle almost within sight of her father's house on the river. One of my hunting party in lower Burma

was the brother of a Karen, who had been struck down and carried away as he built a little temple in the jungle just beside his padi field. In the Malay Peninsula, just on the outskirts of Batu Gaja, a Tamil woman, carrying her babe on her hip, was mauled and her babe killed while making a short cut to her house through a small piece of open jungle. Such cases might be multiplied by other observers to show the occasional boldness of the man-eater; but as a rule it chooses a sequestered spot for its attack, and is, because of its acquired skulking nature, the most difficult to hunt of all tigers.

Other popular misconceptions give the tiger extraordinary leaping ability. It does not, as habitually painted, leap upon the back of its victim to crunch the vertebræ of the neck. It may do so occasionally on small game. I have seen panther springing on the little barking deer, but the usual tiger method is a stealthy stalk followed by a swift rush and seizure of the victim's throat.

It does not leap from twenty-five to one hundred feet, as we frequently read. Twelve feet is nearer the average of its jumps when chasing game, and there is no record of its jumping streams of over sixteen to eighteen feet in width. It is a bold swimmer, and a frequent wader.

It does not give up pursuit of its quarry on failure of the first attack.

It does not deliver bone-crushing blows with its fore paws, like bruin, although it does give blows that lacerate the flesh.

It does not roar like a lion.

It does not kill by blood letting, but by dislocating the neck.

It can climb a tree, but rarely does so.

There is also much exaggeration concerning size and weight. A tiger that measures ten feet from the tip of its nose to the end of its tail is a big one, and above the average, which is about nine and a half feet. Of course there are exceptions, as in all animal kind, but the majority of eleven and twelve foot tiger stories are fiction. I was unable during six months' hunting to find definite account of one even eleven feet in length. I did hear of several ranging from ten feet to ten feet six inches, and one of ten feet eight inches. So also with the weight, which is commonly written down at from 400 to 500 pounds, whereas the average will run from 300 to 375 pounds, the latter being a good one and the former figure more near the average.

The manner of hunting tigers varies according to locality and conditions; and in India alone several methods obtain:

Driving the tiger out of the long grass of Bengal before a line of elephants to a previously selected open spot where the gunners, also on elephants, are stationed.

Driving it out before a line of native beaters through the jungle to a given open place where the gunner is stationed up a tree near where the tiger is expected to break cover.

Awaiting it on a platform (" mechan ") erected within thirty to fifty feet of a tied up live bullock or goat; or near the un-eaten carcass of the tiger's kill to which it will return.

Walking it up before beaters; *i. e.,* shooting it on foot.

Natives also drive the tiger before a long line of beaters into widely stretched nets which are then closed and surrounded by fires and by men armed with spears and guns. In Java this method is elaborated into a " rampok," which includes freeing a trapped tiger within a large circle of several rows deep made by men armed with spears. The " game " is gradually to narrow the circle until the charging and desperate beast is closed in by a wall of sharp steel points which finally despatch him. It is not a glorious game. Poison and spring guns and traps are also used by natives throughout the Orient to rid themselves of a man-eater.

In the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, lower Burma and southern Siam, the jungle is too dense and continuous to permit of beating up tigers with a line of elephants. In fact, as compared with India, almost no tiger hunting is done in these countries, and that little consists of sitting up over a kill, or, in the dry season, over a water hole. The latter is a favorite method of Chinamen who hunt tigers for the skin and for the whiskers which, like the horn of the rhino, are largely valued on account of certain occult influences they are supposed to exert in compounding medical charms. But in none of this Far Eastern section are the natives hunters by inclination, and not enough hunting is done by the handful of resident whites to replace ignorance with skill. Besides, the average native is not in sympathy with hunting; he has no stomach for the game; so that pursuit of the tiger in this part of the world is done under extremely difficult conditions, and with no great measure of success. In sections of Corea, and on parts of the Chinese coast, however, Chinamen, armed with great, three-tined pitchfork-like spears, hunt out the cave-dwelling tiger and become not only expert but brave and dependable. And this tiger is fully as formidable as the one of India, requiring of the sportsman both nerve and courage.

Hunting from the back of an elephant has no ele-

ment whatever of danger for anyone except the mahout (driver) when the tiger charges the elephant's head; at such times the mahout's seat astride the elephant's neck just behind the great ears becomes untenable if the attacking beast is not quickly killed by the guns above in the howdah. It is the method pursued by the native rajahs of India, high officials, and visitors who want to kill a tiger regardless of cost—and can afford the price. And it is the most luxurious, expensive and easiest way of gratifying the tiger-killing impulse. On such a hunt from thirty to one hundred or even more elephants may be employed, and as elephants are worth each from $400 to $2,000, and cost about $1.00 a day for keep alone, an idea may be formed of the hire of such an expedition—not to mention its intrinsic value. Then there are the mahouts and beaters and camp makers and water carriers and personal servants, to number from seventy-five to three hundred according to the size and distinction of the expedition.

The howdah in which the hunter rides and from which he shoots, is a wood and cane affair resting on two round long pads placed lengthwise either side of the elephant's backbone, and firmly lashed in place by ropes passing under the elephant's neck, belly and tail. The hunters draw lots for position and when they have been stationed—

sometimes as much as one hundred yards apart, according to the country—other elephants bearing only a pad and their mahouts, beat the jungle towards the sportsmen in the howdahs. The chief excitement in this kind of hunting centres around the question of who will get the tiger, for in a country possible to such extended drives, there is no certainty as to the precise point the beast will break cover, and getting a shot is therefore a matter of individual luck. Sometimes, when the tiger does not break cover, the howdah-bearing elephants close in upon the piece of jungle in which the quarry lies concealed, and then there is more "doing" and some fun. But for the most part, standing on the back of an elephant inside a howdah behind an armory of guns, is not particularly stirring and does not appeal to the sportsman who has ever experienced the thrill of stalking.

Shooting rhinoceros from a howdah, however, if not more dangerous, at least averages higher in diversion, because in close cover elephants hold a rhino always in great respect and frequently in much fear on account of its obstinate advance and well understood tendency to gore legs and stomachs that obstruct its path. Therefore a rhino in long grass at close quarters means a good bit of scurrying around and at times it means a run-away by an elephant that has become panic-stricken at the

STARTING OUT FOR A TIGER DRIVE IN INDIA.

The howdah elephants and sportsmen leading; the pad or driving elephants following.

sharp whiffing, sniffing, and the swaying grass that mark the charging rhino. If trees happen to be plentiful in the vicinity such a run-away is really dangerous to the occupants of the howdah. Once I had such an experience and I hope never to have another so uncomfortable. Luckily there were no trees, but several shallow, narrow gullies into which the elephant scrambled with great haste; the howdah meanwhile rocking like a cockle shell in a sea way. I was as a pea within a vigorously shaken rattle. That the howdah stayed on the elephant's back is recommendation enough of the strength of the ropes and the skill of the lashing.

Walking up a tiger with beaters can not be done in a long grass country and should be attempted anywhere only by those of experience; aside from the danger, there are a hundred chances of failure by doing the wrong thing at the right time. A tiger shows extraordinary intelligence in discerning the silent, waiting sportsman up a tree in the foreground, from the harmless, though noisy tom-toming beaters at his rear, and will often break back through the line, unless continuous skill and care are exercised. So a beat should never begin too near the tiger once he has been located, as he may go unseen straight out of the country at once. Some tigers show immediately; others not until the last moment; and, as with other animals, no

two tigers act the same. Incidentally, no tiger shows so quickly as the panther. To know the ground thoroughly, therefore, is an absolute essential to successful beating; not only to know the cover to be driven, but the possible outlets to the covers nearby. My failure to get a tiger in half a dozen such tries is explained by just that lack of knowledge which I never could find in the natives upon whom I had to depend, and never could stop long enough in one locality to acquire myself. Where natives are as familiar with the tiger as they are in India, and know the ground, the chances are immeasurably enhanced, and success should and will come to the experienced hunter who can await such conditions. If your tiger breaks cover directly in front of you, hold your fire; if possible let him get abreast of your position, or past it, before you press the trigger. Otherwise he is apt to break back among your beaters, and may kill one of them; may destroy their courage in themselves and their confidence in you, which is very serious.

Sitting up over a kill is the most frequent habit of Malaya, and the most infrequent of success, as compared with India, because of inexpertness in building the "mechan," and in tying up the bullock or goat, which should be placed in a quiet place, several hundred yards from any cover where it

will be possible for the tiger to lie up during the day, after he has taken the bait. This will enable you, when the kill has been made, to build your platform without fear of disturbing the tiger, as is often the case and the cause of his failure to return. Of course it must be located down wind from the bait, and back from the tiger's probable line of approach when such is possible of discernment. The mechan may be what size you will, but should be no larger than necessary—say 6x3, or even 1½x4, and must be made of tough material that will not creak, with a screen of leaves that will not dry up quickly to crackle at an inauspicious instant. It ought to be about fifteen feet above ground, or twenty, if you can equally as well build one so high, to lessen the chance of being scented. Mechans vary from such simple workmanlike platforms to ones bearing nearly all the comforts of home. An Anglo-Indian whom I knew as an indefatigable devotee of this kind of shooting, used to build his mechan with great care and furnish it with mattress, pillows, rug, water bottle and reading matter. Whether the platform be simple or elaborate, however, take no one into it with you; twice I lost good opportunities of scoring through my servant's clearing his throat. The tiger does not usually look up, unless his attention is attracted by a noise, but the slightest movement

catches his exquisitely sensitive ear, and when they have been hunted tigers become so wary as to be well-nigh impossible of circumvention. Get to your platform by four in the afternoon, for between that hour and half after eight is the most likely time of his coming, though, as a matter of fact, he may and does appear at any hour of the night. All nicely man-made rules and regulations are violated by this quarry.

To walk up a tiger is the most dangerous form of sport, but to the man with the heart for it—far and away the most enjoyable. Like other pursuits of the venturesome, this one should not be attempted by the inexperienced or by those that can not keep cool under nerve-trying conditions; and in common with all hazardous games, experience robs this one of some of its formidability. Experience should spell caution as well as skill, and a man having both will know enough never on foot to track a tiger into long grass, or to approach in very close cover. A tiger seeks to conceal himself, and on discovery is moved, in my judgment, by the spirit of self-defence against what he believes to be an attack, rather than by the single desire to kill; though whatever the impelling spirit may be, the hunter's position is none the less eased, for the tiger in such jungle can usually move quicker than a man can handle his

gun. For that reason never approach cover that can hide a tiger until it has been explored, and make it a rule to believe every piece of this kind of cover does hold a tiger until you have proved that it does not. Tiger hunting in any form is dangerous business, and following a wounded one should depend entirely on the nature of the jungle into which the beast has retreated. If the cover is dense—keep away until you are re-inforced and even then don't venture to drive him out unless you have a body of spearmen that will stand firm; unlike the valiant boar, a tiger will not, as a rule, charge a party that is bunched and holding its ground. Nor under ordinary circumstances is an unwounded tiger apt to charge unless you stand in his only avenue of escape. Tiger shooting, in a word, is so variable and always so dangerous that without a companion of suitable temperament and experience the average hunter should not engage in walking up the quarry; and not then unless he carries a level head. To the man so constructed that he can not keep cool I say with all emphasis—don't go tiger hunting. An excellent aid to keeping cool is a double barrel rifle; and a maxim worth remembering is never to fire your last cartridge at a retreating tiger, because if you wound him he is likely to change his mind about running away—and a tiger coming your way, uttering his short,

coughing roars, is about as unnerving and dangerous an experience as a hunter can have.

Not every tiger hunt is rewarded with a tiger. Except for my friend, Dr. Smith—and English army officers of India who are out at every report—I know none that has done more actual hunting for tiger within a given period than I—and I have yet to secure my first trophy, though I wounded three, in the course of six months' uninterrupted industry in Sumatra, Malay Peninsula, Siam, lower Burma and India, during which time I sat up over goats and bullocks; watched over a kill from a mechan; waited up a tree for a tiger to break cover in front of beaters, and walked him up. At first it was partly inexperience on my part, and then native ignorance and lack of cooperation; lastly it was hollow-pointed bullets, and always it was lack of time; for getting a tiger is after all a question of time and opportunity, other things being equal. You may go out two dozen times, as I did, without carrying home a scalp, or you may score the first time, as has been done from a howdah.

My first tiger hunt developed from a deer hunt on the coast of the Malay Peninsula, which I joined to please my Mohammedan host, Aboo Din, who had just brought me back from a successful boar shoot he had organized for me with great

reluctance—for the disciple of Mohammed holds no intercourse with pigs. Now although the Malay is not a hunter, some of them are quite devoted to running deer with dogs, and a few of the better class keep packs for the purpose, with a huntsman, who is a kind of witch doctor called "pawang," with many fields of activity. I found pawangs that looked after crops, pawangs that spirited away sickness, and pawangs that insured successful deer hunting. As a rule only the sultans or rajahs afford pawangs; but Din, though neither sultan nor rajah, was a native of influence and wealth, and there was not much doing in the Malay Peninsula that he was not into, from deer chasing up to horse racing. He was very proud of his pack which was in fact famous in the neighborhood.

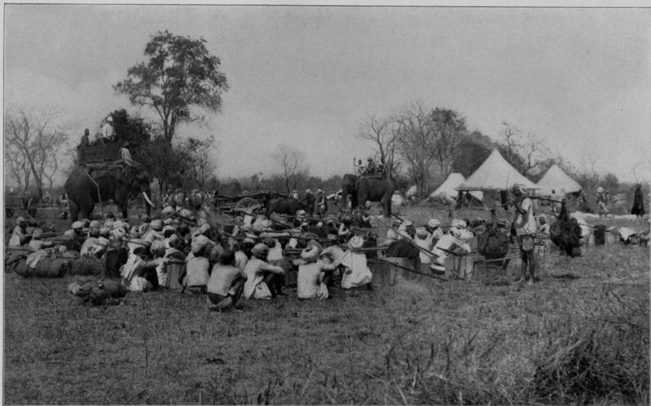
When we reached the cover where the dogs were to be turned in for deer, we halted, while the pawang delivered himself of an incantation to assure success, and when a deer was killed the carcass remained untouched until the pawang again fell into fanatical frenzy as the hunters gathered around. Aboo explained the final ceremony as necessary to deliver the spirit of the deer into Mohammed's safe keeping; otherwise it would forever haunt and afflict the man who had killed it. Several days we successfully snap-shot deer, as they raced across more or less open stretches from

one patch of jungle to another, when one noon the dogs suddenly broke into a loudly distressful chorus which Aboo declared could only mean that they had run into a tiger. As we turned cautious steps towards the howling and yapping it subsided and soon we came to three badly mauled and whining members of the scattered pack which we could hear beating hasty retreat in many directions. We moved carefully, although the jungle was fairly open and the dogs' back tracks easily followed in the soft soil. The ground was well cut up at the scene of the brief and apparently one-sided conflict; blood showed that something had been doing, while the plainly printed oval pugs of a tigress indicated who had been doing it. We followed these pugs with the utmost deliberation until they led out of that piece of jungle to skirt another and finally enter the lower end of a ravine, by which time it was dark. Next morning at daylight, we picked up the trail again at the point where it led into cover of unusual density in the shallow ravine. I suggested that Aboo put the dogs and men in here while we took position at the upper end of the draw just below where it ended in higher ground. A good bit of urging was necessary to get the dogs into the cover and much encouragement to keep them moving, but the Malays, armed only with the parang (jungle knife),

yelled and shouted and threshed the jungle with stout bamboo poles sharpened at one end into a short tough point, as though hugely enjoying themselves. It was an hour before the beaters approached to within about one hundred yards of us, and as Aboo watched the lower bank of the gully and I the upper, twice we thought we saw the yellowish head poking its way through the jungle above us. We felt sure it would break cover on the upper bank at the sky line. Suddenly as we watched intently, the sun burst forth brilliantly over the hill, shining full in our eyes, and at that miserable moment out came the tigress from the jungle straight into the bewildering glare. 'Twas an impossible shot, but my first opportunity at such game, which must have been my excuse for firing. I missed the mark by feet I suppose; the tigress at all events vanished instanter over the hill, and though several hours we tracked her, finally we lost all trail and had to give it up greatly disappointed.

A tiger that has once hesitated on its charge is not likely to charge home. Once I had an experience to corroborate this. Near a native settlement on the west bank of the Ganges I had been for several days without success walking up a tiger in the hills. Then followed other days of even no sign, and finally a day when one broke cover in front

of beaters, about seventy-five yards from where I sat in position up a tree. He was a regal sight as he came out silently, slowly—stopping, with half his body still uncovered, while, with raised paw, like a cat, he cautiously surveyed the field. The picture was so enjoyable, for the moment, I did not think of shooting, or, in my inexperience, realize that at any instant he might disappear. And so it was—for suddenly, with a spring and a turn to one side he was gone into the jungle again; but I had awakened from my trance with his first move and as he vanished put in a shot which scored because I saw him switch around and bite his stern as the cover closed upon him. The piece of jungle into which he had retreated was dense at the edges, but opened up some just beyond, and we made our way on the tracks slowly and carefully, one of the beaters having a little mongrel fox terrier type of dog that went forward on the trail with unexpected courage. We were a long time before getting to a very dense piece where we hesitated, while part of the men and the dog went off to one side with a view to making a survey of the close cover from another point. As they worked off I moved forward a little in an endeavor to find a better position, from which to look ahead. I had got but a short distance and where I could not see six feet ahead, when I was halted by a sudden



LUXURIOUS HUNTING IN INDIA.

The camp of a large party, with porters in the foreground.

growling and a heart-stopping, short, coughing roar. It was the first time I had heard it—and I freely confess—it well-nigh froze my blood. I knew it was a tiger; I could plainly hear it coming; and as the jerky roar grew nearer and nearer, I stood there having sensations—I do assure you. But I stood, for I realized how useless would be an attempt to escape by running; I thought I would have a better chance for my life if I faced the music.

With my rifle raised and at full cock I stood waiting, waiting, and just at the instant I expected the terrifying thing to burst upon me from out the jungle that nerve-racking roar ceased, and was followed by stillness quite as dreadful, for I did not know what it might not portend. I pictured the tiger stalking noiselessly around me, looking for the best place from which to make his final rush. The day wasn't so hot, but the perspiration rolled from me pretty freely just about that time. Then at last came the relief of a noise which seemed going from me. It sounded as though the tiger was retreating. And that is precisely what he was doing. He went out on the unguarded side of the cover—out of my life forever, so far as I know, but not without having made a deep impression upon me; to this day I can hear that tiger coming.

"Sitting up" on a platform for tiger with a

tied-up bullock nearby, as bait, does not commend itself to me as sport; it is too much like bear baiting, in which no sportsman should engage. Such methods are only excusable when an animal's predatory nature has put it in the vermin class, to be exterminated one way or another. And sitting up does not assure tiger by any means, even though it be over the beast's own kill. My attempts were all failures. Three times I was winded, the direction of the breeze changing at sundown, and my platform being only eight feet above ground; another time I fired in the dim uncertain light of a cloud-covered moon, and missed; twice my servant's cough warncd the tiger. On another occasion the tiger came directly under my platform from the rear. I could hear it sniffing and the firm tread on the rustling leaves, which once heard is always remembered. For minutes it stood silent and I dared not move to try for a look lest it take alarm. I even feared it might hear my heart thumping above its head. Then, a twig cracked in the stillness; and again and for eternity, it seemed—dead silence. So long I sat cramped that one foot went to sleep, and my discomfort was extreme. At last daylight—but no tiger. It had vanished, perhaps at the cracking of the twig, as suddenly as it had come.

None the less sitting up has compensations, even

though a tiger be not one of them. Really I found the experience full of interest. Sunset in such country is the most delightful hour of the tropical twenty-four, for it is in the cool of evening that refreshment comes after the super-heated day, and you hear jungle sounds, and see jungle life of which you never before knew. After a time the moon looks forth, and by and by, as its soft light spreads, the trees stand forth, darkly, sharply silhouetted against the sky, and all the jungle takes on new and strangely picturesque beauty. One evening, as I sat over the kill of a tiger—I had the luck to watch the antics of two jackals stealing a meal. Well they knew whose kill they nosed, and every movement suggested terror at the risk. One would circle the opening, head stuck out and every nerve obviously on edge while the other snatched a morsel from the dead bullock; then the other guarded while the erstwhile sentinel grabbed a mouthful and swallowed it unchewed—neither ever resting an instant. So they continued for many minutes while they secured a very respectable meal, and grew a bit careless for once one paused a second at the carcass to take more than a passing grab, when the other, with tail between legs, back arched and head extended down and out to the full length of its neck, rushed it with such a grin on its face as made me wish to kill it then

and there. Suddenly, with eyes searching the jungle on one side, they fell to whimpering and twittering and dancing on their feet as though in mortal terror of an impending calamity—then like a flash they were gone. I confidently expected to see a tiger appear, but none came, though I watched patiently and intently throughout the long night.

My most serious experience with a tiger happened in Sumatra. Uda Prang and I were returning from a successful rhinoceros hunt, and came one night to a settlement of half a dozen houses, where the growing of the sago plant and the cutting of rattan to sell Chinese traders, made up the industrial life of the inhabitants. We found the little settlement in a state of great agitation and mourning, for only the night before a young girl had been killed by a tiger or panther, they knew not which, as she gathered herbs not a quarter of a mile away from her home. It was evening when we arrived, but on the morning following, early, we were taken out to where the tragedy had occurred, and a bloody bit of dress and the palms of the child's hands and soles of her feet indicated that the beast had made its ghastly feast on the spot. The pug marks seemed to me rather small for a tiger, but Uda said it was a tiger and not a panther.

Back from the river and behind the open fields

where the jungle had been reclaimed for sago, were two sugar-loaf-shaped hills of independent, uneven tops, but joined at the base by a ridge-like backbone, which was fairly free of jungle though otherwise the hills were rather closely covered. For two days we hunted the tiger's tracks, feeling fairly confident of eventual success as this happened to be one of a few cultivated patches widely separated on this stretch of the river, and as crops attract deer and pigs, so pigs and deer attract tigers. And at last we did find the trail of this tiger where it led into the larger of the two hills. That night, by a happy bit of luck, two canoes loaded with rattan for the Chinamen down river, rested at the settlement, and we persuaded the four Malay boatmen to stop over and help us. So next day at daylight we set out sixteen strong, carrying bamboo sticks for jungle beating, three drums for noise and spears for defense; it was an absurdly inadequate line, but it represented the population of a one-hundred-mile radius. We started the men in on the larger hill, where we had found the tracks, to beat towards me on the smaller hill where I took position commanding the comparatively uncovered connecting ridge. And we posted two men in the fields to note if the tiger left the isolated hills. What with their jungle threshing and shouting and vigorous, unceasing drum, drum-

ming, the beaters altogether made quite a noise and as after an hour or more it neared me I thought I caught a glimpse of the tiger skulking along down low on the side of the backbone, where the growth was thick—making towards my hill. It could in this way pass my position unseen, and fearful that it might escape from the unguarded side of the small hill, I made my way to Uda Prang who forthwith ordered the men over to the far side of the smaller hill which the tiger had entered and which I had just left—to beat back and thus turn and drive it again across the ridge and on to the larger hill from which it had originally started.

As the beaters began their yelling and smashing, Jin Abu and I started to climb to an abrupt shelf-like bench on the larger hill, which overlooked the backbone. The hill was fairly steep and the close cover made moving laborious with frequent checking. Several times we were distressed with impatience at being delayed by clinging thorn-covered growths. A bit winded we neared the site we had chosen from which to shoot the tiger as it came back over the ridge. Thoughts of what I would do with the pelt ran in my head—and then we were startled by a growl followed by a muttered edition of the coughing roar I knew well by

this time, and there, not more than six or eight feet away, and above us, was the tiger we thought was on the other hill. He had crossed back and was now watching us, body crouched, chin close to its fore paws, eyes glaring menacingly. It was the surprise of my hunting career, and withal a most disturbing situation, for my rifle (50-calibre) hung from my left shoulder. I felt that a spring was imminent, and it seemed that almost with thought of it, the spring came, but not before I had swung my rifle into position, and fired, full into the beast's face, dropping flat instantly with the same intuitiveness which closes the eyelid against flying danger. Uda Prang was not so quick in dropping and, as the tiger went over our heads it reached him, on the shoulders in passing, tearing the flesh severely with its claws. It kept on down the steep hill breaking cover, and plunging into the jungle, across the fields, where for three days we tracked it. At first we found blood but it did not last long, indicating a superficial head wound, and after a time the pug prints were entirely lost on firm soil.

So the little girl was not avenged after all, but I received a practical lesson in the untrustworthiness of hollow-pointed bullets on dangerous game.

Thus the tiger's trail, and the tiger. To none are accredited such human tragedies; to none so

much of ferocity and cunning and cruelty and power. But it is royal game! the kind to fix upon you that fascination which lies in the pursuit of quarry, having a minimum of the man-fear with which brute nature is possessed.