

footsteps in your woodland rambles. The fringe of yellow petals is unfolding on the witch-hazel boughs; and if you only knew the place, you might discover in some forsaken nook a solitary pale blue lamp of fringed gentian still flickering among the withered leaves. The Indian summer is soon a thing of the past. Perhaps before another daybreak it will have flown. There is no dawn upon that morning. The night runs into a day of dismal cheerless twilight, and the sky is overcast with ominous darkness. That angry cloud that left us, driven away before the conquering spring, now lowers above the northward mountain. We see his livid face, and feel his blighting breath, "a hard, dull, bitterness of cold" that sweeps along the moor in noisy triumph, that howls and tears among the trembling trees, and smothers out the last smouldering flame of faded autumn.

PIG-STICKING IN INDIA.

EVERY reader of modern English novels is familiar with the term "pig-sticking." The gallant young officer who has won the heroine's heart, and who goes to India in order that the wicked rival may intercept his letters and destroy his happiness, is always engaged, while in that distant land, in either tiger-shooting or pig-sticking. The *London Times* recently classed pig-sticking with polo as a sport of inestimable value in developing the manly qualities of the British soldier. In this country we have lately learned that polo is a sort of horseback croquet, in which heads instead of feet are smashed, but of the true nature of pig-sticking we are shamefully ignorant. Let us, then, in a sincere and earnest spirit, inquire as to the character of the pigs and the process by which they are stuck.

Those who have formed their conception of pig exclusively upon the tame pig of the civilized sty, have no adequate idea of the free wild pig of the Indian jungle. Like the North American Indian, the pig is debased by contact with civilization. He becomes cowardly, weak, dirty, and a prey to an inordinate thirst for swill. The distance between the tame Indian of Saratoga, who steals chickens and wallows drunken in the gutter, and the fierce warrior of the Western plains, is not greater than that which separates the despised pig of civilization from the wild and fearless

quarry of the East Indian pig-sticker. The latter pig, whose spirit has never been broken with pig yokes, and whose moral nature has never been poisoned with swill, is one of the bravest inhabitants of the jungle, and has been known to attack and put to rout the majestic elephant and the ferocious tiger.

The full name of the East Indian pig is *Sus indicus*, though no one except a punctilious scientific person ever calls him by it. Among beginners in the art of pig-sticking he is sometimes magniloquently described as a wild boar—though he is very often a wild sow; but pig-stickers of reputation uniformly call him a pig, or a hog. *Sus indicus* often grows to the length of four feet and eight or ten inches, and reaches the height of three feet, or even forty inches, at the shoulder. When full grown his strength is enormous, and in speed he will sometimes rival the fastest Arabian horse. He enters upon existence in a striped state; subsequently he becomes brown; when in the prime of life he affects a dingy black color; and when old he is gray and grizzled. At no period can he be honestly called a handsome or a graceful animal, but his courage and tenacity of life demand our respect.

In point of teeth the tame pig has sadly deteriorated. The wild boar of India, which is the type of the barbaric pig of all ages, is armed with long semicircular tusks. Those in the lower jaw sometimes attain the length of eight or nine inches. They curve outward and upward, and the edges are kept sharp by the pig's constant habit of scouring them against the tusks of the upper jaw. The swiftness and power with which he uses those tusks to carve an enemy are almost incredible. A hunting dog is frequently cut nearly in two by a single stroke of a boar's tusks, and horses and men are occasionally killed by boars which have become tired of being hunted, and which try to infuse a little variety into the affair by hunting their enemies. When wounded he is an exceedingly dangerous beast to face on foot, unless the hunter is a lawless ruffian who is capable of killing him with a rifle. One can scarcely imagine an Englishman so lost to all sense of decency as to shoot a fox, and next to that crime ranks, in Anglo-Indian estimation, the loathsome outrage of killing a pig by any process except that of pig-sticking.

The wild hog is gregarious, but it would be extremely improper to speak of a herd or a drove of wild hogs. Several hogs living together constitute what the pig-sticker calls "a sounder of hog." In like manner our sportsmen speak of a "gang" of wild-geese, and leave the term "flock" to be applied only to tame geese. The reason of these apparent freaks of nomenclature is unknown except perhaps

devotes himself to celibacy and a general disapproval of all things. The solitary boars are much more dangerous than those whose ferocity has been softened by social intercourse. They are like the solitary "rogue" elephants in their reckless and savage temper, and there is no animal that they will hesitate to attack. It can scarcely be said with truth that a wild boar is a match for an elephant, but



A "SOUNDER" OF WILD HOG.

to some accomplished sportsman, though it is possible that they were originally intended to serve as pass-words by which true sportsmen could detect an impostor who should venture to tell apocryphal stories of his prowess in killing whole herds of wild hogs, and whole flocks of wild-geese. All wild hogs, however, do not live in the society of the "sounder." Frequently an aged boar whose personal habits render him disagreeable, or whose character fails to command respect, is expelled from his "sounder," and forced to live alone. Occasionally, too, a younger boar, whose affections have been blighted, voluntarily withdraws from the world, and

it sometimes happens that two of these animals become involved in "a difficulty," in which case the elephant, after having had his legs badly gashed, usually comes to the conclusion that he is degrading himself by fighting his social inferior, and thereupon limps away.

For pig-sticking there are two requisites in addition to the pig—a fast, steady horse, and a good hog spear. The Nigger Hunt spear-head, which is now generally used in India, is shaped somewhat like a myrtle leaf, with long slight curves from point to shank, so that it can be easily withdrawn, as well as easily driven home. A four-edged spear-head is also sometimes

used, but as it is difficult to sharpen, it is not much liked. Of course the spear-head is made of the best quality of steel, and its edges ought to be sharp enough to shave with, in case any lunatic should desire to put it to such a use.

The spear shaft is a stout male bamboo about nine feet long, with the butt weighted with lead so as to balance the weight of the spear-head. The veteran pig-sticker is particular to have his bamboo cut at night, and at the time of the new moon; in which case it is his belief that it will not yield to dry-rot. This is a native superstition, and perhaps strikes an Englishman, whose sisters make a point to cut their hair only at the change of the moon, as a rather respectable superstition which it can do no harm to adopt.

Armed with this weapon, and well mounted, the pig-sticker rides off, sometimes alone, but usually with a gay company of pig-sticking brother officers, and halts on the border of the jungle while the native beaters drive the inhabitants of the jungle down toward the hunters. The master of the hunt posts the sportsmen here and there in pairs, so that each hunter has an especial rival, against whom he is pitted, and whom he must, if possible, forestall in spearing the hog. When the line of spearmen is in readiness the beaters advance, usually with shouts and the beating of tom-toms. Presently one of them sounds a horn, and the hunters then know that the game has been started. A little later, and out from the jungle marches the "sunder," led by the patriarchal boar. When the master of the hunt considers that the game has had a fair start in advance of the hunters, he sounds his bugle, and the horsemen, with poised spears, bear down upon the devoted boar, which bounds away with a speed more worthy of an antelope than a pig.

The one great secret of success in pig-sticking is to ride straight after the pig with all the speed that your horse can muster. The pig must be "blown" within the first two miles, or else he performs the curious respiratory feat known as "getting his second wind," in which case the chances are that he will outrun the horse, and squeak derision at the baffled hunter. But to ride straight after a flying pig over a grass-grown Indian plain requires courage as well as skillful horsemanship. There are several small ani-

mals whose delight it is to make pitfalls in the ground large enough to receive a horse's hoof. When a horse is thus snared, his leg usually breaks, and his rider, after a brief trip through the air, tries the experiment of viewing the landscape in an upside-down position. Then there are frequent nullahs, or sunken water-courses, which the hunter does not discover until he is on their very brink. If the nullah can be leaped, the hunt goes on without interruption. If, however, it is too wide, the rider dismounts, and leads his horse through it. The dismounting is a very simple operation; and the horse, if he is well trained, and has saved himself from plunging into the nullah, expresses no surprise when his master has slid over his neck, but waits quietly until the latter has picked the pebbles from his face and is ready to remount. Meanwhile the pig, with grunts of sarcastic joy, has put half a mile between himself and his pursuer, and is mentally prepared to offer odds that he will finally escape.

When riding, the pig-sticker carries his spear with the butt down, and the point well forward in a line with his horse's ears. When closing with the pig, he aims to reach his left side, so as to use the right arm freely. The pig is to be stuck immediately behind the shoulder, so that the spear will pass through his lungs and out at the breast. The rush of the horse drives the spear home, and a sudden wheel to the left withdraws it, and leaves the hunter ready to receive a charge in case the wound is not immediately mortal. If the pig does charge, he is received on the point of the spear, and permitted to insert as much of it into his interior as his ferocious temper demands. A good pig-sticker nearly always kills the game at the first blow, and a novice who is charged by a powerful boar incurs great danger, unless he is thoroughly cool and self-possessed.

There are pigs which do not wait until they are wounded before charging. A young and high-spirited boar will abandon the attempt to escape by flight as soon as he finds that the hunter is gaining on him, and will suddenly turn, and dash at the horse's legs. If the rider is master of himself and his horse, the pig is promptly spitted. If not, the pig gathers the laurels of the hunt, and rejoins his "sunder" to boast of having spoiled a horse and discomfited a British officer.