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JUNGLE JOHN



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JUNGLE JOHN



JUNGLE JOHN

BY
JOHN BUDDEN

NUNAVIRUL ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL
Date
ERNAKULAM

SIMPLIFIED BY
J. W. HOLME
AND
MICHAEL WEST, M.A., D.PHIL.

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2098

JUNGLE JOHN

CHAPTER ONE

A

THE four long months of almost unending rain were nearly over. Bill Blackadder, tired with his day's work in the wet, hot jungle, sat in a comfortable old chair under the spreading branches of a big tree. He was a man whom everybody liked, for they knew that he was kind, and honest, yet afraid neither of man nor beast.

At this moment there was a puzzled look upon his face—the look of a man who has to decide a difficult question. What troubled Bill's mind? Even Ugly, his faithful old dog, seemed to know that his master was anxious, for he put his nose softly on to Bill's knee, as if to say, "I know all about it, and I wish I could help you."

"What shall I do with Young John?" thought Bill. John was Bill's son, far away in the cool hills of Northern India. His mother was dead, and Bill was left alone to think and plan what would be best for the fair-haired, bright-eyed boy.



Suddenly Bill sprang from his chair. "Why didn't I think of it before," he thought. "Why not have John with me here in the jungle for the cold weather? He

will enjoy it, and we can talk about what he should do when he grows up." Aloud he cried, "Din Mahomed!" and the tall, white-clothed old servant ran up to him almost breathless.

"Would you like to have the small **Sahib**[1] in camp with us for the cold weather?" said Bill.

"As my master wishes, so it shall be," said Din Mahomed.

B

And so, two weeks later, the train slowly came to a stop in the hot afternoon, and a loud voice woke John. He had fallen asleep. The long train journey from the northern hills was ended, and he opened sleepy eyes to find his father standing outside the carriage window. Their greetings were soon over, and in a few minutes John was mounted on a small **pony.**[2] They started off, Bill Blackadder in front, John behind, trying not to fall off, for his new pony was bigger and faster than anything he had ridden before. He was glad when the path became narrower, and the pony was forced to walk.

Soon they came to a small village, and saw the smoke of many cooking-fires. Little drums were sounding. One man was playing an instrument which seemed to give forth a cry of pain instead of music. The pony hated the noise, and kicked and jumped. John nearly fell off his back, but soon the music stopped, and they saw the lights of Bill's camp glimmering through the trees. This was the

[1] **Sahib**=Master. An Indian servant addresses his master thus.
[2] **Pony**=A small kind of horse.

ISLAM HIGH SCHOOL

end of their journey, for near the edge of a big lake stood four large white tents. John got off his horse and his father took him to the tent where he worked, and in a few minutes they were sitting at a table in the centre of the camp, near a big wood fire.

C

John enjoyed his dinner, for the long ride had made him hungry. As soon as it was over, he set out to examine his new home. He discovered little bands of servants sitting round their cooking-fires, lines of horses tied by ropes to small posts in the ground, and a few **camels,** looking rather strange in the darkness.

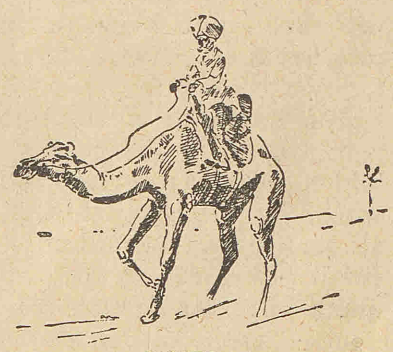
His father soon followed him. He thought that bed was the best place for John after his tiring day. Just as he was saying "Good night," a loud **roar**[1] broke the silence, followed by another.

"That's very near!" said Bill, aloud to himself.

"What was it?" said John.

"Nothing much," said his father. "Don't trouble about it, my boy—Sleep well."

But John had a feeling that only one animal could give such



CAMEL

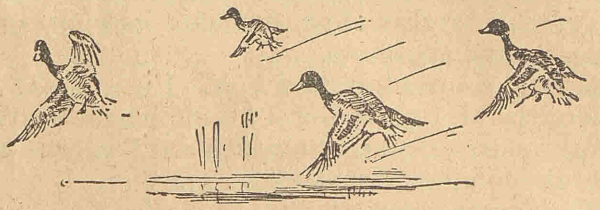
[1] **Roar**=A loud deep cry.

a terrible roar. He was right; it was a **tiger,**[1] the greatest of all animals in that part of the jungles of India.

CHAPTER TWO

A

JOHN lay awake for a little time. He thought with wonder about the birds and beasts that his father had promised to show him. From his bed he could hear the loud cries of the water-birds flying over



the lake, and many other strange sounds that puzzled him. But soon he fell asleep, for he was really very tired.

His father however, still had a good deal of work to do in his office, reading the letters that had come that day, and writing reports of his day's work. Little by little the sounds died away, and all was quiet. Suddenly, out of the darkness a small figure appeared. It was an old man. His black hair stuck out from beneath a cloth tied

[1] **Tiger**=A large, fierce, cat-like animal. You will read a good deal about tigers in this book.

round his head. He wore big shoes, made from the rough skin of some animal, turned up in front, and a cloth round the middle of his body. In his hand was a small jungle axe. Although he was old, the little man looked very hard and strong.

"What is it, Damroo?" said Bill, looking up when he saw the old hunter.

"Did your honour not hear the killer of cattle speak?" said Damroo in a low voice.

"I did," said Bill Blackadder, "and he seemed very angry. Which way did he go?"

Damroo pointed with his small axe. "He goes toward the setting sun, and if he has not killed, he will travel until he reaches the narrow valley near Dhamone."

"Perhaps he thought he would make a meal off one of the village cows, but was frightened when he saw our camp here," said Bill.

"No," said Damroo, "I think he had already killed, and was telling the **jackals**[1] to keep away from his food."

"Perhaps you are right," said Bill. "As soon as the sun rises, go and search through the jungle and bring me news. I should like to kill this tiger, and show John what a great beast it is."

The old man smiled. He too would like to show the little sahib good hunting.

B

Old Damroo was awake before daylight. Just as the morning star appeared above the horizon, he took his axe and set out.

[1] **Jackal**=A wild animal like a dog.

"If he has killed, he will certainly be lying in the Chor Nullah, the Valley of Thieves. My master will easily kill him there," thought Damroo, as he walked on. He tried the old jungle track, to see whether the tiger had passed that way. There were no footmarks, so he went on to the river-bed, now almost dry. Here he found a quite fresh mark. It was a very large flat one, and from it Damroo knew that the tiger had jumped from the river-bank into the soft sand beneath.



He followed the marks. He could read exactly what the tiger had done. Here it had stopped to listen, one paw in the air; there it had stopped to scratch, and to sharpen its great **claws**[1] on the stem of a tree; here it had stopped to drink. It had not long departed, for the footmarks were very fresh. Old Damroo knew that he was close behind the tiger. "If he has drunk," said he to himself, "then he has certainly killed." On he went. Sometimes the marks were difficult to follow, but Damroo was a man of the jungle. A broken stem of grass here,

[1] **Claw**=The sharp point on the foot of a bird or beast.

a hole in the sand there, a stone turned over, all helped the old man to trace the path that the tiger had taken.

C

Suddenly he caught sight of the long marks of the tiger's claws deeply cut into the ground, and a few feet away the body of a cow. No doubt it had wandered from the village, and met its fate. The tiger had dragged it carefully into a thick bush, covered with jungle grass. Damroo knew that the tiger was lying somewhere near, waiting for evening to come. Then he would return to make his meal off the "**kill.**"[1]

He searched in every direction, and at last found the tiger's traces again. They led to a valley nearly half a mile long. On either side there rose steep rocky cliffs. Damroo kept on searching, but could find no marks to show that the tiger had left the valley. He knew therefore that he was still there, and that he would remain there until the sun had set.

"I shall, without doubt, show my little master a real tiger to-day," he said to himself. Little did he know what was to happen!

[1] **Kill** = The body of an animal killed by another animal.

CHAPTER THREE

A

When Bill Blackadder woke early that morning, he thought, "John must be very tired after that long journey. I'll let him sleep late." When Din Mahomed came in with his early tea he ordered that John was not to be waked. He then set Ugly free from the tent-post to which he had been tied all night. The old dog ran eagerly through the camp, and was quickly out of sight among the trees. Just then he heard a voice outside the tent. He looked out and saw the old hunter, Damroo, standing before him.

"Well, Damroo," said Bill Blackadder, "you have been very quick this morning. Have you found where that tiger is lying?"

"Yes," said Damroo, "he is the Valley of Thieves, about two miles away, and we can easily find him there."

"That is great news," said Bill Blackadder. "John will enjoy hunting him." He then called Din Mahomed. "Go to the small sahib," he ordered, "tell him that he will see a tiger before the sun sets." Din Mahomed hurried away to John's tent with the joyful news. To his great surprise he found the tent empty. "He must have risen very early," said the old man to himself, as he went in search of the boy. He searched all through the camp, but found no trace of him. The camel-men had seen him at sunrise.

but since then no one knew what had become of him.

B

Din Mahomed went back to his master. "I have searched the whole camp," he said, "but John is not to be found."

"Has anyone seen him this morning?" asked his master anxiously.

"Yes," replied Din Mahomed. "Very early he spoke to the camel-men near the edge of the jungle."

"Was he wearing his sun-hat?" said Bill Blackadder.

"No," said Din Mahomed, "for it is still hanging in the tent."

Bill Blackadder called Ugly, but no dog appeared.

"Oh," thought Bill Blackadder, "I know what has happened. John has gone off with old Ugly to hunt in the long grass near the lake. There are lots of water-rats and water-hens there." He called Damroo. "We must follow John," he said. "If you can find out where a tiger lies, you can find my boy too. We must take his sun-hat with us, for the sun will soon be so strong that it will make him ill."

The camel-men told Bill Blackadder exactly where they had last seen John, and he and Damroo searched along the edge of the jungle for some trace of the boy. But the cattle had passed there on their way to drink, and they found it difficult to find any footmark. Suddenly Damroo's sharp eyes noticed a broken stem of tall grass, and the faint mark of a shoe in the wet ground near it.

C

They followed the track, Damroo hunting John just as he had hunted the tiger. Soon the little marks of a dog's paw joined the shoe-marks, and Bill knew that he had guessed correctly. Ugly and John must have gone off together.

As they went further into the jungle, Bill noticed that Damroo's face was becoming more and more serious. The further they went, the more anxious the old man became. "What is the matter?" asked Bill Blackadder. "Have you lost the track?" "No," said Damroo, "but these marks lead to the Chor Nullah, the Valley of Thieves!"

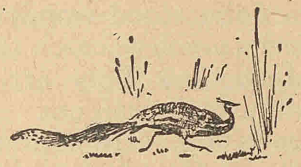
D

John had slept deeply, but the sound of someone breaking sticks to light the camp-fire had waked him early. He lay for a short time listening to the first songs of the birds. Then he thought of the many interesting things that might be happening outside his tent, and jumped out of bed. In a few minutes he was washed and dressed, and walking through the camp. He came to the edge of the jungle, where the camel-men were sitting round their fire. "I should like a ride on a camel," he thought, "and here's a very good chance." But the camel-men only smiled when he spoke to them.

"When your legs are as long as a camel's neck," said one of them, "then you can ride a camel."

"Not until then?" said John rather sadly.

"No," said the camel-man solemnly. "A man is not fit to ride a camel until his legs are as long as a camel's neck, for he is a very nasty beast to guide."



PEACOCK

John wandered on. Suddenly a fine **peacock** ran out from the high jungle grass into the path. It had lovely bright-coloured tail-feathers, and John thought they would make a fine ornament for his tent. He ran after it down the narrow path, but the bird easily escaped. Ugly had followed bravely behind John; he caused the bird to rise and disappear among the trees.

E

John was glad to have the old dog as his companion. They walked on. Suddenly an animal jumped out of the long grass and ran into the bushes. The beast surprised John, and he was not very happy when Ugly disappeared after it. He stood alone in the narrow path and wondered how he would find his way back to the camp. At that moment a baby **antelope** appeared on the path. John stood quite quietly, and the little animal came towards him step by step. It seemed as if it also had lost its way, for it came up and smelt John's knees with its little cold nose. It gave sad little cries, and its large round eyes looked very sorrowful. John put out his hand to touch it, but the baby antelope stepped quickly aside, and disappeared among the bushes.



ANTELOPE

John stood wondering what to do. He wanted very much to catch that antelope and take it home. Just then Ugly arrived back from his hunting, almost breathless. John watched the old dog carefully. He seemed to be hunting again down the path, when suddenly he saw the mark of a man's foot. "Ah!" thought John, "there must be someone near," and on they went. They passed over the sandy bed of a dry river, and in a few minutes came to a deep wide valley, lying between great rocks.

F

John noticed that Ugly was advancing very carefully; he seemed to smell something in the wind. They both crossed a small stream and climbed the opposite bank. John had just reached the top, and was standing with his back to the water, when Ugly stopped suddenly in front of him. It seemed as if he would not let John go a step further.

Suddenly Ugly gave a low **growl.**[1] He was answered by a terrible roar, which sounded all through the valley. A second later a full-grown tiger stood before them. It took no notice of John, but fixed its eyes on Ugly. Its lips were drawn back, showing its great teeth.

For a moment Ugly stood there bravely, face to face with the angry beast. But then he thought that courage was of no use in a struggle between a dog and a tiger. He **barked**[2] straight into the

[1] **Growl**=The low sound made by an angry animal.
[2] **Bark**=The noise made by a dog. To make this noise.

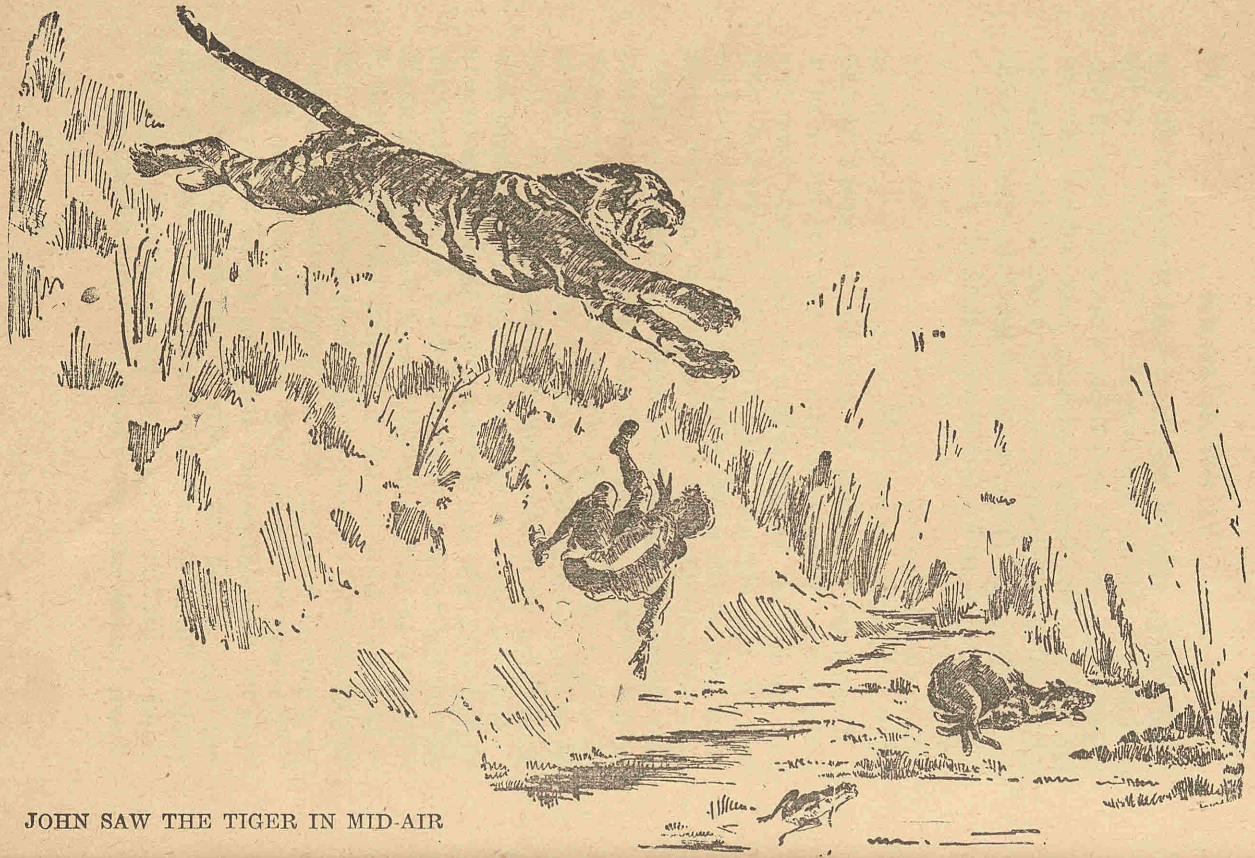
tiger's face, turned quickly, and ran towards the opposite bank of the stream. So great was his fright that he did not look where he was going. He did not see John standing just behind him on the edge of the bank; he fell against the back of John's knees. Over went John into the stream beneath, and as he fell the great tiger charged!

6

John saw the tiger in mid-air, its great mouth wide open. It missed him by the thickness of a hair as he fell backwards over the bank into the bed of the stream. Thoroughly frightened and very wet, John gave a cry of terror, and saw the tiger disappear into the jungle as quickly as it had come. He shouted; that was the right thing to do. For if jungle beasts are unwounded and have a way of escape open, they will run away from the sound of a man's voice, for there is something in it that frightens them.

John picked himself up, looked round, and saw Ugly, with his tail between his legs, come slowly out of the thick grass into which he had escaped. "That was a fine beast," said John to himself. "If I had had a gun I should have shot him." What old Ugly thought we shall never know, but he growled to himself for a long time afterwards.

The sun was now high in the sky. John knew that it was dangerous for him to be without his sun-hat, so he lay down in the shade of a large rock. There he would wait until sunset before he tried to find his way back to the camp. Ugly lay down beside him, and they both fell asleep.



JOHN SAW THE TIGER IN MID-AIR

H

"The small sahib is going to the Valley of Thieves, you say," said Bill Blackadder. "Why, that is where the tiger is lying."

"Yes, without doubt," replied Damroo.

They followed the footmarks of John and Ugly over the dry sandy river-bed to the rocks at the edge of the valley. Bill Blackadder called aloud, but no call answered him. "We must go down," he said. "I wish I had brought my gun."

They were just starting to climb down to the stream when Ugly appeared waving his tail.

"Where is he?" said Bill Blackadder to the old dog. Ugly turned and led them down to the great rock. In its shade lay John, rubbing his eyes.

"Well, my boy," said his father. "You have given us a fine hunt. Here's your hat; put it on at once. What has happened?"

"I am sure the tiger was more frightened than you were," said his father, when John had finished his story. "But I cannot imagine why Ugly is still alive."

"The small sahib must learn the law of the jungle and of the jungle beasts before he wanders into it again," said Damroo. "I am an old man of the jungle, and I will teach him all that I know."

"You shall," said Bill Blackadder. "Come, John. Let us go back to camp and breakfast. I feel very hungry, and I am sure you do, too."

CHAPTER FOUR

A

THE next morning, very early, John saw that his father was very busy with his day's work. He wandered through the camp towards a small fire that he could see burning amongst the tree-trunks. It was old Damroo's cooking-fire and John wanted to know all about the gigantic tiger that, as he said, he had " hunted " the day before.

He walked carefully through the dry leaves in his thin camp shoes. He had almost reached the fire when he put his foot on something that gave him a strange feeling of fright. There was something turning under his foot—something that **hissed**[1] loudly. John jumped high in the air with a shout of terror and fled to Damroo. The old man heard the cry and rose up, with his axe in his hand. In a moment John was by his side.

B

" What is it ? " said Damroo anxiously.

" I put my foot on something that moved and hissed. I could hear it in the dry leaves for quite a long time."

[1] **Hiss**=The sound of the letter S. The sound made by a snake. To make this sound.

"That must have been a "**dhaman**"—a very long snake. He eats rats and small birds, but he is not harmful to you or me."

"How does he catch the birds?" said John.

"The snake climbs a tree. It is very long and thin, and looks just like a branch. It chooses a branch near the top of the tree. There it waits, for hours sometimes, until a bird comes near. It really does a great deal of good, because it kills rats; and rats spread the germs of illness."

"I don't think I like snakes," said John thoughtfully.

"No," said Damroo, "truly most snakes are evil. Jungle-people are too poor to buy lamps and oil. So they have to travel in the darkness, and if they are bitten by snakes, they may easily die."

C

"Does every snake kill with its bite?" said John.

"No," said Damroo. "But there are many snakes that can make a man seriously ill for days. Jungle people kill every snake they see, and spare none, because they hate these evil creatures so much. A snake's teeth are so made that it is difficult to free them from anything which it bites. If a snake bites us, we seize it firmly by the neck, and cut a hole at the place where it has bitten. In this way we cut out the snake's teeth, and so the poison does not enter our body."

John thought of his thin shoes, and the snake that he had stepped on. "Are all snakes poisonous?" he said quickly.

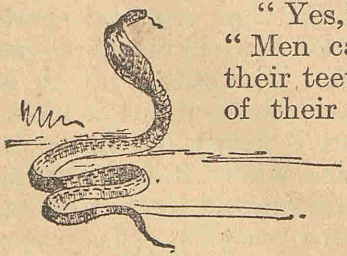
"In these jungles the **Russell's viper** is the only snake which causes death," said Damroo. "It is a very beautiful creature, as thick and as long as a man's arm. It is dark red in colour, with yellow and black marks in the shape of a cross, thus (+)." Damroo scratched some lines in the dust. "It is a lazy snake, and does not move away when it hears footsteps, as most snakes do. This makes it very dangerous, because it will allow a man to walk over it. Then it bites so deeply that even a strong man cannot free himself from its terrible teeth."

D

John began to think that he had been rather foolish to walk through the grass in thin shoes.

"Then we have the **cobra**, the snake with the swollen head. We jungle men fear him very much, because he sits up and strikes. He kills many children of the forest, and they die in great pain."

"I have seen a cobra in a basket," said John. "It danced to music."



A COBRA

"Yes," continued Damroo. "Men catch cobras and cut out their teeth. They bring them out of their holes in the ground by playing music, which seems to make them so sleepy that they can be caught easily. They raise their heads and about one-third of their bodies from the ground, and move their heads

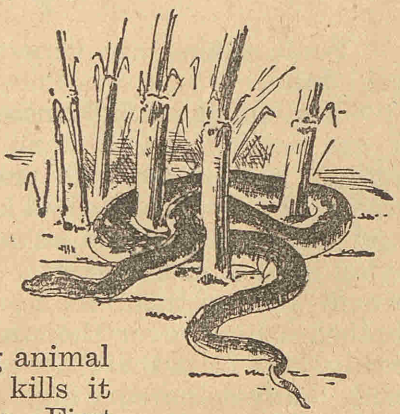
from side to side. Then you can see on the back of a cobra's neck marks like a pair of glasses, such as people wear when their eyesight is bad. One kind of cobra grows to a great length, fourteen feet or more, and this we call the "king" cobra. But do not think that only big snakes are dangerous. There is one no longer than this"—pointing to a stick about a foot long—"that brings death to all."

E

"That's not a very big snake," said John.

"No, but it is the **Krait**; it is the most dangerous of all the snakes. It is so small that it can hide itself anywhere, even in a shoe. If it bites you, you die almost at once," said Damroo.

"A **python** is a very big snake, isn't it?" said John.



A PYTHON

"Yes, it is a gigantic snake, as thick as the thickest part of a man's leg, and as long as your tent-post. It is a great hunter. It hides near the edge of a stream, or on the branch of a tree, and catches any living animal that comes near. It kills it in a strange manner. First it **coils**[1] its body round the animal and presses it so hard that all its bones

[1] **Coil**=Make (a rope, etc.) into circles.

are broken. Then it covers the dead body with soft sticky matter from its mouth, which helps it to swallow the whole animal."

"Have you ever seen a python do this?" said John.

"Once when we were hunting far away from here, your father and I saw a python in the branches of a great tree. We had to look carefully to find its head, because it is useless to try to kill a python except by shooting it through the head. At last we saw it, hidden between two thick branches. Your father killed it with the first shot, and when we examined it, we found that it had swallowed a small bear. He was indeed a giant snake."

F

"Some snakes are very tricky, aren't they?" said John.

"Yes, small sahib," answered Damroo. "Once I was passing near a small lake, a large **leopard**[1] jumped out of the high grass at the edge of the water. I knew that he had killed some beast there, and I soon discovered an antelope freshly killed, lying hidden in the grass. I thought the leopard would soon return, so I climbed a tree whose branches hung over the water, and held my gun ready. As I sat there, I watched the **dragon-flies**[2] with many-coloured wings, flying over the water, and settling on small pieces of stick which stood out above it.

[1] **Leopard**=An animal like a tiger, but with a yellow spotted skin.
[2] **Dragon-Fly**=A flying insect.

"While I was waiting a water-snake swam slowly on the face of the water from the opposite side of the lake. When it had arrived almost under my tree, it swam to the bottom and fixed its tail round the root of a water-plant. It made its body quite straight and pushed its nasty head and neck about the width of my hand above the water."

"What happened then?" asked John anxiously.

"A many-coloured dragon-fly flew over the water. It thought the snake was a fallen stick, and settled on its nose. In a moment it was gone —drawn down into the water and eaten."

G

"But I suppose," said John, rather thoughtfully, "snakes have enemies like all other creatures?"

"Yes," said Damroo, "perhaps you know the **mongoose**, with the pointed nose and bushy tail, whose quickness is greater than that of most things in the jungle."

"Yes," replied John. "My servant in the hills caught one and kept it in the house. It had a greyish-brown coat, and a tail sticking out like a brush."

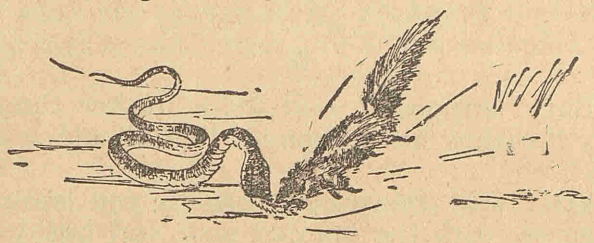
"You have described him well," said Damroo with a smile. "He is the real enemy of snakes. He is so quick that he can kill any of them. Not one escapes. A mongoose can kill and eat ever a cobra."

"It must be very quick," said John.

"Yes," said Damroo. "I have watched a mongoose kill a cobra many times."

"Tell me about it," demanded John.

"It happens thus," continued the old hunter. "The mongoose finds the cobra, and seems to become mad with anger. Each hair on its body stands on end, and its eyes grow red. It comes to the snake sideways, with little sharp cries of anger. The cobra raises its head and hisses. But the mongoose knows that the cobra can only strike downwards, and cannot raise itself immediately to strike again. So its head lies on the ground for a moment, and when it is in that position the snake can do nothing."



"Yes, that must be a good chance for the mongoose," said John, with a laugh.

"Yes, that is true," went on Damroo. "The mongoose pretends to attack the cobra, but it is so quick in its movement that the snake fails to bite in return, and lies for a moment unable to move. The sharp teeth of the mongoose sink deep into the back of the cobra's head and kills it. Then the mongoose has a fine meal off its enemy; I think he is the only one of the jungle beasts that really enjoys a snake!"

CHAPTER FIVE

A

WHEN John looked through his tent-door next morning, he saw a sky covered with black clouds. There was certainly a storm coming, for the wind was making quite big waves on the water of the lake. Great drops of rain began to fall. Every moment they increased, and soon the camp and the jungle round it were like a running stream. John knew that there would be no hunting to-day, so he sat down with a story book. Just as he was beginning to think that it was much more interesting to be in the jungle than in his tent, he heard a slight sound outside the door.

"Who's there?" he shouted.

"I have brought your new gun," a well-known voice replied. "You had left it in the rain, and it would be spoilt if it remained outside any longer."

"Good," said John, delighted to see the old man. Come in and talk to me. I want to hear more about tigers."

"There is a good deal to be told," said Damroo, "more than I could tell even if I sat here all day and all night."

B

"You know the tiger that I hunted the day before yesterday?" (Damroo smiled at John's idea of hunting, for the tiger had nearly hunted

John !) " Well, it had a strange sort of tongue, and its breath had a very unpleasant smell."

Old Damroo looked up in surprise. " The small sahib must have been dangerously near the beast if he noticed that," thought he.

" Indeed, a tiger's tongue is a very useful instrument," said Damroo. " It is like a steel brush, and is so strong that it can bring blood to a man's arm with a single touch. When a tiger eats, it does not bite the meat from the bones of the animal it has killed, but rubs it gently away with tongue."

" I did not know that before," said John.

" As I said, there is much to be told about tigers. In these jungles, the tiger is lord of the animals. He fears nothing except man, and sometimes is not afraid even of him."

" Would he fight an elephant ? " asked John.

" If a tiger was very angry, he would fight even an elephant, but whether he would win the battle no one knows. From the moment a tiger-**cub**[1] is born nothing can harm him, for the tigress, his mother, guards him day and night, and kills animals for his food. But when he grows bigger, a day comes when he begins to quarrel with his mother, and drives her away from the food which she provides for him. Then at last she leaves him, for she knows that he is strong enough to provide his food for himself.

C

" The tiger is the fiercest of all animals. Once I watched a tigress feeding her two cubs in a dry

[1] **Cub**=The young of lions, tigers, bears, etc.

river-bed. (Of course, I was hidden in the top of a high tree.) She could not see me, but she could feel that danger was near. She searched the ground but discovered nothing. The cubs continued to feed for an hour or more. When they had finished, she cleaned them thoroughly with her tongue, as all cats do, for a tiger is only a big cat. Suddenly the branch on which I was sitting gave way with a slight noise, and in a moment the



tigress was on her feet, in front of my tree, in alarm. But the tree was so thickly covered with leaves that she could see nothing. This saved my life. The two cubs ran under their mother's body, and stood with their heads sticking out from between her legs."

D

"I suppose they felt quite safe there," said John.

"Yes," replied Damroo. "No jungle beast would dare to attack a tigress when she was defending her cubs. She will protect them with her life even from a full-grown tiger. Once my master had ordered me to hunt a very large tiger whose footmarks he had found. I was following his track when I found that this tiger had met a tigress just as he was going to cross a stream. I could see that she was trying to lead him away from some thick jungle, where it is probable that she had hidden her cub. They had gone for about a mile along the bank of the stream, where the young cub joined them. I suppose he did not like to be left alone. I could see where the foolish cub had hastened to follow his mother, and where the tiger had turned and killed him. A little further along the stream the tigress lay dead."

"Had he killed her, too?" said John, in surprise.

"Yes, small sahib. An angry tiger, in his evil desire for blood, will kill anything. This tiger had turned on the tigress and killed her with one bite of its great teeth."

E

Damroo lifted the curtain at the door of the tent. The rain was still pouring down. "The lords of the jungle will not like this kind of weather," said Damroo.

"I suppose that they can swim?" said John.

"They are very fine swimmers," said the old man. "I once lost a fine tiger, because I did not know how well a tiger could swim. We had followed one onto a little hill at the edge of a wide river. Your father sat at the foot of the hill, near the river-bank. We could see the tiger walking slowly over the high ground, and then down to the bank. But, instead of turning along the bank in the direction of your father, who was waiting with his gun ready, the tiger walked slowly into the river, and began to swim. He swam well and strongly, with his head just out of the water, and it was a fine sight for the hunters on the hill above.

"Then we saw a small **crocodile**[1] swimming near him. Would he be courageous enough to attack the tiger and pull him beneath the water? No! At the last moment it swam away, probably thinking that it would be safer to leave the tiger alone."

"Would a big crocodile attack a tiger?" asked John.

"Yes," replied Damroo. "Even though a tiger is much stronger, you must remember that his strength is of little use for fighting in water, because it is all used in swimming. For this reason, a crocodile could drown a tiger if it seized him while he was swimming, and pulled him under the water. A tiger may be lord of the jungle, when he is on the land, but the crocodile is his master if he dares to enter the water."

[1] **Crocodile**=A large water-animal with a very big mouth and many sharp teeth.

F

"Damroo," said John. "I suppose all the animals of the jungle keep very quiet and hide themselves when they know there is a tiger hunting?"

"Not always. Weaker animals sometimes greet him as he sets out to hunt, just as courtiers greet their king. They are not always very respectful, especially the monkeys, who are never very polite. They jump along the tops of the trees and make a noise as long as the tiger is in sight. The tiger hates the noise, growls in anger, and does his best to escape into the quiet parts of the jungle. Then there are the red dogs, who hunt in bands, and drive away all the animals for miles around. The tiger hates these also, because they make it difficult for him to find food."

G

"I wonder that there is anything left in the jungle, if tigers and leopards kill something every day," said John.

"They do not kill every day," replied Damroo. "Very few animals would remain if they did. But remember that tigers kill the village cattle as well as the wild animals of the jungle. The men in the village send out their cattle every day into the jungle to feed, in charge of several guards. Sometimes one of the cattle will wander away from the rest, and is killed by a watching tiger. Then

the guards raise loud cries and drive the beast away."

"Does it go?" asked John.

"Yes," said Damroo, "for a man's voice is the one thing that the tiger fears. But they go away for only a short distance, and prepare for another attack."

"But why do not the cattle-guards carry guns?"

"Guns would be more dangerous to the people of the village than to the tiger," answered Damroo. "Guns do not always kill, and a tiger wounded and in pain is very much fiercer than an unwounded one. The village people know that if their cattle-guards were armed with guns, the result would be that many wounded and dangerous beasts would be wandering in the jungles, and that some of them would become 'man-eaters.'"

H

"Are not all tigers man-eaters?" asked John.

"Oh no," replied Damroo. "Sometimes a tigress who has become a man-eater will teach her cubs to hunt and kill men, but these are few. Usually the man-eater is made by a man. He wounds a tiger so seriously that it no longer has the strength or speed of foot to hunt the jungle animals, or even the village cattle. It becomes mad with hunger, and in the end it turns and kills men. When a tiger does this, it becomes a terror to all men who live in the jungle."

For some time John remained in deep thought. The only creature, he imagined, able to deal with

the man-eating tiger, was a man himself. There was no doubt that it was a man's duty to kill as many man-eaters as possible.

Damroo watched him. "You are thinking deeply," he said with a smile.

"Yes," said John thoughtfully. "It is time that I killed a tiger."

"There is still plenty of time," replied Damroo. "Only fully grown men can kill tigers."

"That may be so," said John. "But I must kill the next tiger that I see."

Damroo looked rather serious. He thought that there would soon be trouble if the small sahib thought that it was his duty to kill tigers!

CHAPTER SIX

A

Two days later, the rain had ceased, and the tents had dried in the warm sunshine. John's father had work to do some miles away, so preparations were made to move the camp. Carts with wooden wheels were brought from the village, and loaded with furniture, cooking-pots, oil-tins and lamps.

John was much interested in all this work, but Bill Blackadder could not wait to see the long line of carts start on its journey. He had sent some tents to the place where they were to spend the night, fourteen miles away. Thus he hoped that everything would be ready when they arrived in the evening. The horses were brought, and they

started forth into the jungle. Damroo led, his axe in his hand and his gun on his shoulder. John followed him at a short distance, riding his pony. Then came his father and a band of forest-guards.

"Where are we going?" asked John suddenly.

"To Dhamone," said the old man.

John sat up; he had remembered something.

"Damroo," he said, "that is where the tiger went, isn't it?"

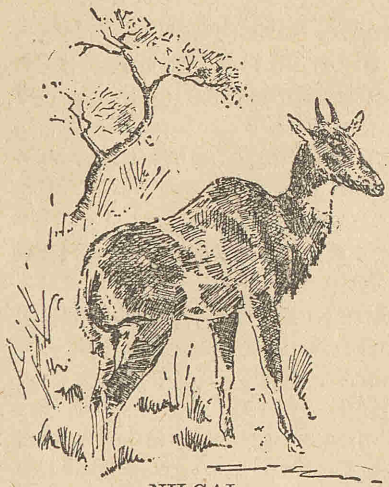
"Possibly," replied Damroo, "but do not think any more about tigers. They are dangerous great beasts, and only grown-up hunters can deal with them."

B

This was John's first long journey through the jungle, and it was a most interesting experience. He wondered at the strange silence around him. As they climbed the slopes of the hills, the trees became fewer, until they came out into wide flat spaces, covered with beautiful short grass. When they reached one of these openings in the forest, Damroo stopped, pointed with his axe, and laughed.

There, under the shade of a small tree, John saw a great ungraceful beast standing, brushing the flies from its sides with its tail. It was nearly as large as a horse. Its back went down from its shoulders in rather a strange way. "That ugly beast is a **nilgai**, the largest antelope in Asia. He has seen us, and looks even uglier than he did," said Bill Blackadder.

John saw that the nilgai had caught sight of them, and had come from under the tree to stand



NILGAI

and watch them. It had the head of a cow, small straight **horns,**[1] a white breast and legs, and the rest of its body was bluish-grey. Suddenly it turned and speedily disappeared among the trees. Damroo now led them along a narrow track, made by jungle animals through the grass. It was while they were going steadily onwards that a great **Sambhur,** the red deer of India, jumped from the waving grass and went towards the thick jungle. A bark from Ugly told this noble beast that he had no time to waste, for he was afraid of the wild red dog, whose cry is just like Ugly's bark. With a sudden jump, he disappeared before Bill Blackadder could bring his gun to his shoulder.

C

"It was Ugly's fault that we have lost the beast," cried Damroo, with an angry look upon his face.

"It does not matter," replied Bill Blackadder. "He was moving, and it would have been difficult to shoot him."

[1] **Horn**=The hard, bone-like, pointed objects which grow from the heads of some animals.

" Was that an antelope ? " said John.

" No," said Bill Blackadder, " that was a deer."

" It was very like the other, except that it had long horns."

" Yes," replied Bill Blackadder, " but there is a difference between them which not many people know. A deer drops its horns every year, and grows another pair. An antelope's horns grow longer and longer ; but they never drop off."

They went on down towards the river's edge. " We shall have something to eat when we reach the stream," said Bill Blackadder. " We can also feed the horses and let them drink."

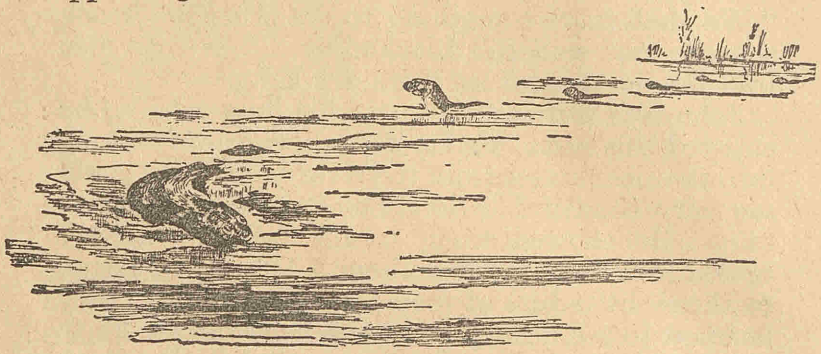
John was rather tired after his long ride, so he enjoyed this rest. He lay face downwards looking into the clear water from the river-bank. He could see very beautiful little fishes swimming beneath him. He showed them to his father, who lay beside him and watched them. They then began to throw little bits of food into the stream ; they laughed to see how quickly the fishes swam up to the food and swallowed it, when it fell almost on their noses.

D

Soon the water seemed to be alive with the little fishes, while at a little distance from them some much larger ones began to swim slowly towards the place where the free meal was going on. " Those are **mahseer**, the finest fish in the East," said Bill Blackadder. " Keep quiet ; what is this ? " he continued. He pointed to the opposite side of the river, where a large rock stood among the tall

water-grass. A bird as white as snow had been standing on this rock for some time, and it was only when it flew away with a loud cry that Bill Blackadder's attention was called to the spot.

"Look at these **otters**,[1] John," he said. "Keep quite quiet, and don't move. They are coming this way." They both lay without the slightest movement, and watched the otters swimming one behind the other, with only their little heads appearing above the water.



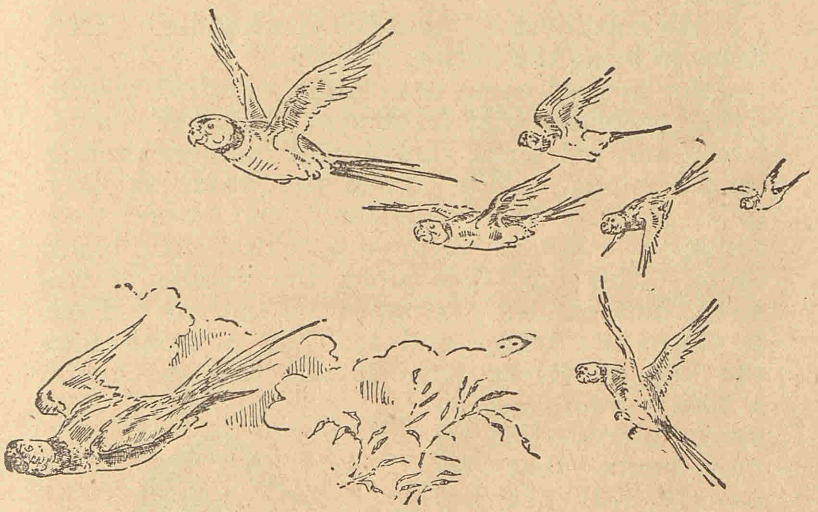
There were two old ones and four young ones. When they reached the spot just below John and his father, they began to play. It was a very pretty sight to see the graceful way they swam in circles over and under each other at wonderful speed. They played for some time, then one of the old otters stuck his head out of the water and looked at John. Their faces were only a few feet apart, and it seemed as if the otter was puzzled by the sight of this stranger. Neither John nor his father made the slightest movement. The otter

[1] **Otter**=A fish-eating water-animal.

showed its teeth and hissed. Nothing happened, so he began to make a noise like a cat, as if he were asking who these strange creatures were. Then John had to laugh at the otter's funny face, and immediately the whole family disappeared.

E

"They were pretty little things, weren't they?"



said John. "Did you notice how their feet disappeared when they were swimming? I always thought that they swam with their feet. But I see now that they swim by holding their feet close to their sides, and moving their bodies and tails, like a fish."

good story.

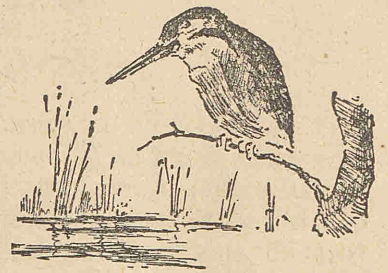
"That is so," said old Damroo, who had also been watching. "They are great catchers of fish. We jungle men believe that when an otter grows old, and his teeth fall out, a pointed bone grows out of his forehead, so that he can swim through the water and still catch fish with this spear of bone."

"I don't believe it," said Bill Blackadder.

"That may be," answered Damroo respectfully, "but that is our belief, and we ought to know."

"We must hasten," said Bill Blackadder. "Tell them to bring the horses, Damroo."

John noticed some beautifully coloured insects flying over the wild flowers at the river's edge. Green and red birds, their bright feathers shining in the sunlight, flew above the water as they rode along. The **kingfishers** too, were very common. One of them was white with black spots. This bird flew along the middle of the river, and suddenly stopped in the air. Then it closed its wings and fell like a stone into the water. Every time it did this it caught a fish. John was so much interested in its movements that he nearly fell off his pony, because all the time he was looking backwards at this bird fishing.



KINGFISHER

After riding a mile or two further, the old fortress of Dhamone

came into view. "You must search the valley near the wall of the fort early to-morrow, Damroo. Perhaps our old friend the tiger will still be lying there."

"It shall be done," said the old man.

F

It was not long before the little party were in camp. There were two tents already standing under some shady trees. The march had been a long one, and everybody was rather tired.

"Well, what do you think of it?" said Bill Blackadder to John.

"It is lovely—I know nothing more beautiful than the real jungle," said John. "What shall we do to-morrow?" he added quickly.

"Rest," said Bill Blackadder firmly.

"But what shall we do about that tiger?" said John to himself, for that was more important than most things at present, to our young hunter.

CHAPTER SEVEN

A

THE old city of Dhamone was a strange place. Many hundreds of years ago the people living there had deserted it, perhaps frightened away by some terrible sickness, or conquered by their enemies. But all this had happened so long ago that no one knew its true history. The great fortress with

its fine old gateways and courtyards was empty of people; only jungle beasts ever appeared in its streets, or wandered round its walls. Wild plants and jungle trees grew thickly in its open spaces.

In one small snow-white **temple**[1], however, there still remained a faithful priest who kept its lamp continuously burning. He received a little money every month from the Government for doing this. He was the direct descendant of the priests who for many years had served in the temple.

B

John went to visit him at the door of the temple. He was an old man with a kind face, very poorly clothed. John found out from him that he and his family had lived there for hundreds of years, and that the task of taking care of the place had been handed down from father to son. He also discovered that the old man was a great hunter. "I am a man of the jungle," he said proudly. "Place one **rupee**[2] on the steps of this temple and doubtless you will kill a tiger before the end of the year."

A whole year seemed a long time to John, and he tried to make the old man promise an earlier success in his hunting. The old man, although he would not exactly fix a day, said that the tiger might appear at any time, for he very much wished to possess John's rupee. So, very hopeful, John placed his rupee on the steps, and started to examine the deserted city.

[1] **Temple** = A building in which prayers are said to a god.
[2] **Rupee** = An Indian coin.

C

He saw the thick walls of the city towers with their narrow holes through which soldiers had shot their arrows. He looked down steep stairways into dark little rooms like prisons. Little brown monkeys ran over the ruined walls and in and out of the doors of deserted houses, and played wonderful tricks as they jumped from house to house. But Bill Blackadder had given him orders not to wander very far through the narrow city streets, so after looking around for about half an hour he returned to camp in search of Damroo.

The old hunter had been out very early in the morning. He had searched along the jungle paths for any mark which might show that the great tiger was anywhere near the camp. He had found no traces of it, but he was not without hope.

"We may have arrived here before him," he said. "Perhaps he has killed a fine beast, and is lying in some secret place for a day or two, until he is hungry again. But I am sure that in a day or two we shall have news of him."

Then John produced his great plan to examine the narrow ruined streets of the city, and to discover what strange things lay hidden there.

"No," answered Damroo firmly, "those dark places are full of all sorts of dangerous, poisonous insects. Guard against dark places, for it is wise for those who wander in the jungle to keep away from the darkness." He shook his head, and firmly refused to go with John into the dangers of the city.

"But I think there may be a bear in the narrow valley on the other side of the old fort," he continued, with a smile. "When I have eaten my food we will set out and see if he is at home."

"What shall we do if he is?" asked John.

"We must get him out," answered Damroo. "Your father and I have hunted bears in many worse places than that."

D

The idea of hunting a real jungle bear excited John, and he asked so many questions that Damroo hardly had time to answer half of them.

"'Baloo,' as we jungle people call him," explained the old man, "is the fool of the forest. Indeed, the jungle seems to be the wrong place for him. He is as black as coal, and so he can be seen anywhere. Usually the jungle hides the beasts that live in it, but nothing can hide a bear. The tiger passes silently through the thickest growth of bushes, but everybody knows when a bear is near. He makes all sorts of strange noises with his mouth as he goes along, breaking branches, stepping heavily among the sticks and stones in his path. He makes even more noise than a man in his passage through the jungle. He is almost blind, and very curious. He cannot mind his own business, but must stick his nose into everything. And he loves strong drink whenever he can get it."

"Surely you are not serious?" said John.

"Yes," replied Damroo. "At one season of the year the fruit of the **mohwa**-tree becomes soft and falls from the tree. From this fruit

jungle people make their strong drink. 'Baloo' loves it and will travel many miles to find it. Sometimes you can hear them at night fighting with each other over the fruit, and then we make it a rule never to go near them, for then they are really dangerous.

"After a night of feasting the bears wander into the long grass and lie down to sleep. They sleep very deeply, and sometimes a man cutting grass or gathering wood for his fire falls on top of a sleeping bear. Then he wakes suddenly, thinks that he is in danger, and knocks the man down. He then attacks him with his terrible claws. We jungle people suffer a great deal from 'Baloo,' even though he is a fool."

E

"I should like to keep a baby bear," said John.

"I have caught many," replied Damroo.

"How did you do that?"

"Well, you see, the mother bear carries the young ones on her back until they are strong enough to walk alone. Sometimes we shoot one when she is thus carrying her little ones, and then we catch them, because without their mother they are helpless."

"What do they do when their mother is killed?"

"Poor creatures, they do very silly things, as bears always do when they are in trouble. I have seen two small bears climb a tree until they reached the top, and then try to climb still higher."

John laughed.

"They must have hurt themselves when they fell," he said.

"No," replied Damroo. "A bear seems to be able to fall from a great height onto his head and not hurt himself."

John saw his father walking across the camp towards them. "Hullo, John," he cried. "Are you drinking in more knowledge?"

"Father," said John quickly, "Damroo says there is probably a bear in the valley. May I come with you and hunt it?"

"What is this, Damroo?" said Bill.

"While I was searching for the tiger this morning," said Damroo, "I heard two bears quarrelling in the valley. If you have time we might go and find them after sunset."

"All right," said Bill. "Young John will have his first hunt this evening."

F

About an hour before the sun went down that evening Bill got out his heaviest gun, which shone in the sunlight. John wondered whether he too would ever have such a precious possession.

"Ready?" said Bill. "John, you had better take a small spear."

Damroo went in front, carrying the gun, then Bill followed, and last came John with his spear. They arrived in good time at the narrow valley, where they stopped for a moment. Bill took his gun and turned to John.

"Remember two things," he said, keep quite quiet and do what you are told."

John was ready to do anything, and his hand held the spear more firmly.

"Don't stick that thing into me, whatever you do," said his father anxiously.

Suddenly Damroo stopped; his quick ear had caught some sound. They all stood still and listened. A strange noise, which John had never heard before, came from in front of them.

Damroo turned to Bill and put two of his fingers into his mouth. Bill turned to John and whispered "That is the sound of the bears **sucking**[1] their paws."

"I never heard of a bear sucking its paw," thought John to himself.

G

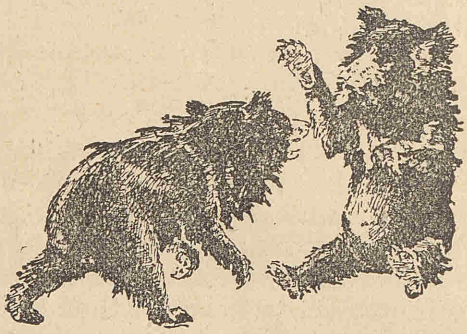
Bill made a sign to Damroo to go forward and find out where the bears were. The old hunter went on hands and knees through the long grass without a sound. John wondered at the great care with which the two men advanced. Damroo wore no shoes at all, but carried them in his hand. Both John and his father wore shoes made of rope, which made no noise as they walked. Damroo moved his feet so carefully that not a sound was heard. The slightest movement of a stick or a stone would have told the bears of danger; for, although they are almost blind, their power of hearing is very great.

The sucking noise continued and sounded much nearer!

John noticed that Damroo had removed the cloth which he wore round his head, and was

[1] **Suck**=To draw (liquid) in with the mouth.

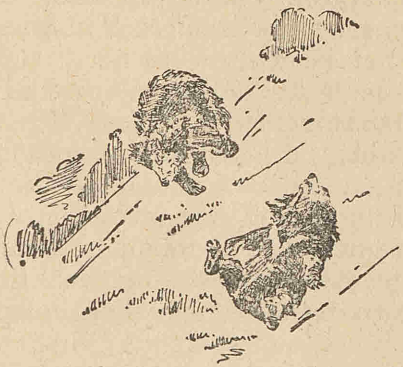
carrying it under his arm. The hunter reached the corner of a great rock and looked round it. Immediately he drew his head back, and John knew that the bears must be quite near. He felt his heart beating in excitement, for this was his first real hunt. Damroo then turned and made a sign to John, so he went up to the rock and looked carefully round it. In front of him was a wonderful sight. At the mouth of a cave sat two great black bears. They looked very funny as they held their fore-paws in their mouths and sucked them loudly.



H

One bear sat with his back to John. The other bear sat face to face with him, so that John could see his thick coal-black coat, with a broad white band in the shape of a V across his chest. He had a greyish-white nose and evil-looking little eyes; but John noticed most his terribly strong forearms and long sharp claws. He looked up for a moment, and saw his father raise his gun to the shoulder. He fired. The bear which had its face

turned towards them fell to the ground. In a moment he jumped to his feet again, and before Bill could fire the second time, he had thrown himself at the other bear, mad with anger. The two bears rolled over and over each other in their struggle, until they reached the river-bed at the bottom of the steep valley.



Bill was trying to aim a second shot at the unwounded bear when the wounded one seemed to drop down dead. Immediately the second bear left him, and began to climb with great speed straight up the hill again towards the cave. He seemed terribly angry ; he was a different animal from the funny beast that John had seen calmly sucking its paw !

Up the hill it came. John noticed that it ran in a very strange way, crossing its front legs at each step, and rolling along rather than running. It did not seem to know what had happened, or where the danger came from. Then, he caught sight of John, who jumped to his feet, with his spear in his hand. The bear turned with an angry sound and came straight towards him.

I

Now Bill Blackadder had had a good deal of experience with bears. He stood quite still, and when the beast was about fifteen feet away from John, he took a careful aim and fired. The bear stopped and fell. Then in a moment old Damroo sprang at the beast, and struck it on the head with his axe. John thought that he too should take his part in the work ; he was just going up to the bear with his spear ready when his father caught him by the arm.

" Wait a moment," Bill said, " I must give him another shot." He did so, and the bear lay dead.

" Now you can try as much as you like," said Bill with a smile. John, however, had little success ; he found that his spear was not sharp enough to stick into the bear's strong skin. All he did was to become very hot and tired, with no result.

" Except for his nose, ' Baloo,' is the hardest beast in the jungle," said Damroo.

" What made him fight the other bear as soon as you fired, Father ? " asked John.

" Bears are curious beasts," said Bill. " If they are not killed immediately, they will attack any other bear that is near them. They seem to think that the sudden pain is caused by the nearest moving object. If that object is another bear, then there is a fight, as there was between these two."

" Yes," thought John, " poor old ' Baloo ' seems to do the wrong thing all the time, even to the moment he dies."

They covered the two dead bears with branches, which Damroo cut down with his axe, and started to return to the camp.

J

"That bear's skin was very strong," said John suddenly.

"Yes," said his father. "A bear can be knocked down and beaten a great deal without seeming to feel any pain. Do you know that sometimes a bear will not take the trouble to run down a hill if he is in a hurry?"

"What does he do?" asked John.

"He simply rolls himself into a ball and rolls down the hill until he reaches the bottom, then he unrolls himself and runs away."

"Why were they sucking their paws like that?"

"I do not know. All bears seem to do it. Perhaps digging in the ground to find ants and other insects hurts their paws. But no one, I think, really knows the reason."

"They had funny little eyes," said John.

"When they are very young," said Damroo, "they have no eyes at all."

"Are they blind?" said John.

"Yes, they see nothing, but their mother carries them everywhere on her back, as I have told you before."

"Bears seem to like the old ruins, Damroo," said Bill Blackadder.

"Yes, I think that they try to steal the bees' nests that hang on the walls. But I do not know

how they reach them. Bears love sweet things, and they are the only beasts that can deal with the jungle-bees, because their coats of thick hair protect them from the bees' poison."

"Does 'Baloo' ever kill animals?" asked John.

"Very seldom," said Bill Blackadder. "Bears feed on the roots of plants, on ants and **honey.**[1] It is a strange sight to see a bear digging up an ants' nest. His strong sharp claws can dig the hardest soil very easily."

The little party was now near the camp. They met a number of workmen in charge of a forest guard. These men had heard the shots in the jungle, and were setting out to bring in whatever had been killed.

"Well, John, that is the end of our first day's hunt," said Bill when they arrived at their tents. "And I hope it will not be our last."

CHAPTER EIGHT

A

THE next morning John wandered round the camp in search of excitement. But first he must find Damroo. He looked everywhere, and asked everybody, but the old hunter had disappeared. He saw the remains of the old man's cooking-fire, and the skins of the two black bears. But where was Damroo?

Suddenly John remembered that the old hunter

[1] **Honey**=Sweet liquid made by bees.

still hoped to find that great tiger. Perhaps he had gone into the jungle again to try and find signs of the beast. John walked on until he came to the pathway of stones which enclosed a pretty little lake near the old fort. Suddenly a small head appeared above the water near the path. Full of curiosity, he stopped. Then a small girl climbed out of the water, smiled at him and turned to go away.

"Have you caught a fish?" said John.

"No, I cannot catch anything to-day," she replied.

"Where do you live?" said John.

"I live with my uncle, the priest," said the small girl. "My name is Moti."

"Have you lived here a long time?" asked John.

"Ever since my mother died," she replied, sadly.

B

They were silent for a short time. Then Moti said, "You killed the bears last night."

"Yes," said John. "My father shot them, and I stuck my spear into one—when it was dead."

Moti laughed, and John felt that he was not really a great hunter yet.

"Are you glad they are dead?" asked John.

"Yes, I am," said Moti. "My uncle never allows me to wander into the jungle near the fort. 'The "Baloos" will catch you,' he said. 'And if they catch you they will kill you.' So I can never go anywhere because of those terrible bears. But now I know you, I can go into the jungle whenever I like, for I know that you will protect me."

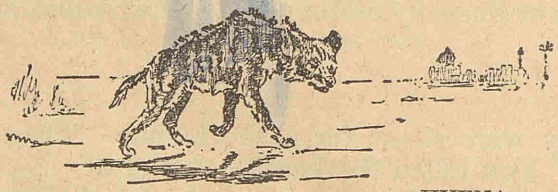
"Let us go now," said John.

"Not now," said Moti. "The sun has risen, but towards evening let us go to the great tower over there. Then, when the sun has gone down, if we sit very quietly, we can watch the hyenas, the night-thieves, fighting over the bones they have hidden beneath the stones in the courtyard below the tower. Will you come?"

"Yes," answered John. "But I must escape from old Din Mahomed, whom my father has placed in charge of me."

"Can you bring me some thin string? It is very difficult to obtain it in the jungle, and I want it for fishing."

"Yes, I can bring you plenty of string, if you will show me where the hyenas are."



HYENA

And so the agreement was made. John followed Moti along the stone pathway, and noticed how gracefully she walked. She was about as tall as he, with deep black hair and fair skin. They walked along, talking and laughing happily. As Moti entered the gateway of the old tower, she turned and cried, "Remember, this evening as the sun goes down, I will meet you here," pointing to the ground at her feet. John laughed. "Very well" he cried.

C

It was quite warm along the stone pathway that evening, for the heat of the sun was still rising from the stones. The pleasant smell of jungle flowers rose into the air from the trees at the side of the little lake. John stood watching the birds that rose from the water and flew towards the setting sun. A slight sound made him turn. Moti was standing by his side.

"Are you ready?" she asked in a whisper. "We must be very quiet, so that no one will know that we have run away."

"Yes," replied John, "I'm ready. Which way do we go?"

D

Moti, shoeless but happy, led the way along the path, until they reached the ruined doorway. They entered, and climbed some narrow stairs which led to the top of the thick strong wall of the fort. John noticed that Moti walked along the edge of the wall without the slightest sign of fear. He learnt later that all jungle people are like this; they can stand on the edge of a cliff and look down thousands of feet into the valley below without fear. John, however, had to walk very carefully among the rough stones, for the shoes which he wore did not help him; indeed, they made it more difficult for him to walk.

But Moti soon reached the end of the wall and sat down to wait for him. She laughed at poor John as he struggled along the last part

of the ruined wall. When he arrived he was breathless. He sat down at Moti's side, and as soon as he could speak, asked how far it was to the hyenas' courtyard.

"It is a little distance away," said Moti, "but we must go quietly."

E

Moti started to climb some steep stone stairs at the end of the courtyard, and John followed as quietly as he could. He wanted very much to see the strange new beasts about which Moti had told him. At last they came to the top of the stairs, and found themselves standing on a broad stone path. This was really the top of a very wide wall. Beneath them lay a broad courtyard. Moti went on hands and knees to the edge of the path, and looked down. She then made a sign to John to do the same. He did so, and they lay side by side, waiting for the beasts to appear.

"This is where these beasts of the darkness live," whispered Moti. "Do you see those holes at the end of the courtyard?" John looked carefully, and saw two small entrances, like caves, at the bottom of the high wall opposite to them.

"We must be very quiet," whispered Moti, "for these beasts are frightened of the slightest sound."

F

They had not to wait very long. Moti's quick eyes saw a movement at the entrance to one of the openings. She pointed silently, and John saw an animal slowly, very slowly, come out into

the courtyard. It was the size of a large dog, but John thought its shape very curious. It had a great powerful neck and shoulders, and its back legs seemed to be much shorter than its forelegs. The hair on its neck and back seemed to stand upright.

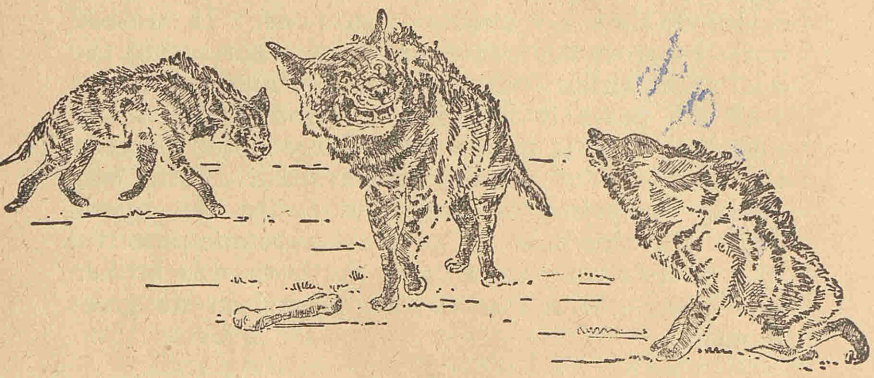
As it came from the opening, the hyena smelt the air around him very thoroughly. It then came forward a few steps, raised its head and smelt again in every direction. At last it seemed satisfied that no enemy was near. It walked quietly across the courtyard to the bottom of the wall upon which John and Moti lay hidden. There with its paws it dug in the ground for a few minutes, until it uncovered a large bone, perhaps the leg-bone of some great animal. John was greatly surprised to see how easily the hyena dealt with this bone. The beast gave one powerful bite of its strong teeth, and the bone was broken into pieces, which soon disappeared in its great mouth.

G

Suddenly John noticed that three more hyenas had appeared from their holes. They were smaller than the first one, and not so strong. They advanced very carefully, and it was not until they were close to the larger beast that he observed them. When he did so, he stood with his nose to the ground, and his back raised. The hair on his neck and shoulders seemed to stand upright, and he started to growl in anger. The three smaller beasts understood what these signs meant, and they started to behave in a very strange manner. They danced around the first hyena

in little jumps, throwing their heads upwards at the same time in a very funny way. Round and round they danced, "laughing" loudly. It was such a funny sight that John and Moti could no longer remain silent. They too laughed aloud. Immediately the four hyenas disappeared into their holes.

"We have frightened them," said Moti. "They will not come out again while we are here."

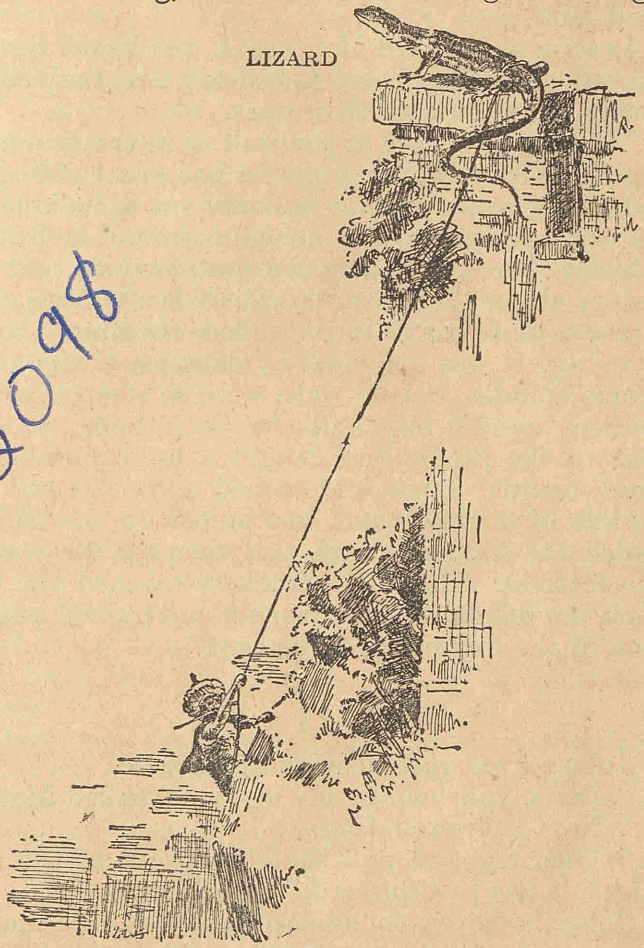


They both stood up. "I liked the funny song they sang," said John, beginning to dance like the hyenas, while Moti tried to "laugh" in the same curious way.

H

The sun had now set. "We must hasten," said Moti, "or the darkness will come before we can reach home. It is not good to be lost in the ruins at night." John agreed, and they ran off along the stone pathway. When they had come to the outer wall of the fort, John noticed a large lizard on

top of a stone. It was grey in colour, more than three feet long, and it was making a strange



LIZARD

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"drumming" noise, which seemed to be produced by blowing out the under-part of its neck.

"What is that?" said John.

"It is the large jungle lizard, the *iguana*," replied Moti.

As soon as it heard Moti speak, the lizard ran up the wall and disappeared so quickly that they could hardly follow it with their eyes.

"It lives in a hole in the wall or in the ground," explained Moti. "The iguana has great strength, and a single man cannot pull one out of its hole by the tail, because its feet hold the ground so firmly. When I was very young my mother once told me a story about these lizards. There is a famous city-fortress in Central India called Gwalior. Many years ago it was attacked by enemies of the great prince Scindia, but its walls were so steep that the soldiers found it impossible to climb them. So they sent to the jungle and caught a large number of these lizards. Each soldier tied a rope round the middle of a lizard, and was pulled up the cliff on which the fortress stood, and then up the wall of the fortress. Thus the attackers reached the top, took the defenders by surprise, and gained possession of the fortress and the city."

I

John's eyes opened wide in surprise.

"Don't you believe my story?" asked Moti.

"No," answered John.

"Then try and pull that lizard out of the hole which it has just entered," said Moti.

John, however, thought that lizards, like snakes, were nasty things to touch, and hurried away along the path, followed by Moti. Just as they

reached the end of the path, Moti suddenly stopped, and John stopped also. A figure was sitting a few yards away, looking quite black against the red sky in the fading light.

"Who is it?" asked John.

"I don't know," answered Moti, "but I never pass a stranger in the jungle until I know who he is." Then she picked up a stone and threw it at the silent figure which sat watching the path. Her aim must have been good, because a voice shouted angrily. John knew the voice at once, "Darmoo, Damroo!" he called out.

"I have been waiting for you for a whole hour," said Damroo, coming up to them.

J

"How did you know I was here?" asked John.

"I was on the top of that hill," said the old hunter, pointing to some high ground in the jungle a mile away, "when I saw you enter the pathway to the fort, with this girl." He turned to Moti. "What right have you to take the small sahib into the fort, the home of all kinds of poisonous beasts?"

Damroo put on a very fierce expression, but John would not allow him to blame Moti. "I asked her to show me the hyenas. They are terrible looking beasts, aren't they, Damroo?"

"I suppose this silly girl has been telling you terrible stories of these fierce beasts. Do not believe them, because girls are frightened of quite harmless beasts!"

Moti looked as if she would have liked to beat

the old man, but he continued without taking any notice of her anger. "These hyenas are really very useful animals because they make the jungle clean after the tigers and leopards have finished their meals. Although they look so fierce, they have no courage at all. They will never attack anything that can defend itself. If they are caught or driven into a corner, they will not fight, but will lie on the ground and pretend to be dead."

"Yet they seem to be very powerful beasts," said John.

"That may be so, but they have no heart," answered Damroo.

"Nor have you, you nasty old man," said Moti; and she fled as quickly as her feet would carry her, before the old hunter had time to express any more low opinions of girls and their weaknesses.

CHAPTER NINE

A

VERY early next morning John went to his father's tent to ask whether there would be any hunting that day. Bill Blackadder smiled. "No, John," said he. "It is not all play and no work for me in the jungle, but after a day or two I think we shall be hunting once more."

John knew from his father's smile that he could look forward to more good hunting very soon, so in high spirits he set out to the old fort. He thought that Moti might be able to plan some

excitement for the day, or show him some fresh wonder of the jungle. He was rather surprised to find that it had been raining during the night. The stone pathway round the little lake was very wet, and it was difficult to walk upon it even in shoes of rope. Indeed John fell down twice in the first twenty feet, and then again so suddenly that he bit his tongue. He was just getting to his feet after his third fall when he had an idea that some one was laughing at him quietly. He sat still and listened. It was bad enough to sit down suddenly on the wet stones, but it was still worse to be laughed at from nowhere.

B

"You are walking very slowly this morning," said a high laughing voice from the steps below him.

"You would walk slowly too," replied John angrily, "if you had these thick shoes on your feet!"

"Well, why do you wear them? People of the jungle are not so foolish as to wear things that make them sit down suddenly, and bite their tongues, as you have just done."

John thought that there was a good deal of truth in Moti's words, so, as he did not wish to sit down heavily and bite his tongue every few minutes, he quickly removed his shoes and joined Moti.

"Shall we fish to-day?" he asked. "The rain has made the water thick and dark-coloured, so that it should be easy to catch the fish."

"No, there will be no fishing to-day," replied

Moti, very firmly. John looked rather surprised. "To-day is surely the day for dealing with the ducks," continued Moti.

"Oh, is it?" replied John, wondering what plan Moti had in mind.

"Yes," added Moti, "they have now been on the water for some days, and will be quite fat."

"Are they very thin when they arrive?" asked John. He had noticed large companies of wild ducks on the opposite edge of the lake.

C

"They only come here at this season of the year," explained Moti. "They tell me that those ducks go northwards every year, far beyond the snow-covered mountains, to the country of China. There the young ones are born, and when they are completely covered with feathers, both the old birds and the young birds fly thousands of miles southwards to reach our country of sunshine and lakes. When they arrive, they are thin with hunger and tired from their long journey. For this reason we do not try to catch them until they have rested from their travels and have satisfied their hunger."

John noticed that Moti was carrying under her arm one of those large round red pots in which Indians carry water, called a *chattie*. "When are you going duck-hunting?" asked John.

"Very soon," replied Moti.

"But what will you hunt them with?"

"This!" Moti held her chattie high above her head and turned it round and round rapidly on

the end of one finger. She caught it gracefully as it fell, and placed it on the ground beside her.

"But how can you catch birds with a pot?" asked John in surprise.

"Do you dare to come with me? If you do, then I can show you how it is done," whispered Moti.

"Of course I dare," replied John, who was angry because Moti seemed to doubt his courage.

"Listen, now!" ordered Moti as she sat on a rock with her legs crossed, and made a sign to John to sit beside her.

D

John placed one of his useless shoes on each side of him, and obeyed. Moti then began to explain her plan, but she soon noticed that John was paying no attention to her words.

"Are you afraid to come?" she asked anxiously.

John made no reply, for a sudden terror had seized him; he jumped high in the air with a loud cry, and before Moti could prevent him, he was running along the path with a shoe in each hand. "Take care!" he shouted, "there's a snake under the rock that I was sitting on—I heard it hiss."

Moti immediately followed John, although there was a little smile upon her lips. "We must catch that snake," she said, as she broke a Y-shaped stick from the nearest bush. They then came back to the rock very quietly, and examined every corner. There was a hole a few inches wide under the rock near the spot where John had been sitting. It was here that the snake must be

hiding. Moti listened, but not a sound could be heard. Then she struck the rock with her stick, but nothing happened. She pushed hard against the rock, and it moved a little. Then at last she heard a hiss, a strange sound that she could not understand. Moti jumped quickly backward. Again she struck the rock, this time harder. There seemed to be several little explosions under the rock. Moti was very puzzled.

"Let us get a heavy stick and push the rock over," said John. This seemed to be the right thing to do, so they went into the jungle and soon returned with a long thick branch. Their first attempt was not very successful; a great deal of loud hissing, however, came from the hole. This was becoming exciting!

E

Moti and John were both prepared to run for their lives the moment the rock rolled over. "One, two, three," counted John, and with a great push the rock went over. John dropped the branch and fled. But Moti had more curiosity, and stopped to look. The next moment she broke out laughing at poor John, who still fled along the path.

"What is it?" he shouted, looking back over his shoulder.

"Come and see with your own eyes," replied Moti.

John returned slowly, rather ashamed that he had left his companion in possible danger. He looked at the spot from which they had removed the rock; there, in a small yellow mass, tails to the centre and heads outward, were lying four baby

tiger-cats, the wild cat of the jungle. Like most very young animals, they looked very helpless but very pleasant.

"What pretty little fellows," said John. He attempted to pick one up. Immediately the small thing flattened back its ears and drew back its lips, looking like a picture of evil, hatred and anger. John drew back his hand very quickly!

"Well," said Moti, "these snakes are not dangerous!"

"Perhaps they are not," said John, "but they did give me a fright!"

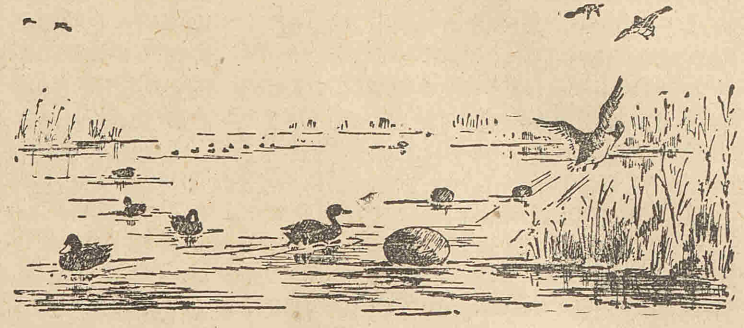
Moti picked up one of the small beasts by the skin at the back of its neck. It was so surprised that it forgot to be angry. "If we push that rock back again on top of them, it will kill them all," said John anxiously.

F

"Jungle beasts can always find their young ones," said Moti. So saying she picked up the little cats one by one and dropped them into her chattie. Their explosive little hisses sounded like water boiling over onto a fire as they were carried away. Moti and John placed them in a hole in the old wall of the fort, and then set out towards the resting-place of the wild ducks on the lake.

When they reached it, they found that many kinds of birds of bright and shining colours rose in alarm from the edge of the lake as they passed. At the end of the lake the water became narrower and a stream flowed into the jungle. Moti put her finger to her lips as a sign that silence was

necessary, and they both advanced very carefully. Hand in hand they stood and looked over the high grass up the little stream. John was greatly surprised to find that it was crowded with ducks of every kind. What he specially noticed was that here and there were on the water several chatties exactly like the one that Moti held under her arm. The ducks were swimming in peace among these chatties, taking no notice of them at all.



G

"Stay here and watch," whispered Moti. And then, to John's surprise, she took her chattie, turned it upside down, and without saying a word, put it on her head. Little Moti looked very funny in this strange head-dress, and John laughed aloud, thinking that she could not see him. But then he discovered that there were two small holes in the side of the pot, through which Moti could see perfectly well. She made a sign to John to hide in the long grass, then moved a little distance down the stream, and walked silently into the grass at the edge of the water.

She entered the water quite unseen by the swimming ducks. Very silently she walked towards the middle of the stream, her small body completely hidden under the water; only the chattie could be seen above it. John wondered at the way she swam through the water without a sound, towards the ducks, who seemed to take no notice of the advancing chattie. When she was about a hundred and fifty feet away from the nearest duck, the water became less deep, and she started to walk on the bed of the stream. Inch by inch she slowly came nearer to the duck. John became more and more excited, until he could hardly stand quiet.

H

Slowly she got nearer and nearer, stopping occasionally to be sure that the duck had not noticed her. Then she would advance step by step, until she was only a few feet away from the bird. John became more excited still. Would she catch him? Suddenly the duck disappeared beneath the water, and for a moment John thought that it had escaped. But no! Moti had caught the bird by the leg and pulled it under the water.

Moti had caught the duck so quickly and silently that the other ducks noticed nothing; not one rose from the water in alarm, although several looked around them anxiously for a moment or two. But they soon settled down again to enjoy the warm sunlight which shone on their many-coloured feathers. Again Moti sought another fat duck, and again in silence advanced slowly through the water and caught it in the same way. Now

John saw that she was returning to the bank of the stream; she was careful not to alarm the birds, but came back as carefully as she had gone. Soon she was standing by John's side, with two ducks in her hand, both still alive.

"What beautiful birds they are," said John.

"Yes," Moti replied, "but we must return at once. I shall be ill if I sit too long near the water."

I

They rose, and walked slowly back along the edge of the jungle towards the fort. Moti carried one duck and her chattie, John carried the other duck. He found it difficult to do so, because its feathers were very wet, and it struggled a good deal in his hands. Moti saw his difficulty and promised all sorts of rough treatment if he dared to let it escape.

"Look," she cried, and pointed to the opposite corner of the lake. There, walking slowly through the bushes was an elephant, swinging its long **trunk**[1] from side to side.

"Is it a wild elephant?" said John.

Moti laughed at him. "Wild!" she answered. "No, that is the elephant which your father uses when he travels through the forest or when he hunts a tiger. Perhaps we can ride on him this afternoon," she added.

Then they began to talk about elephants. "Sometimes," said Moti, "the wild elephants come into this jungle, but it is forbidden to kill them, because the Government protects them."

[1] **Trunk** = The long nose of an elephant.

"Why?" asked John.

"I do not know," answered Moti thoughtfully, "perhaps it is because they have knees in their back legs as well as in front. Their back legs are not like the back legs of other animals."

J

John was puzzled about this, and he meant to look carefully at the next elephant he saw, to discover whether Moti was speaking the truth. They were hastening now, for John wanted very much to see the elephant as soon as it arrived in camp. They soon reached the old fort, and once more climbed its old walls and ran to the camp.

But this haste was to spoil the day for both of them. The stones on the pathway were still wet, and John was wearing his shoes again. As he hurried along, he suddenly fell on his hands and knees. Moti was following just behind him, and down she came also. The result was first that Moti broke her chattie and then both let the ducks escape. They flew away with loud cries of joy at their unexpected freedom, leaving Moti and John looking sadly at their empty hands and the broken chattie.

In silence they rose to their feet. With an angry shake of her head Moti ran through the gateway towards her home, while John set off to the camp. Moti was hoping that John felt truly sorry for losing the fine ducks; but John indeed was thinking not of ducks, but of elephants.

CHAPTER TEN

A

JOHN arrived in camp and found his father smoking his pipe and watching the great elephant. The beast seemed very happy, swinging gently from side to side, and at the same time brushing the flies away from its little eyes with a branch which it held in its snake-like trunk. On the top of its head the elephant had carefully placed some wet green leaves, to protect itself from the heat of the sun and to make itself cool after the hot and tiring march into the camp. As John watched it carefully waving the leafy branch from side to side, he thought that it knew how to take care of itself just as well as a man.

"There is always something the matter with him," complained Bill Blackadder sadly, "first he hurts his feet, and now his teeth are troubling him."

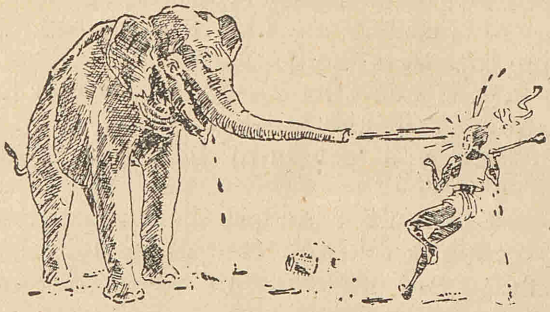
"Can you do anything to stop the pain?" said John.

"I don't think so," replied his father. "Once an old *mahout*, one of the men who spend their lives in charge of elephants, told me that he could pull out a tooth which once was giving this elephant great pain. The animal seemed to be suffering terribly, so I allowed him to make the attempt."

"What happened?" asked John.

Good Story. B

"The old mahout pretended that he was going to rub the elephant with a piece of rough stone (elephants love this!) When he had made the beast lie down on its side, he tied its feet together with thick ropes, so that it could not rise from the ground. He then tied its trunk to some short strong posts driven into the ground. He made some men sit on the trunk, so that the elephant could not move it. By this time the elephant was thoroughly angry.



"The mahout then took a round piece of wood, about two feet long and four inches thick. This had a hole running through it, and on the outside were fixed long nails sticking outwards. This was placed inside the mouth of the elephant, who could not bite it because of the nails. Then the mahout put his hand through the hole in the wood, seized the tooth, which was old and decayed, and pulled with all his strength. The tooth came out very easily.

" But the elephant played a trick on the mahout in return. They let the elephant rise to its feet, and gave it a bucket full of water in order to wash its mouth. It solemnly sucked up this water with its trunk into its mouth, several times, and then suddenly blew the remains of the water in the bucket all over the old mahout."

C

John laughed. This old elephant seemed to like some fun occasionally ! " Can I ride on him ? " he asked.

" Not now, he is tired," replied Bill.

" May I just sit on his back ? " said John, unwilling to miss a good chance.

" Well, yes, but I had better show you how to mount him," said his father.

" How do you get onto his back ? " asked John.

" If you haven't a ladder, there are two ways ; one is by his trunk and the other is by his tail. I shall not try to mount by this elephant's tail, for he seems to need rather careful treatment."

" Do you mean to say that you are going to climb up its trunk ? " asked John in surprise.

" No ! No ! " laughed Bill Blackadder, " watch me and you will see how it is done."

He stood exactly in front of the elephant's head. Then he seized the ends of the elephant's great ears in his hands. The mahout was seated on its neck. He gave a word of command, and the elephant let down its trunk. Bill placed his foot upon it. Immediately Bill was lifted like a feather

and he was just stepping from the trunk to the top of the beast's head. . . . Then there was a high loud cry. John saw the elephant remove its trunk quickly from under his father's foot. Bill Blackadder fell forward against the animal's great forehead and seized the top of its trunk. John saw the trunk waving between his father's legs like a great snake.

D

The elephant continued to cry out with pain. The mahout shouted all sorts of advice from his seat on the elephant's neck, and Bill hung to the trunk. John thought something terrible was going to happen. Suddenly however, an extra strong wave of the trunk threw Bill head downwards to the ground. He rose painfully and shook himself. He felt as if he had been sitting on a thousand snakes.

" That is NOT the way to do it," he said after a short silence.

" No, I thought it was not," said John. " Will you please show me the other way ? "

His father laughed, and then suddenly turned to the mahout and asked why the elephant had behaved so strangely.

" Never in his life has he done that before," said the mahout.

" Is his trunk hurt ? " asked Bill, thinking that perhaps the mahout had harmed it with a blow of his heavy stick.

" No, but the sahib wears shoes with iron nails in them," said a well-known voice behind them.

Then Bill remembered that he had nails in his

shoes. "You are right, Damroo," he said. "You have always said that shoes are the curse of the jungle; they have certainly given me plenty of trouble to-day."

"And me too," added John sadly, remembering how he had fallen on the stone pathway, and how the ducks had escaped.

E

"I wonder why that elephant was so angry about the small nails in your shoes, Father," said John a little later; "the mahout drives him with a thick stick with a heavy sharp iron point, and he does not seem to mind it."

"Yes, I know," answered his father. "But remember that an elephant's trunk is the most tender part of its body, and any little thing hurts it. It was my fault, and I would never have put my foot on its trunk if I had remembered those nails. Poor old beast, it must have been very painful."

"Indeed, it was rather painful for both of us," he added, still rubbing himself. They both laughed and walked homewards.

. . . . .

They were near the dinner-tent when Damroo appeared before them. He raised both hands to his forehead as a sign of respect. John knew immediately that the old man had news of good hunting.

"He of the long nose and ungraceful body has arrived in camp at a very suitable moment,"

said Damroo, meaning, of course, the elephant. "This morning very early, I saw with my own eyes the tiger that the small sahib hunted the other day." Here the old man looked with a smile at John.

"It was certainly a very big tiger," said John.

"Without doubt it was a tiger of some size," agreed Damroo. "When I saw him he seemed to be troubled by something in his forepaw. Perhaps some sharp stone or broken branch had stuck in it."

"Shall we hunt him to-morrow?" asked John immediately.

"We shall tie up some cattle for him to-night," replied his father. "If he kills them, we shall hunt him to-morrow."

F

Damroo explained. "It would be useless to search the jungle on the chance of finding him. But when he is fully fed, I shall trace his foot-marks to whatever place he chooses to rest in. Thus we shall surely kill him."

Bill Blackadder agreed. Then he turned to John. "Don't go wandering through the jungle as you did when Damroo followed this beast the last time. And also tell Moti, your new friend, not to go too far. Tell her that a tiger can be just as dangerous as a bear."

. . . . .

Bill Blackadder saw John safely asleep in his tent that night. He looked very comfortable in

his little camp-bed. Then Bill walked a little painfully to his own tent. His fall from the elephant had shaken him a good deal. When he thought of his experience, he wondered why the elephant had behaved so strangely; the beast had never shown so much anger before. Bill walked slowly to where the elephant was standing, tied by thick ropes to short posts hammered into the ground. The mahout was sleeping near it.

He woke the old man and asked, "Is your elephant all right?"

"I think so," replied the mahout. "But if you wish, I will tie him with double ropes."

"I do not quite trust him," continued Bill. "These elephants are very dangerous when they suddenly go mad. Have you any iron rings for his legs?"

"No, I have not," answered the mahout. "But I do not think that there is any cause for fear. I can make him obey me even in his mad moments."

G

Bill shook his head; he had had experience of mad elephants, and knew how difficult they were to deal with. When an elephant is mad, it can be terribly dangerous.

"Fasten him so that he cannot possibly free himself from the ground-posts," were Bill's last words to the mahout.

"It shall be done," the old man replied.

Bill Blackadder sat in his long chair for some time after his evening meal. It was a beautiful

moonlight night and the sky was cloudless. It was so bright that it was nearly possible to read a newspaper without the help of a lamp. Bill smoked two or three pipes, read some reports, and then went to bed.

About midnight a loud cry of anger broke the silence, then another. Immediately the camp was in disorder. Men jumped from their beds and rushed out of their tents, for they knew the meaning of that sound. Bill's fears had come true; the elephant was mad.

John sat up in bed and rubbed his eyes. He could hear the servants shouting, and then the voice of the elephant. He jumped out of bed to look through the doorway. He was surprised to find that the night was almost as bright as day. A terrible sight met his eyes. The great elephant, looking like a mountain in the moonlight, with its trunk held high in the air, was running straight towards his father's tent. It had broken the thick ropes which fastened it to its posts as easily as if they had been thin string.

H

The beast stopped; it gave a high angry cry and then seized a cart standing in its path and threw it into the air. Then it seized a tent, pulled it from its fastenings and threw it to the ground. It went on to Bill's tent, and John could hear the sound of breaking furniture as the great beast destroyed everything inside it. John was beginning to think that it was time to do something when a hand seized his arm.

"Come, and come quickly; the elephant is mad," whispered Damroo in his ear. "There is no time to waste."

They both hastened out of the tent. It was not a moment too soon, for there was a great noise behind them. The elephant had thrown a heavy wooden table through the top of John's tent. Half a minute later the tent and everything that it contained was completely destroyed.

John, as he fled in his bright-coloured sleeping-suit, was a strange-looking object in the moonlight. "Run to the wall of the fort—run hard," cried Damroo, for the elephant had seen them, and was coming after them with a cry of anger. Damroo turned towards the elephant, while John ran faster than he had ever run before. He saw the brave old hunter trying to draw the attention of the great beast to himself. The elephant rose above the old man like a great tower; its trunk waved angrily in the air. Then, just as John came near to the old fort wall, he turned his head for a moment, and saw the glitter of a jungle axe as it left Damroo's hand.

I

A different sound came to John's ears. The elephant had stopped and was throwing the axe into the air. A few feet away stood Ugly, barking angrily. He had just escaped from the ruins of Bill Blackadder's tent, where he had been tied. As soon as the elephant saw the little dog, he pursued it towards the fort, which John had now

nearly reached. He ran on, and heard behind him the sound of an animal rushing through the grass. It was the pony, who had broken its head-rope and was wild with terror. The pony ran past him into the thick jungle.

Soon John reached the ruined wall, and climbed hand over hand, until his feet were firmly set on the top, thirty feet from the ground. There he sat and wondered what had happened to his father and to Damroo.

The noise in the camp increased. John could see nothing, but it sounded as if the elephant was destroying everyone and everything that came in its path. Suddenly a small voice came from the foot of the wall. "Is that you, small sahib?" it whispered.

John called out anxiously, "Come up, come up, the elephant is coming this way." He was afraid that Ugly's barking would bring the elephant in their direction. A small figure climbed quickly up the wall, and in a moment Moti was sitting beside him. "I heard the noise in the camp," she said, "and came to help. But I did not like that elephant, who seems to have become a devil, so I returned here. I saw something on top of the wall; at first I thought it was a monkey; then I discovered that it was you!"

John was silent. In his anxiety he did not mind whether he looked like a monkey or not.

"Do not have any fear about your father," said Moti. "He is the greatest hunter in these jungles, and the beast will not easily destroy him."

"But he may be caught under the broken tent

and unable to escape," said poor John with tears in his eyes.

" We must try to draw the elephant away from the camp towards us," said Moti, after thinking for a moment. " He cannot harm us here, for this wall has stood firm for hundreds of years. No elephant could break it down."

There was no doubt that something must be done, and done quickly, for the terrible noise in the camp still continued. The elephant seemed to be coming nearer to the fort, in pursuit of Ugly, whose barking they could hear. The brave little dog seemed to know that it was necessary to draw the mad beast as far as possible away from the camp.

J

I will try and whistle[1] him," said John suddenly ; " if he comes, the elephant may follow." John however, was not a very good whistler ; he blew between his teeth till he became red in the face, but very little sound came. Moti laughed aloud. This made John try still harder, and his second attempt was more successful, for very soon Ugly heard him. The dog turned at once and came to obey the call. The great beast followed fast, and several times Ugly was forced to stop, turn round again, and bark as loudly as he could. Now elephants hate barking little dogs, so that little by little Ugly came nearer to the wall, and the elephant followed closely behind.

[1] Whistle=To make a high sound by blowing air through the lips or teeth.

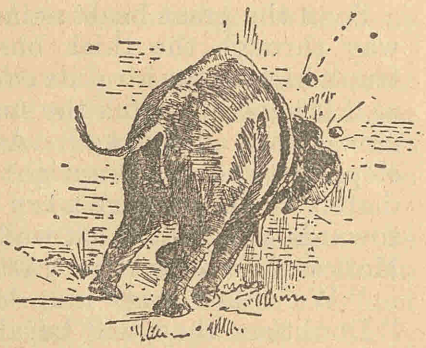
Soon the great beast came into view, forcing its way through the thick bushes. It held its long trunk high in the air ; its ears were pushed forward as if it hoped to catch the smell or the sound of this new enemy on the wall. As soon as Moti saw the elephant, she stood upright and shouted. Immediately the beast gave a cry of anger and advanced towards the great thick wall, on top of which both Moti and John were now standing.

" We must keep him here now," said Moti. " Doubtless they will be able to find a gun now that he has left the camp." John silently agreed, although he did not like the thought of this mad creature being so close to them.

K

" Ah ! Ah ! you son of ten thousand trunkless ones, you destroyer of tents and hater of little dogs ! " shouted Moti. With a cry of anger, the elephant advanced to the wall, the faithful Ugly still barking round his feet. Moti stood and threw a stone at him as he came. It struck the beast a heavy blow in the centre of the forehead. This made him still more angry, and he tried with all his strength to break the wall down by pushing it with his great head. Then he seemed to throw his whole weight against the wall, but the only result was to make himself more and more angry.

Moti and John knew that they were quite safe, for the old wall stood as firm as a rock, and the elephant's trunk could not reach them. All he could do was to blow into their faces ; in return



he received great pieces of rock which they cast down from the wall. The two children became more and more excited; they knew that they were giving the frightened people in the camp time to come after the elephant and catch him. In his excitement, John danced here and there on top of the wall. This seemed to make the elephant still more angry; the more John danced in his bright-coloured suit, the harder did the elephant throw itself against the wall.

L

Moti also was excited. "Stop dancing!" she cried. "Let me draw this breaker of walls further away. Then call as loudly as you can to your father, and doubtless he will hasten to us with his gun." Then she too danced along the top of the wall. Every few feet she stopped and pushed a great stone onto the elephant's head. Thus she made him follow her in his attempts to reach her, and at last she drew him to the end of the wall. The dog, still full of courage, barked whenever the beast stopped in his pursuit of Moti.

When John saw that the elephant had left the spot beneath him, he climbed quickly down to the foot of the wall and set off speedily back to the

camp to help his father. He had an idea that perhaps Bill Blackadder was still struggling to escape from the ruins of his tent. He knew that it was a dangerous thing to do, with a mad elephant near him. But John had plenty of courage, and he wanted to do all that he could to help. He ran as fast as he could, for he knew that at any moment the elephant might see and pursue him. Suddenly a strong arm seized him in the darkness.

M

"All right, all right, John," said Bill Blackadder's big voice. In a moment John's fear was driven away, and he knew that his father was safe.

"Where is that elephant?" continued Bill. In a few seconds John explained everything, and they went back to the wall. They could hear Moti in the distance still doing her best to keep the beast's attention; and the occasional sound of a great stone, as it hit the elephant's back or forehead made John and his father laugh. In a very short time they reached the foot of the wall and began to climb. John went up like a monkey, but his father found it more difficult, because he had a heavy gun in his hand. In the end, however, slightly breathless, he joined John on top of the wall. He sat down for a moment to get his breath and to remove his shoes, for he thought that it might be dangerous to walk among the stones of the ruined wall with a loaded gun in his hand. Then he rose and advanced, followed by John.

They were now quite near to the elephant. John was so excited that he could feel his heart beating. They both laughed again as a great stone, pushed over by Moti, sprang off the elephant's back and dropped heavily to the ground.

N

"Enough! Enough! Come here and take a little rest, oh fighter of elephants," cried Bill to Moti. He turned to John and said, "Sit down and do not move. I am going to shoot him; he has killed his mahout."

John sat down and Moti, quite breathless, joined him. "Has he killed a man?" she whispered.

"Yes," he answered.

"Then he must die; he is a murderer," said Moti, seriously.

She had hardly spoken when there was the sudden sound from the heavy gun. The two children shook with fear for a moment as they sat close to each other in the dim light. Then they saw the great beast walk unsteadily for one or two steps; then it slowly raised its trunk high above its head, higher and higher, as if it were still struggling to reach them. At last it stood straight up on its back legs with its trunk pointing at the sky. For a second it stood thus, black against the moon, a truly terrible sight. Then with a loud cry it turned over backwards, and fell to the ground.

"His time has come," said Moti. John was silent, but he felt that a great danger had passed, and that his father was at last really safe. Bill

returned, stepping carefully among the broken stones. "Now let us go back to the camp for a cup of tea—if that beast has not broken every tea-pot and cup in the camp!" he said. So they set off to find out what was happening there.

O

"Where is Damroo?" asked John.

"I have not seen him, but you may be sure that he has come to no harm," replied his father. John felt happier when he heard these words, although when he last saw the old man he seemed to be in the greatest danger of being killed under the mad beast's feet. When they arrived at the camp they saw a strange sight. Every tent had been pulled up and everything in it thrown all over the ground. But things were soon put in order, and old Din Mahomed was busy boiling some water to make tea. Most of the servants had spent the last hour in the tree-tops, and were nearly frozen with cold and terror. But they saw their master return, and soon climbed down to the warm fire.

P

John was happy when he saw that the first man to arrive was old Damroo. "What happened to you, Damroo?" asked John. "I thought that the elephant had killed you."

"No," replied the old man, "when the beast charged me I threw my head-cloth at him. He

stopped to destroy it, and I climbed quickly up that tree over there." He pointed to a tall tree, which rose without a single branch for a hundred feet into the air. No one in the world but an active jungle hunter could possibly have climbed it.

"Had you no difficulty?" said Bill smiling.

"No," he replied. "If a mad elephant is behind you, the fear of death gives you double strength. And Ugly helped me, too, by drawing away his attention."

"Well," said Bill. "I should have thought that only a monkey could climb that tree, or a bird fly to its top."

"What happened to you, Father?" asked John.

"I knew what was the matter, so I jumped out of bed, and put on my shoes. Just as I was taking the gun out of its case, the tent came down on top of me. It felt as if I were in the darkest prison, and it was almost impossible to get out. I struggled, and at last I was free. But I lost the gun in the darkness, and that is the reason why I was a long time coming to help you."

"Can Moti have some tea?" asked John, suddenly pointing to the small figure sitting a little distance apart from the company.

"Yes, of course, and she shall have a silver arm-band in return for this night's work," said Bill.

Moti's eyes shone with joy. She had dreamt of silver arm-bands often enough, but now her dream was coming true.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A

JOHN'S tent had suffered a great deal in the night. The servants had raised it and supported it with sticks hurriedly cut from the neighbouring bushes. The great central post was in a hundred broken pieces and the furniture was almost completely destroyed. It was nearly daylight when at last John slept, and almost midday when he, or anyone else, woke up.

The kitchen tent lay in ruins, and its stores of food lay around it. The little brown monkeys of the jungle quickly discovered this, and a band of about forty of these active little animals sat on the branches of the trees near which the tents were placed. From there they watched every movement of the servants below them.

At the first chance, a small brown form climbed silently down the tree, dropped from its lowest branch and moved towards the nearest sugar-tin. Suddenly it seized a handful of sugar and filled its mouth. Then, with its tail waving in the wind with joy, the little thief ran back to the tree. In two jumps it was safely back on the branch. Again and again this happened.

B

Old Din Mahomed, who was in charge of the cooking-stores, could do nothing to prevent them.

When he ran in one direction in pursuit of one thief, another would descend the tree. Before the old man could turn round, both monkeys had escaped with their stolen goods. John laughed loudly at their tricks. "They look so solemn," said he to Damroo, "but I am sure that they must laugh to themselves about it all."

"Small sahib, people of bad manners say that there is no difference between us poor jungle men and these climbers of tree-tops; but the one difference between monkeys and men is that the monkeys cannot smile," said Damroo. John had never thought of this before, but now he knew that it was true.

"Yes," continued the old hunter, "a monkey can express anger and pain in his face by making wrinkles in his forehead, but he cannot smile to express pleasure, or to show that he enjoys some fun. If he could, we would like him more than we do. But life in the jungle forbids the smile; it is too serious for fun. And now we must get the camp free of these thieves."

"How are you going to do that?" asked John. He knew that no man of the jungle will kill a monkey, and he could not understand how even old Damroo would be able to move these unwanted visitors from the tree-tops.

C

"We men of the jungle are learned in these little matters," said Damroo. He disappeared into the tent which the servants had just succeeded in raising out of the ruins of the old one which the

elephant had almost destroyed. A moment later he returned with a sticky piece of paper in his hand. "The servants use this for catching flies in the kitchen," he said with a smile, "but now I shall show you a very funny sight."

He took the paper and spread it on the ground at the foot of the largest tree. The little brown monkeys sitting on the branches looked down at him with their eyes bright with curiosity. Damroo threw a little sand over the paper to hide it, and placed in the centre a large heap of sugar. Damroo and John walked away for a short distance and waited to see what would happen.



It was not very long before a small brown form was seen descending the tree as far as the lowest branch. For a moment it looked lovingly at the sugar shining brightly on the carefully hidden fly-paper. Then down dropped the monkey to the ground, and seized the sugar. There was a loud squeal, and the strange sight of a little brown ball struggling with nothing at all! The more the little thief struggled, the more firmly the paper stuck to him. At last he gave up the fight, and with one great jump he flew up the tree, carrying the paper round him.

His fellow-thieves, when they saw this strange figure, gave one cry and jumped madly to the next tree. The frightened monkey followed them, but the sticky paper prevented him from moving quickly enough, and soon he was left far behind. John and Damroo saw the whole band going as fast as they could towards the old fort, the poor little monkey in pursuit.

"They will never return," said Damroo. John's sides shook with laughter; there seemed to be nothing to stop the monkeys until they dropped to the earth tired out.

D

"We shall not be able to move the camp for some days now," said Bill Blackadder as they ate their midday meal. "Did you ever see such disorder? It will take days to sort my papers, for that elephant threw my office table into the air, and all the papers with it."

John was secretly rather pleased to hear that there was a chance of remaining at Dhamone; he wanted to see Moti again. Besides, was there not a tiger in the neighbouring jungle?

Suddenly old Damroo appeared. His face was anxious, and he looked at John a moment before speaking. But Bill Blackadder spoke first. "Have you found him?" he asked.

The old hunter shook his head. "There is no trace of him," he said.

"Who is lost?" asked John at once.

"The pony," replied his father sadly.

"This is terrible," thought John. Then he told how the frightened pony had rushed past him when he had fled from the elephant. "He went straight into the jungle beyond the old fort," he added.

"The little fellow may have travelled for miles; and if he followed the course of the river-bed, it would be difficult to find his tracks on the hard stone," said Bill Blackadder.

"I lost his foot-marks after a short distance," said Damroo, "for the little horse left the sandy paths and went straight into the grass."

E

"Do not let it trouble you," said Bill to John, "he will return very soon." John, however, was not so sure about it, and he immediately wandered away to find Moti and tell her this bad piece of news. It was now late in the afternoon, but John decided that something must be done to find the little pony.

He found Moti lying on her back, at the foot of the old wall, with her hands behind her head, and looking at the sky. She was singing a little song, and seemed very comfortable. So John dropped his hat onto her face, and she sat up suddenly. "Something terrible has happened," he said.

"What is it?" she asked anxiously.

"The pony has disappeared," answered John.

"Then we must find him at once," said Moti.

"But where?" replied John. "Even Damroo cannot trace him."

Moti stood for a moment in deep thought. "Where did you last see him?" she asked. John

explained how the frightened pony had rushed past him into the jungle.

"He will doubtless go to the river to drink," said Moti. "But he does not know this jungle well, so he will not be able to find the little streams, which are far apart. The broad stream will draw him, for he will be thirsty before night comes."

"How far is that?" asked John anxiously.

"Not more than two miles," answered Moti. "Let us go and search for him."

F

"Very well," said John at once. He was really anxious to save the pony from the many dangers of the jungle. They set off eagerly. Moti led John past the old fort, and down across the narrow valley, the home of John's bears. Then they entered the thick grassland, where here and there stood trees with wonderful red flowers. They travelled on through thicker jungle, where the only sound was that of their feet on some broken stick, or the whisper of the wind among the leaves. They hastened as fast as they could, for they had to reach the river before darkness came and search along it for traces of the missing pony.

Suddenly they heard the rushing sound of the river. In a few moments they stepped onto the river-bank. The river was at this time of the year only a narrow stream, but on each side was an open rocky space where in spring the force of the stream had washed the ground clear of trees and bushes. Moti had hoped that they would find the pony walking on this open river-bed,

but there was no trace of him. The sun was now low in the sky, when Moti said, " We can go only as far as that great rock, and then we must return." John agreed, and they went on. Suddenly Moti seized her companion by the arm and pointed to the ground. There, straight in front of them, were the marks of a horse's feet.

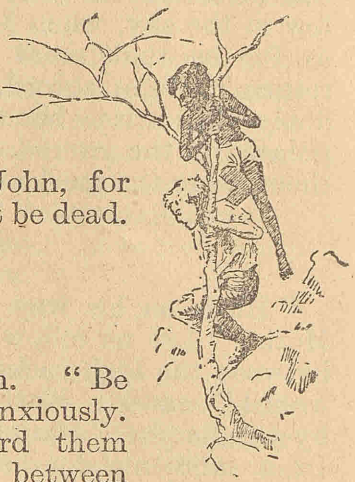
G

" He is on his way to the stream," whispered Moti. " Let us follow him." They ran together between the high rocks. Then a sudden " Woof ! woof ! " caused Moti to stop and seize John by the hand. " Stop ! " she said in a low voice. In a moment she had turned, and without a word, was running back. John followed as fast as he could. They fled over the open ground to the nearest tree, and Moti climbed it like a monkey. John climbed after her, and with the help of Moti from above, he arrived at the highest branch, about twelve feet from the ground. It was not a very firm tree in which to seek protection from danger ; the slightest movement made the tree swing from side to side in a very frightening manner.

John had been greatly surprised by Moti's strange behaviour, but he soon knew the reason for it. From her seat above him she kicked him sharply on the head. He looked up, and saw her pointing to something between the rocks from which they had just climbed. At first he could see nothing. Suddenly he observed two small round yellowish-brown ears sticking

out over the top of a rock about a hundred feet away and immediately afterwards the head of a tigress appeared.

"Poor beast!" cried John, for he knew that the pony must be dead.



H

Moti kicked him again. "Be quiet," she whispered anxiously. But the tigress had heard them speak. She jumped from between the rocks and stood looking at them, her head held high, her ears upright, the end of her tail waving. John thought what a really beautiful animal she looked, although, at the same time, he wished that his tree were a great deal larger and higher. The tree that Moti had chosen was certainly the nearest, but John felt that it might give way at any moment and throw them at the feet of the tigress.

She stood still for a few moments, and then to John's great surprise and fear, she advanced to the foot of the tree. Have you ever seen a cat playing all by itself? It runs here and there in a sort of dance, holding its tail high in the air, every hair standing on end in imagined anger. It ends its game in a quick rush up the nearest tree. Thus it was that the tigress advanced. It was a beautiful sight, but John would have

been better pleased if the bars of a cage had been between him and the tigress !

John and Moti climbed a few inches higher. The result was frightening. The tree began to bow its head very slowly. John and Moti dared not move. They could feel the tree little by little giving way, and the tigress was standing just below it. It was a terrible difficulty in which they found themselves, for in a few moments the tree would fall to the ground. John wanted to shout, but he remembered that the tigress might have some cubs hidden among the rocks, and that a shout would alarm the tigress and make her attack them. What was to be done ?

I

At that moment a vulture[1] had seen the body of the pony lying on the sandy river-bed. The great bird dropped like a stone from the sky and flew past the tigress towards the pony. The tigress, doubtless thinking that the vulture had come to steal her dinner, turned at once and ran after it. It was not a moment too soon, for just as the tail of the tigress disappeared behind the rocks, John's tree gave way completely. It slowly bowed down to the ground and at last gently threw the boy and girl in a heap on the spot where not ten seconds ago the tigress had been standing.

Neither of them spoke a word. Moti gave a little cry and ran as fast as she could towards the edge of the jungle. John followed, and they ran until they were breathless and could run no more.

[1] Vulture = A large bird which feeds on dead bodies.

When they thought they were safe at last, they sat down to get their breath back again.

"It has killed my poor pony," said John.

"Without doubt," answered Moti.

John felt the tears rise to his eyes, for he had loved that pony dearly. He turned at once and set off towards the camp. Moti followed silently, sorry for John and grieving at his loss.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A

YOUNG JOHN and Moti wasted no time that evening on their return journey to the camp. Darkness was falling as they reached the old fort, and they could hear the sound of thousands of wings as the ducks flew to their night feeding-place on the lake. Moti parted from John at the gateway of the fort, and John, sad at heart, went on to his father's tent.

He told his story sorrowfully. But he made up his mind that the tigress should die. "You must shoot her," he said to his father very firmly, "for she has killed my pony." Bill Blackadder was sorry for John, but he knew that it would not be very easy to pursue and kill the tigress. "Send Damroo here," he said suddenly to Din Mahomed. John felt happier immediately, as he thought to himself, "Father is as eager as I am to hunt this beast." The old hunter soon appeared, and listened with serious attention to the whole

story. " It always happens like this," he explained. " In the evening a tiger is playful, and plays all kinds of tricks. But if it has just killed some animal, as this tigress has killed the pony, it is dangerous to come near it. Doubtless Moti knew this when she ran away so fast."

B

" Never trust a tiger at the time when the sun goes down. Then, as I have said, they become playful; they seem to become childish, and do things that they would never attempt to do at any other hour. Certainly this tigress would have played a very terrible game with you if by chance she had seen you."

Indeed, John had thought that she seemed very playful and ready to give all sorts of trouble. This thought had driven him to climb that tree, with such strange results.

" We shall have trouble with that old tiger now," said Damroo suddenly. Bill Blackadder wrinkled his forehead and looked puzzled. If the experienced Damroo expected trouble, then that trouble would be serious ! " He doubtless will take this young tigress under his protection, and then he will become dangerous," added Damroo. John looked at his father in a questioning way.

Bill smiled. " A tiger likes to show a tigress how fine and brave he is," he said. " He will attack more fiercely if you meet him in the company of a tigress. He may not wish to harm you, but he likes to show the tigress that he is afraid of nothing."

" Even jungle beasts have their pride," said Damroo solemnly.

C

"Have you tied the cattle out in the jungle to-night?" asked Bill Blackadder.

"Yes, sahib, I have tied up seven beasts in different places," replied Damroo.

"It seems very wrong to tie up cattle like that, just in order to let them be killed," said John.

"You are right, John, it does seem terribly unkind," answered his father. "But remember that the death of one beast may save the lives of hundreds of other beasts, if the result of its death is that we kill this tiger."

"Yes, small sahib," added Damroo. "Do not forget that a tiger kills at least one animal every five days, so that the cattle of the villages and the deer in the jungle suffer terribly. But doubtless both the tiger and this tigress are now fully fed, and they will not kill again for a day or two."

"We must kill them both before we leave Dhamone," said Bill. "We cannot move for a week, as the tents must be repaired; that elephant has almost completely destroyed them."

D

Just as John was getting into bed that night, he said suddenly to his father, "May I go with Damroo to-morrow morning? I can show him where I found the tigress."

"Very well, if you wish, you may go," said his father, who knew that he could trust his son to the protection of the old hunter.

. . . . .

When the sun rose on the following morning, John sat up in bed and saw the smiling face of Damroo sticking through the doorway of his tent. "Are you coming to search the jungle with me this morning, small sahib?" said a kind voice. John was out of bed and dressed in about half a minute.

The two hunters set forth into the jungle just as the sun was appearing over the tree-tops. At this early hour the jungle is a wonderful place; the wild animals are returning to their homes in the thickest parts of the forest, and the deep silence is unbroken. Damroo went in the direction of the bush-covered hills which rose behind the old fort. They did not climb them, but followed the track that ran round their foot. A tiger always follows these lower tracks in order to meet the animals as they return to their hiding-places among the bushes. The wise old hunter had tied up two or three of the cattle near this track in order to bring the tiger there.

E

John saw them carefully tied by the foot to short posts driven into the ground. Damroo explained that if they were tied by the neck, a tiger might see the rope and think that it was dangerous. The cattle were tied in an open space, so that they could be seen from a distance. No hunter wishes to walk on top of a tiger when he is eating his meal!

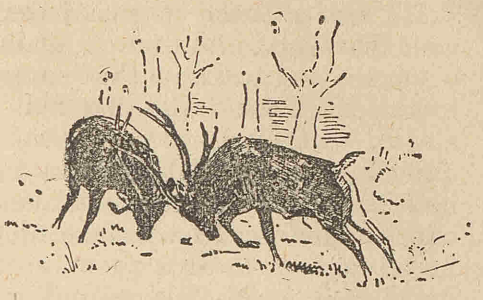
John saw several deer returning from the river to the high ground. They stood and watched him curiously, and then walked slowly away into the long grass.

"You will see many of them round the corner of that hill," whispered Damroo. John eagerly hurried along the path. As soon as they reached the corner the first thing that they saw was a fine beast with horns so large that they seemed almost too heavy for him to carry. The deer stopped suddenly. He stood fearlessly, ready to defend his jungle home from these unwanted visitors.

F

. "Sambhur," whispered Damroo. The whisper was very low, but it did not escape the ears of the deer. It raised its bushy tail, threw back its head, and ran up the steep hillside. John and Damroo watched it disappear. They were just going to continue their search when suddenly Damroo laid his hand on John's shoulder, and the boy stood still and listened. A great noise had broken out on the hillside above them, as if two great beasts were fighting in fierce battle. John ran forward up the steep hill to try and see what was happening.

Suddenly two great deer, with their horns caught in each other's, rolled in a struggling mass down the hillside. Stones and branches followed them. They came down, fighting angrily, until they arrived almost on top of the two hunters. Head to head they struggled; their eyes were bright with anger. John noticed how they went round each other in circles, each trying to gain a place above the other on the hillside. Their minds were so completely given to the fight that they did not notice the two silent figures looking at them with wondering eyes.



For a moment the battle ceased. The two deer stood breathless, head to head, to regain strength to continue the fight. Suddenly the battle began again. Round and round they went, until they came quite close to John, so close that one of the beasts suddenly smelt the smell of man. Now all jungle beasts are terrified of that smell. Immediately one of the deer drew back its horns from its enemy's, turned and ran away. The other deer pursued it, striking it with its forehead as it fled.

G

John laughed when the battle was over.

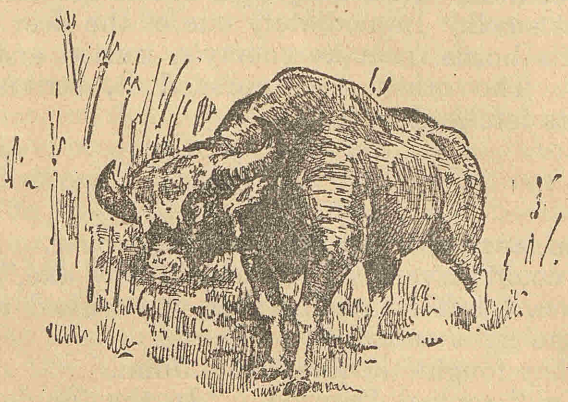
"I could have killed them with my axe," said Damroo, "but I thought that you wished to see how the fight ended."

"They fought terribly," said John.

"Yes," replied Damroo. "In the jungle only the strongest beasts can continue to live. Thus it is necessary that all things should fight. 'Kill or be killed' is the law of the jungle."

Damroo and John went on towards the river, on the banks of which the hunter told John that two more cattle were tied. As they forced their way through the trees at the foot of the jungle hills, John, for the first time, saw a real bison.

He was a beast of great size, eating peacefully when they saw him first. But in a few minutes the bison seemed to know that some danger was near; he raised his head and listened. Suddenly he took alarm. Although they were well hidden, he turned quickly round and looked in their direction. He held his nose high in the air in an attempt to find out by smelling the nature of the danger. Then he advanced towards them, stopped, put his head down and beat the ground with his front foot. Damroo seized John by the arm and drew him behind a thick tree. Then with his axe, he struck



A BISON

the tree sharply several times, producing the noise of stones shaken in a tin. The great bison looked alarmed. Damroo waited a moment and then repeated the noise. Immediately the beast turned round and ran up the hillside. Now and then John caught sight of him and wondered at the quickness of such a large animal as it hurried

over the rocks and stones and between the trees in its path. "I'm glad he went," he said to Damroo.

H

"Yes, an old bison can be very fierce and dangerous," answered Damroo. "They very seldom see men, and are always alarmed when they do."

"Why did you make that noise?" asked John.

"You must remember that beasts of the jungle are more afraid of unseen things than they are of things which they can see. The bison heard the noise, but could see nothing. This made him afraid; but if he had seen me, he would doubtless have charged." John was rather glad that the great beast had not done so, for it would have been like stopping a railway-train.

They were now leaving the hills behind them, and advancing down the valley to the river-bank. A sudden whisper from Damroo caused John to stop. The hunter pointed with his axe to something lying near a tree close to the river. Then he said, "Look, it is killed!" He made a sign to John to sit down, and together they sat for half an hour, neither moving nor making a sound.

John could now see the remains of a dead cow at the spot to which Damroo had pointed. Carefully they walked towards it, hoping that the killer was not anywhere near them. Damroo looked at the body and at the marks in the sand. "This is not the work of a tiger," he said. "A leopard has killed this. A leopard seizes an animal under the neck, a tiger seizes it from above. Be-

sides, these are the marks of a leopard's paws, not of a tiger's. We must build a *machan* in that tree." Immediately he broke down some branches, climbed the tree, and made a rough wooden floor among the branches.

"This leopard will return at sunset to finish his meal," Damroo said; "then you will see your father kill him." He climbed down the tree, covered the dead body with branches and with John at his side, returned to the camp.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A

JOHN had risen very early that morning, so Bill sent him to bed as soon as he had eaten the midday meal. "No," he replied to John's many questions. "I will promise nothing; there may be time to hunt this evening or there may not. It all depends on whether I can finish my work." John thought it was a pity to miss such a chance. He knew however that his father would never fail to finish work that had to be done, even if there were twenty leopards to kill. So he slept peacefully for several hours. When he woke he heard Damroo and his father talking outside his tent.

"If the aim is good, this little gun will surely kill the beast," said Damroo.

"I will take the heavy gun with me, however, because the small sahib might miss," replied Bill.

That was quite enough for John. He was out of bed in a moment. "I won't be a minute," he shouted to his father from inside the tent.

"He may be a small sahib," said Damroo with a smile, "but certainly his ears are fully grown!"

"He misses very little," said Bill Blackadder, "I hope he will not miss this beast to-night."

B

After they had drunk a cup of tea, Bill and his son set forth with Damroo to shoot the leopard. From the wall of the old fort Moti watched them in silence. Her eyes shone with pleasure when John waved his hand to her, and pointed proudly to the gun that his father was carrying, and then to himself. This was to be a great occasion for John!

But Moti also had made up her mind that she would not miss this chance, for when the little party had disappeared round a corner of the fort, she dropped from the wall and followed them. When they were near the "kill," Damroo went forward alone. John watched him as he advanced carefully on hands and knees, with his head-cloth under his arm and his shoes in his hand. In a minute or two he returned to Bill and whispered. The shake of his head told John that the leopard had not yet come back to the "kill."

Everything was done in complete silence, although climbing the tree into the machan without a sound was difficult. Damroo stood with his face to the tree. John climbed up his back, seized the lowest branch and pulled himself up into the tree.

Bill followed with greater difficulty, for his weight was double that of John. Damroo climbed another tree a little distance away.

C

"You will shoot this beast," whispered Bill to John. This was the first real knowledge that the boy had of the honour he was to receive. His eyes shone with excitement.

"This little gun shoots very straight," said his father. "Remember to hit the beast behind the shoulder," he added, as he loaded the gun and placed it in John's hand. He then showed him how to sit in the machan, with his legs crossed. John, of course, found it more comfortable to hang his legs over the edge, but his father knew the danger of this. He remembered when a friend of his had sat thus in a tiger-hunt. The tiger came out of the bushes directly towards him. When the beast was sixty feet away, his friend fired, but failed to stop the tiger. It came on, straight to the foot of the tree. In his anxiety, Bill's friend fired again. There was a loud cry of pain, and Bill thought at first that the tiger had climbed the tree and seized his friend. Instead, however, Bill found that he was holding his foot in his hand, wondering what had happened. In his excitement he had aimed at the tiger, but hit his own foot, and the shot had passed through it! After that, Bill advised everybody sitting in a machan not to hang their legs over the edge.

As soon as John found the gun in his hands,

he sat upright, ready to shoot at the first thing that moved. Bill smiled when he noticed this. He remembered how excited he had felt when he first waited to shoot a tiger. Now it was John's turn to feel the same excitement of the hunter. Bill tried to make the boy sit more comfortably, but with no success. John sat with the gun firmly held in his hand, and his eyes fixed on the river-bed from which he expected the leopard to appear.

D

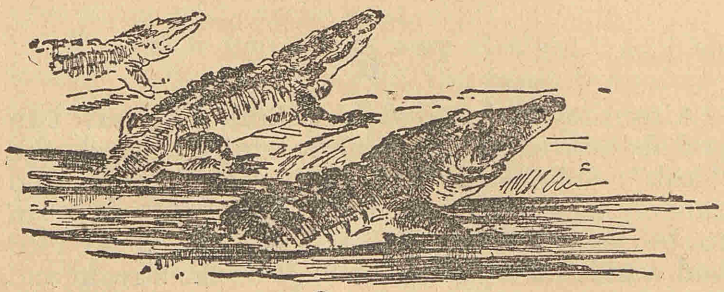
After they had waited some time, John saw two jackals arrive. They went carefully towards the "kill." When they were sure that there was no danger, they began to feed. They did not seem to be very hungry; they soon ceased to feed and wandered away to the edge of the stream and then began to drink. When they were no longer thirsty they disappeared among the rocks.

Soon afterwards John noticed two little balls appear above the water, then a third. Silently he pointed to them, and drew his father's attention to them. Bill Blackadder seemed puzzled, until the heads of three crocodiles showed clearly on the water's edge. Crocodiles have a very strong power of smell; they had smelt the smell of blood brought to the water by the jackals, and had gathered eagerly to examine into the matter. In a few moments they climbed slowly onto the bank. One of them suddenly smelt the "kill," and all three came towards it. Bill Blackadder was just going to drive them away

with a shot, when suddenly they fled, one behind the other, back to the river.

E

What had caused them to leave their meal so hurriedly? John looked up at his father to see whether he knew. Bill pointed at the kill;



and there before them was the leopard. John could not understand where it had come from; it seemed to have appeared by magic. The beautiful great beast sat solemnly beside the "kill," and fixed his eyes on the circles in the water where the crocodiles had disappeared.

"Now is the time," thought John. He fired. Bang![1] A yellow form flew into the air. Then his father fired twice. The beast gave a cry of pain; suddenly he disappeared as silently as he had come.

"Well," said Bill, anxiously, "that was not very successful. You fired too quickly; there

[1] Bang = The sound made by a gun when it is fired.

was no need for any hurry." But he knew how excited John was, and forgave him. He remembered that he had done exactly the same thing when he first hunted in the jungle. "We must be very careful now," he added. "A wounded leopard is a very dangerous beast."

"Shall I get down now?" asked John.

"No, certainly not; sit quite quietly." Bill gave a low whistle, and Damroo came carefully down his tree and stood at the foot of John's tree. Bill explained what had happened. Damroo smiled, and John felt very unhappy.

"We will wait half an hour," said Bill. Damroo agreed. "Perhaps we shall find him dead. If he is not, he will be at least less dangerous, for his wound will make him less able to move."

F

They all three sat together for half an hour. "We had better move now," said Bill. "You climb to the top of the tree and watch carefully. Shout if you see the beast move." He put his gun on his shoulder and moved away.

John watched them carefully. He saw Damroo gather some stones and fill his head-cloth with them. He noticed that as soon as the old hunter came near a rock or bush he threw some stones at it, for fear that the wounded beast was hidden behind it. Once or twice he climbed a small tree and eagerly examined the ground around it. Then he threw a stone into the space between two high rocks, and listened anxiously. Suddenly, Damroo turned and ran up a tree as actively as a

cat. It was a most surprising trick. John had never seen a man climb a tree so quickly; but John had forgotten that Damroo was a man of the jungle, trained to do such things.

G

Bill stood with his gun ready at his shoulder. The next moment a small head appeared over the rock. Bill opened his eyes wide in surprise. "What are you doing there?" he shouted.

"I have been watching the show," answered Moti, without the slightest sign of fear. She seemed to think it was quite a usual thing for little girls to hunt leopards on foot.

"I very nearly killed you," said Bill, angrily.

"I should have died happily," replied Moti, with a smile. "I was laughing at that jungle monkey Damroo running up the tree."

"Enough," said Bill, with a smile that he tried to hide from Damroo. "Have you seen the leopard? Is it wounded?"

"The beast with the spotted skin lies dead among those bushes," answered Moti.

"Are you certain that he is dead?" Bill meant to take no chances with a wounded leopard, the most active and most dangerous animal in the world.

"Yes, I am certain. I was sitting in that tree," said Moti, "when you fired. The beast came straight towards me, but then stopped. It turned round in circles, biting at the shot-wound in its side. Then it fell and lay without a movement, dead."

Moti showed Bill Blackadder the spot where the leopard lay. As soon as he was sure that Moti's story was true, he called John from the tree. "Here is your first leopard, John. You hit him six inches too far back." John looked at the great beast with pride. Its beautiful spotted coat shone in the fading sunlight, its great claws stuck out from its paws, and its lips were drawn back, still showing the evil teeth.

"Come along back to camp," shouted Bill. "Cover him up, Damroo. We will send for him later."

"That was a very good hunt," said John to the old hunter. Damroo did not reply, for he was still rather ashamed that Moti had seen his rapid rush up the tree, and had made such fun of him.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A

When the party arrived back in camp John was surprised to see the tall figure of a man rise from a long chair outside his father's tent. He came to meet them with a smile.

"Hullo, Jerry," said Bill Blackadder. "What are you doing here?"

"I am travelling into the forest about forty miles away to do some man-hunting this time."

"What! has Bir Singh the robber been at his work again?" asked Bill.

"Yes, he has murdered two merchants, and has fled to the jungle. But I mean to catch him

2098

this time," replied Jerry. "Is this your son?" he added, looking at John.

"Yes, this is young John," replied Bill. This new friend and John liked each other at once, for both of them enjoyed good hunting. John was soon telling the whole story of his experiences to Jerry. He was just beginning to ask questions about the man-hunt, which interested him greatly, when their talk was stopped by the sound of a dog-fight behind the tent. Everyone rushed to the spot, where they found Ugly in the middle of a great battle with two of Jerry's large hunting-dogs. After a great deal of shouting and struggling, the three dogs were separated. John held Ugly firmly by the back of his neck, while the two strangers were led quickly away.

"That was my fault," said Jerry. "I forgot all about my dogs. Ugly was quite right to attack them; he knows that he is here in order to guard the camp; and I must say that he does it very well. That elephant seems to have nearly ruined your camp," he went on, looking round him.

B

"You are right," answered Bill. He then told Jerry the whole story of the mad beast.

"I once had an elephant that played a very nasty trick on me," said Jerry.

"What did it do?" said John.

"Well, I was fishing in the Gogra river, and had two elephants with me carrying my bags and boxes. I wanted to cross the river, which was very broad. I sent for the elephants to make

them swim across. You know, elephants are very fine swimmers. One of the two mahouts had gone to a village about a mile away to buy sweets. I was very eager to cross the river as soon as possible, so I decided to ride his elephant myself. We set off for the river-bank. The other mahout told me that my elephant was easy to ride, and would obey all my commands. He took his elephant into the stream first. I followed. We reached the middle of the river. Suddenly my beast raised its trunk, and whistled like a railway-train. And then I found myself swimming, for the beast had disappeared under the water."

C

John laughed.

"You may laugh, but I can tell you that I was nearly drowned! Suddenly the elephant rose as quickly as it had disappeared. I learned afterwards that he had been swimming with the end of his trunk just above the water.

"'They play like that when they are in the water,' explained the mahout to me politely. But I gave the beast no more chances to play such games with me after that. It was the wettest game I have ever played."

John was greatly pleased with this story. He tried to get some more stories out of his new-found friend but his father sent him to bed, for he was thoroughly tired.

"That boy will be a great hunter," said Bill.

"Will he?" said Jerry. "Then I will give him a really good hunt to-morrow."

"Must you leave to-morrow?" asked Bill.

"Yes, that fellow Bir Singh is giving us policemen a great deal of trouble. He steals money from wealthy merchants. That is bad enough, but when he knocks them on the head, sets fire to their houses and burns them to death, then Bir Singh deserves the same fate."

"How far away is the place of his latest evil deed?" asked Bill.

"About fifteen miles from here. Come with me in the morning and we shall hunt with my dogs on the open ground about four miles away. Last year I had some fine hunting after jackals there."

"Very well," replied Bill. "Young John has never seen a jackal-hunt, and it will amuse him."

D

They were out of bed early next morning, and soon were riding once more through the grass of the jungle. The two great hunting-dogs ran by the side of Jerry's pony. When they reached the bush-land the hunters separated and went forward in a wide line. "We will hold our hats in the air if we see anything," said John's father before they parted. They went on for about a mile, when suddenly John saw his father hold his hat high in the air. Immediately all three hunters increased the speed of their horses. The dogs did the same. John noticed that they seemed to know what was happening. They did not rush madly in every direction, trying to find what

they were pursuing. They still ran one on each side of Jerry's horse. First one dog, then the other, took a great jump into the air, and looked all round in an anxious attempt to observe the animal they were following.

Soon John caught sight of a large jackal, some distance in front of them. He looked at the dogs. Suddenly one of them ceased to jump into the air. It also had seen the jackal, and went in pursuit with the speed of an arrow. The other dog went after him immediately, followed by the three hunters. They rode like the wind. John was only half as heavy as Bill or Jerry, so he was able to keep well in front of his companions.

E

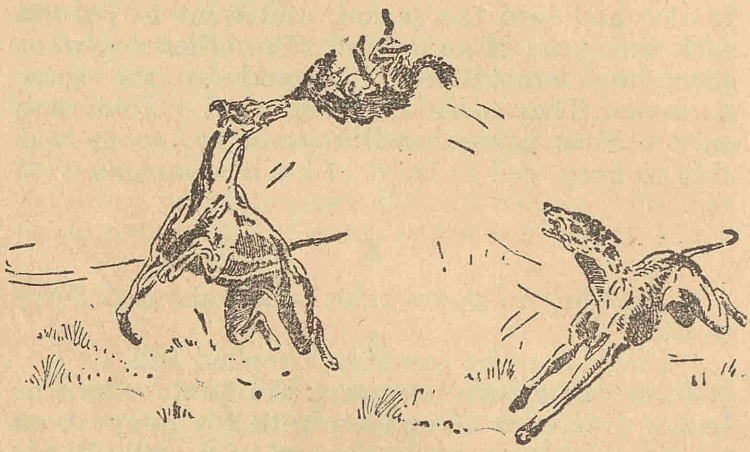
"That boy of yours rides well," shouted Jerry to Bill.

"I only hope he can stop," replied Bill.

John was greatly enjoying the hunt. Once he had a difference of opinion with his pony about which side of a bush they should go. For a moment he was almost off the pony's back, but he hung on, and was still leading in the hunt. The speed of the jackal surprised him, but the dogs were faster still. They were running nearly side by side with the jackal, when John noticed its mouth open ready to bite. But they were going at too great a speed for fighting. The first dog came up and took the jackal by the ear. With a sudden movement of the head, he threw the jackal up in the air. The other dog, running up from the rear, caught it in its powerful teeth

as it dropped to earth. "Its time had come," as Moti would have said.

John stopped his pony quite easily. It was almost breathless, so John dismounted and allowed the pony to rest a short time. He looked at the great dogs and thought, "What a fool Ugly was to fight them; they could have eaten him!"



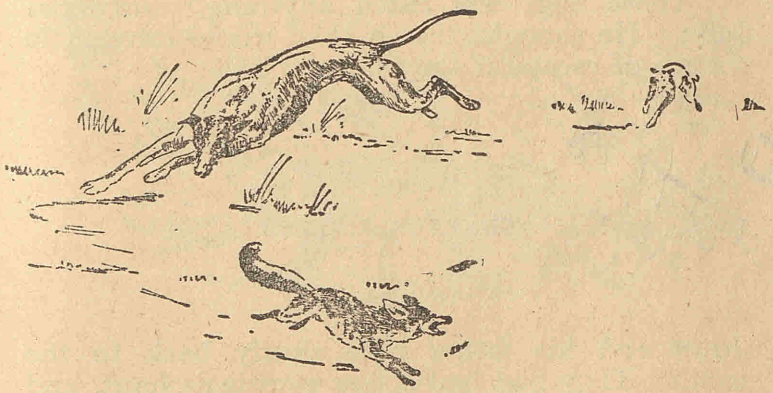
F

Jerry and Bill joined John, and after a few minutes' rest tried to find some water for the dogs. But they were unsuccessful. "Come on, let us give them one more hunt," said Bill Black-adder. They mounted quickly, and started off again. Suddenly John heard a cry from Jerry, and immediately the dogs were again hunting fast. But it was a different kind of animal that they were now pursuing. It was a little silvery-grey

fox, a pretty little fellow with a fine bushy tail. The dogs ran much faster than the fox, and John thought that the hunt would soon be finished. But he made a mistake, for the fox suddenly turned when the dogs were almost on top of him. Again and again this happened, and every time the fox escaped. The hunt ended as quickly as it had begun. The fox disappeared into a hole in the ground.

G

John was rather pleased that the brave little



animal had beaten the dogs. "These little foxes are wonderfully quick," said Bill. "I have seen a dog follow one of them until there was no breath left in him. Suddenly the fox's tail went up, and he ran straight towards the hill, and left the dog almost unable to move. We must be getting back to camp very soon," he added, look-

ing at the sun, which was now high in the sky. He turned to Jerry to say "Good-bye."

Jerry turned his pony and said seriously, "Listen. This thief Bir Singh is a really evil man, and more than forty of my men are in pursuit of him. It may be that the band of which he is leader has separated, and that he is hiding somewhere in this jungle. Be careful if you meet him, because he is armed, and ready for any wild attempt to escape. If you have any trouble, shoot him!" He waved his hand, again turned his pony and disappeared over the high ground.

"I hope he will catch his thief," said Bill.

"Those dogs will catch anything," answered John. He thought that a thief would have little chance of escape if they hunted him!

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A

JOHN and his father rode slowly back to the camp. They had had a fine morning's hunt, and John felt very happy and hungry. A good breakfast was ready for them as soon as they arrived. Bill was just beginning to think of the day's work when old Damroo walked into the tent. He looked very serious, and Bill knew that he was bringing important news.

"Sahib," said Damroo, "we must be very careful of that young tigress."

"Why?" asked John. One tigress was very much the same to him as any other tigress.

"By chance I saw that beast this morning, and doubtless she is dangerous. It has come to my knowledge that she is the cub of a man-eating tigress in the next jungle. For years she has been the terror of the men in the neighbouring villages. This tigress too is a man-eater."



"Are you sure of this?" asked Bill.

"Yes, sahib. This morning I met a hunter from the village of Busiagond. He was searching the opposite bank of the river for this beast. He told me her story. The mother-tigress, the man-killer, was killed by a soldier a few weeks ago, and now her two full-grown tigress-cubs are wandering through the jungle. They have already killed three children."

B

"We must do our best to kill her," said Bill thoughtfully. "Is she coming this way?"

"The tiger that the small sahib hunted has joined her, and from their footmarks I think they will be in the little valley near the fort to-night," replied Damroo.

"If we can find them there, our task will be easy," said Bill. The old hunter shook his head doubtfully. "It will be dangerous to hunt them unless they have had a good meal. I do not like pursuing hungry tigers. We had better tie up a buffalo[1] for them."

"Very well," replied Bill. "Tell me when you tie the animal up, and I shall bring my gun."

Damroo looked happier when he heard these words, for he did not like the idea of visiting the valley all by himself, without any protection. He might meet two dangerous beasts there, and the result would be very unpleasant for Damroo!

"I must tell Moti about this," said John, "for there is great danger for her also. Her uncle sends her into the jungle to collect wood for his cooking-fire. I must tell her about the danger."

"Damroo will tell her," said Bill. He smiled at the old man.

"She will listen to no talk from me," complained Damroo, "and if she does, she will not obey. But I shall do as you command."

[1] Buffalo = A large black cow-like animal.

C

Bill laughed. "Well, I must do my work," he said, looking rather sadly at the heap of letters on his office table, all of which needed attention. "Call me when you are going to tie up the buffalo!"

Before Damroo had gone very far, John followed him. "Can you make me an axe?" he said. John had decided that it would be very nice to be the possessor of a real jungle axe like Damroo's. The old man thought for a moment, and then suddenly remembered that by chance he had picked up the head of an axe on the path leading to a village. This he now showed to John. "Will this suit you?" he asked.

"Can you sharpen it?" asked John anxiously.

"I can make it just as sharp as mine," replied Damroo.

"Will it be sharp enough to kill a thief?"

The old man wondered what was in John's mind when he replied: "Without doubt it will be sharp enough. But we must cut a suitable stick on which to fix it."

D

While they were on their way to the nearest tree to find a piece of wood, John almost put his foot on a jungle hare.[1] He jumped into the air with a loud cry, for he thought at first that it was a great snake. The frightened animal ran

[1] Hare = A large rabbit-like animal.



away through the long grass. Damroo threw his axe. It flew through the air and struck the hare. His aim was wonderfully straight.

"This will be my dinner," he said, as he solemnly picked the little animal up. John was surprised to see how quickly Damroo had used his axe, and how straight his aim had been. He was now even more anxious to possess one of his own. Just as he began to wonder what he should practise on in order to become as quick as Damroo, he saw a man riding into the camp on a camel. This was something unusual, so he asked Damroo whether he knew what was happening.

Damroo looked sad. "He brings orders from the Government to your father. Thus it always happens, at the moment when there is a chance of good hunting," said he, angrily.

John ran quickly to his father's tent. He saw Bill come from the tent and take a letter from the camel-man. He opened it, and read it. To John's great surprise, his father suddenly kicked his hat, like a football, high in the air. "England! Home!" he cried, like an excited schoolboy. "I have been given six months' holiday in England!"

John, however, felt none of his father's joy and excitement. "This means that there will be no more hunting for me," he said sadly to his father.

"Let us have one more hunt before we go, my boy. We shall destroy those two man-eaters to-morrow," said Bill.

E

But John could not feel much eagerness. He wandered away sadly to Damroo. "Is there any news?" asked the old man anxiously.

"We are going to England," said John.

There was silence for some time. Neither Damroo nor John enjoyed the idea of parting from each other. "But we shall hunt to-morrow, Damroo," said John. "Father says we must kill these man-eaters before we go."

"Surely he will do so, but we must be careful that no accident happens. It will not be easy to kill two tigers together."

. . . . .

Later that afternoon Bill Blackadder called to John, "I am going down into the valley to protect Damroo while he ties up the buffalo. I shall return in an hour's time."

Bill and Damroo had just started when suddenly Moti came running into the camp. She stopped in front of Bill.

"Help!" she cried.

F

Bill Blackadder saw immediately that Moti had bad news; her eyes were wide open with terror, and she was almost breathless.

"Thief," she cried, struggling for breath.

"Where?" asked Bill quickly.

"He has shot my uncle, stolen his money, and set fire to his house."

"That must be Bir Singh," thought John.

In a very short time, Bill had asked Moti many questions. When he knew the facts, he prepared to follow the murderer. "Leave the buffalo and bring my other gun," he cried to Damroo. "Run! Run!"

"He went into the valley, sahib," said Moti. "Be careful, for he is armed."

Bill at once sent help to the old priest's temple, and then set out in pursuit of the murderer with Damroo. The old man soon discovered his foot-marks in the path leading to the valley. John and Moti followed unnoticed. Suddenly Bill saw them. "Go back," he shouted, "do not dare to follow us into the valley. Go up to the high ground and stay there. This is not work for children."

Very unwillingly Moti and John turned back; Bill and Damroo went forward on their dangerous task.

G

The valley was about three hundred feet wide. On each side were high steep cliffs; the bottom was covered with bushes. It was a bad place in which to pursue an armed murderer. There was complete silence, except for the occasional cry of an old monkey, sitting near the top of the cliff.

"We should have kept to the high ground," whispered Damroo.

"Then the thief would have seen us," replied Bill. "That old monkey has seen something. Watch him carefully." Together they stood

and watched. The monkey was only a short distance in front of them, looking down into the valley.

Suddenly there was a terrible roar. It seemed to shake the earth. *Bang*! Another roar! *Bang*! Then there was silence again. Bill knew that the murderer had met the tigers. Which had won the fight, the tigers or the man? The silence was broken again by roar after roar, and by all the strange noises of a great cat-fight.

"Doubtless the two tigers are quarrelling over the dead body of Bir Singh," said Damroo. "The tigress is trying to drive the tiger away from her kill."

"Then one murderer has died. Shall we kill the other two?" said Bill.

"We must do it at once, while the tigress roars. Only then can we know where she is," replied Damroo.

"Come with me," cried Bill.

H

Damroo knew how dangerous the hunt would be, but he trusted his master completely. With no other man in the world would Damroo have dared to meet such danger. "Kill the tigress first, sahib," he said. "She is more dangerous than the tiger."

Bill agreed. They advanced in silence. Occasionally they could hear the low growls of the tigress, as she told the tiger to keep away from her kill. Suddenly Damroo touched Bill's arm. He pointed to an old gun which lay among the

bushes, covered with blood. They were now quite close to the tigress, but it was difficult to see her. The setting sun was shining down the valley, and her yellow coat was of the same colour as the dried autumn leaves of the jungle trees. Damroo saw her first, and pointed to her with his small gun. Bill tried to aim his gun, but he could see nothing of the beast. At that moment he wished that he had the sharp eyes of Damroo.

I

He was becoming anxious, for the light was fading, and soon night would fall. Then suddenly the tigress felt that danger was near. With a terrible roar she rose and charged straight at Bill. Bill stood firm. *Bang!* A roar! Another *bang*! The tigress fell, biting wildly at the stones and bushes.

Bill opened his gun and loaded it again. As he was doing so, the old tiger came to the help of the wounded tigress. Would he charge too? Bill trusted to chance, and continued to fire at the tigress, the man-killer. The tiger roared at them, but remained among the bushes. Finally, after several attempts to charge again, the tigress rolled over, dead.

"Come on," said Bill, "we must follow the tiger; he has no courage at all." He jumped into the bushes, and saw the tiger moving away in front of him. *Bang!* Again he fired, and missed. Then he remembered that he had only one more shot to fire. He stopped and showed it to Damroo. The old man held his arm. "No! No! Sahib.

It would be the work of a fool to follow him now, with only one shot left."

"You are right, Damroo," he said. "The beast has beaten us!"

Suddenly Damroo pointed eagerly to the cliff above them. There was the tiger climbing with difficulty up the steep side of the valley. He seemed anxious to get out of this place of death.

J

Bill dared not fire. He might only wound the tiger, and then there would be still another dangerous beast to wander among the villages killing men and children.

"He will never reach the top. The last ten feet of the cliff hang over the valley," said Bill.

"No," replied Damroo. "He will climb very slowly, but without doubt he will reach it, for no jungle beast attempts an impossible task."

Suddenly he seized Bill's arm. Pointing to the top of the cliff he shouted, "Look there!"

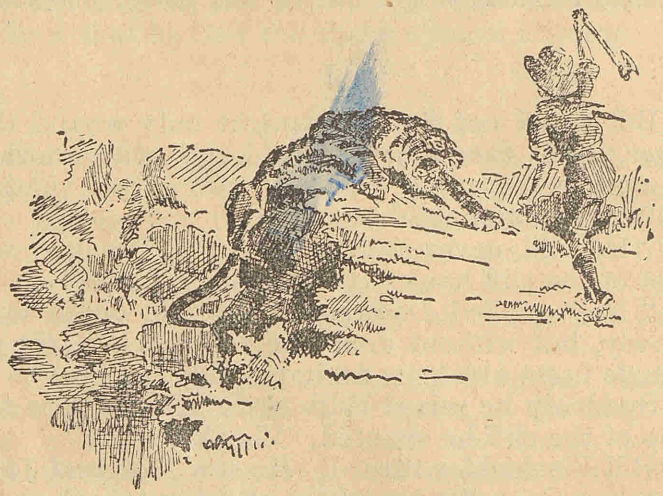
Bill Blackadder turned. He saw Moti and John running along the top of the cliff towards the spot where the tiger was climbing. He shouted as loudly as he could, but they could not hear his voice above the roar of the tiger. Moti led the way; John followed, with his new jungle axe held high in the air.

Bill and Damroo stood in terror. "Shall I shoot?" asked Bill.

"No, sahib; the beast will turn," replied Damroo. It was now too dangerous to shoot, for Moti was standing on the edge of the cliff, looking

over. Ten feet below her on the cliff the tiger slowly climbed. She made a sign to John to come quickly, and he rushed to the attack.

Then, to Bill's terror, he saw the beast give one great kick and spring, and in a moment it had reached the top of the cliff. The tiger put one paw over it, then drew itself up. It pushed its



great head over the edge. For a moment it was powerless, for its great weight hung by its front-paws, the claws of which were fixed firmly in the ground.

K

Then John showed himself to be a real hunter. He advanced towards the great tiger. Moti watched, silently. Bill saw for a moment a jungle-axe shining in the evening sun. Then with all his

strength, John struck one blow between the tiger's eyes, and with a terrible roar, the great beast fell into the valley. It took with it John's axe, fixed deeply into the bone of its forehead. With a sound of breaking bushes and falling stones, it struck the bottom of the valley.

Bill rushed quickly to the spot where the beast had fallen. He found it almost dead; its back was broken. John had killed his first tiger.

Bill then sent Damroo to stop the children from entering the valley. "You are right," said Damroo, when he had returned, and stood looking at the dead body of Bir Singh. "This is indeed no sight for children. But we have done good work to-day, for are there not three man-killers dead?"

"Indeed, it has been a great hunt. But what shall I do to the small sahib for disobeying me?" asked Bill.

"Sahib, do not be angry with him," replied Damroo, "the boy has the courage of a man. He struck hard and truly. He may go across the great seas, but he will return. He is a real hunter now."

L

Bill met the two small wrong-doers at the mouth of the valley. They looked anxious, as if afraid of his anger. But they were soon made happy, for Bill pulled their ears playfully, and led them away.

"You have killed your tiger, John," he said. "You can come quite happily to England."

John's face became brighter. "Where is my axe?" he asked suddenly.

"It is sticking firmly in that tiger's head," answered Damroo. "Truly you struck well!"

. . . . .

That evening, as John was going to bed, he heard a slight sound outside his tent. He walked out into the moonlight. There, hand in hand, stood Damroo and Moti.

"Sahib, we two are now friends," said Damroo. "We have come to say good-bye."

They stood and bowed low. "I wish that you were coming with me," said John.

"Sahib, we belong to the jungle, and the jungle calls us."

They turned and disappeared into the moonlight.

QUESTIONS

CHAPTER ONE

A. (1) Where was Bill sitting ?
(2) What was the name of Bill's dog ?
(3) Who was breathless ?
B. (1) On what was John mounted ?
(2) " They saw the —— of many ——" What did they see ?
(3) How many tents were there in the camp ?
C. (1) What was the best place for John after a tiring day ?
(2) What broke the silence ?
(3) What was John's feeling about the roar ?

CHAPTER TWO

A. (1) What did John hear when he lay awake ?
(2) What did Damroo wear ?
(3) What is a jackal ?
B. (1) When did Damroo take his axe ?
(2) Where did he think that the tiger was lying ?
(3) What helped him to trace the path of the tiger ?
C. (1) What would the tiger do when evening came ?
(2) Where did the tiger's traces lead ?

CHAPTER THREE

A. (1) What did Bill say when he woke ?
(2) Where had Ugly been tied during the night ?
(3) Who had seen John at sunrise ?
B. (1) Was John wearing his sun-hat ?
(2) " There are lots of —— and —— here." What were near the lake ?
(3) What did Damroo notice ?
C. (1) Who had gone off together ?
(2) Where did the foot-marks lead ?
D. (1) What waked John ?
(2) " When ——," said the camel-man, " then you can ride a camel."
(3) What did John think about the peacock's feathers ?
E. (1) What appeared on the path ?
(2) " His large round eyes look very ——"
(3) Over what did John and Ugly pass ?
F. (1) " They crossed ——, and climbed ——"
(2) What happened when John fell ?
G. (1) What frightens a tiger ?
(2) " John saw Ugly, with his tail ——" Where ?
(3) Where did John lie down ?
H. (1) Where did Bill follow John ?
(2) " In its shade lay John ——" What was John doing
(3) What must John learn ?

CHAPTER FOUR

A. (1) Where was Damroo's cooking-fire ?
(2) " He walked carefully through the ——." What ?

B. (1) What does a dhaman eat ?
(2) What do rats spread ?
(3) What happens if jungle-people are bitten by snakes ?
C. (1) What do we do if a snake bites us ?
(2) How thick is a " Russell's viper " ?
(3) What colour is it ?
D. (1) Where had John seen a cobra ?
(2) How do men bring cobras out of their holes ?
(3) What is the mark on a cobra's neck like ?
E. (1) Where does a python lie ?
(2) Where did Damroo and Bill see a python ?
(3) What had the python swallowed ?
F. (1) What did Damroo discover hidden in the grass ?
(2) Round what did the snake fix its tail ?
(3) What did the dragon-fly think ?
G. (1) What is the snake's enemy ?
(2) " It had a —— coat, and a tail——" What colour was its coat ? What was its tail like ?
(3) How does the mongoose come to the snake ?

CHAPTER FIVE

A. (1) What did John see through his tent-door ?
(2) " The camp and the jungle round it were like ——" What ?
(3) What had John left in the rain ?
B. (1) What kind of smell had the tiger's breath ?
(2) Why was Damroo surprised ? " The small sahib must have been ——"
(3) Would a tiger fight an elephant ?
C. (1) Where was the tigress feeding her cubs ?
(2) Why could the tigress see nothing ? " The tree was so ——"
(3) Where did the cubs run ?
D. (1) When did the tiger meet the tigress ? " Just as he was ——"
(2) " He killed her with ——" What ?
E. (1) Can tigers swim ?
(2) " We saw a small —— swimming near him." What did we see ?
(3) " A tiger may be ——" What ?
F. (1) What does a tiger hate ?
(2) Why does a tiger hate the red dog ? " Because they make it difficult ——"
G. (1) " Tigers kill —— as well as ——" What do tigers kill ?
(2) Why do not cattle-guards carry guns ?
(3) Which is fiercer, a wounded tiger or an unwounded tiger ?
H. (1) " It becomes mad with ——" What ?
(2) Who is the only creature able to deal with a man-eating tiger ?
(3) What did John think was a man's duty ?

CHAPTER SIX

A. (1) Where had the tents dried ?
(2) What kind of wheels had the carts ?
(3) What was in Damroo's hand ? And on his shoulder ?

B. (1) At what did John wonder ?
(2) What covered the wide flat spaces ?
(3) Of what was the Sambhur afraid ?
C. (1) What is the difference between an antelope and a deer ?
(2) " He lay —— looking into the clear water." How did John lie ?
(3) What could he see in the stream ?
D. (1) " A bird —— had been standing on the rock." What colour was the bird ?
(2) How many otters were there ?
(3) " He began to make a noise like ——" Like what ?
E. (1) " When an otter grows old, and his —— fall out, a —— grows out of his forehead." What fall out ? What grows ?
(2) " It closed its ——, and fell like a ——" What did it close ? What did it fall like ?
F. (1) Why was everybody rather tired ?
(2) What did Bill say that they would do to-morrow ?

CHAPTER SEVEN

A. (1) Why did the people leave the city ? " Perhaps they were frightened away by ——"
(2) What appeared in its streets ?
(3) What did the priest do ?
B. (1) How long had the priest's family lived there
(2) What did he tell John to place on the steps of the temple ?
C. (1) What did soldiers shoot through narrow holes ?
(2) Where did the old hunter search ?
(3) Where did he refuse to go with John ?
D. (1) What excited John ? " The idea of ——"
(2) What colour is the bear ? " He is as ——"
(3) What does a bear love ?
E. (1) Where does the mother bear carry her young ones ?
(2) What did the young bears do when they reached the top of the tree ?
(3) What were the bears doing in the valley ?
F. (1) Who went in front ? Who followed ? Who came last ?
(2) " Remember two things ; keep —— and do ——"
(3) What did Damroo put into his mouth ?
G. (1) How did the old hunter go through the long grass ?
(2) What did Damroo carry in his hand ?
(3) What sat at the mouth of the cave ?
H. (1) What did John notice most ?
(2) What did John's father raise to his shoulder ?
(3) How did the bear run ? " Crossing its —— at each step, and —— rather than running."
I. (1) How far away was the bear when Bill fired ?
(2) " His father caught him by ——" What ?
(3) With what did they cover the dead bears ?
J. (1) What hurts the bears' paws ? " Perhaps —— in the ground to find ——"
(2) What do bears try to steal ?
(3) What protects them from the bees' poison ?

CHAPTER EIGHT

A. (1) What did John see? "The remains of —— and the skins of ——"
(2) What appeared above the water?
(3) How long had Moti lived there?
B. (1) Why could not Moti go anywhere? "Because of ——"
(2) What is difficult to obtain in the jungle?
C. (1) Why was it still warm that evening? "The heat of the sun was ——"
(2) What did John watch?
D. (1) What did John and Moti climb?
(2) Why had John to walk carefully? "The shoes he wore ——"
E. (1) What did John very much want to see?
(2) What lay beneath them?
(3) Why must they be quiet? "These beasts ——"
F. (1) What did the hyena do as it came from the opening?
(2) What did the hyena uncover?
(3) Where did the pieces of bone disappear?
G. (1) How many more hyenas appeared?
(2) "He stood with his nose ——, and his —— raised." How did the hyena stand?
(3) Where did the hyenas disappear?
H. (1) What did John notice? Where was it?
(2) What kind of a noise did the lizard make?
(3) What is the name of the great city-fortress? Where is it?
I. (1) Why did not John touch the lizard? "He thought that lizards, like snakes, were ——"
(2) Why must Moti's aim have been good? "Because a voice ——"
J. (1) Where was Damroo when he saw John?
(2) Of what are girls frightened?
(3) Why are hyenas useful? "Because they make —— after —— have finished ——"

CHAPTER NINE

A. (1) What did John ask his father? "Whether ——"
(2) What did John bite?
B. (1) What did John remove?
(2) Why did he remove them? "He did not wish to —— and bite —— every few minutes."
(3) What had John noticed?
C. (1) Where are young ducks born?
(2) What was Moti carrying under her arm?
(3) How did Moti sit on the rock?
D. (1) Why did John make no reply? "A sudden ——"
(2) What did Moti hear?
(3) What did they bring from the jungle?
E. (1) Why did Moti laugh at John? "Because the animals were ——, not ——"
(2) What did the cat look like? "Like a picture of ——"

F. (1) Where did Moti and John put the cats ?
(2) What did Moti do as a sign that silence was necessary ? " She put —— "
(3) What were on the water ? " Several —— like the one that Moti held —— "
G. (1) What did John discover ?
(2) How far was Moti from the nearest duck ?
H. (1) What did John think when the duck disappeared under the water ?
(2) How many ducks had Moti in her hand ?
(3) What would happen if she sat too long near the water ?
I. (1) Why was it difficult to carry the duck ?
(2) Why is it forbidden to kill the elephants ? " Because the Government —— "
J. (1) Why did Moti and John hasten ? " Because John wanted —— "
(2) What was the result of John's fall ?
(3) Of what was John thinking ? " Not of ——, but of —— "

CHAPTER TEN

A. (1) What was Bill doing when John returned ?
(2) What had the elephant placed on its head ?
(3) What is a *mahout* ?
B. (1) What did the old mahout pretend ?
(2) How long was the piece of wood ? How thick ?
(3) What did they give the elephant ?
C. (1) How many ways are there of getting onto an elephant's back ? " There are —— ways ; one is ——, and the other is —— "
(2) Where did Bill stand ?
(3) What did he seize ?
D. (1) What did Bill say after a short silence ?
(2) What did he wear ?
(3) What did John remember ?
E. (1) With what does a mahout drive an elephant ?
(2) What is the most tender part of an elephant's body ?
(3) What troubled the tiger ?
F. (1) " Don't —— " What did Bill tell John not to do ?
(2) How was the elephant tied ? " By —— to —— hammered —— "
(3) " I can —— even —— " What could the mahout do ?
G. (1) What did Bill do before going to bed ? " He smoked ——, and read —— "
(2) What could John hear ?
(3) What did the elephant look like ?
H. (1) What did the elephant seize ?
(2) What did it throw through the top of John's tent ?
(3) What left Damroo's hand ?
I. (1) What was the elephant throwing into the air ?
(2) What ran past John into the jungle ?
(3) Who was the greatest hunter in these jungles ?
J. (1) What did John try to do?
(2) What do elephants hate ?
(3) " He did not like the thought of —— " What ?

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K. (1) Where did the stone strike the elephant ?
(2) " The wall stood as firm as ——" What ?
(3) Where did John dance ?
L. (1) What did Moti cry ?
(2) " John had plenty of ——" What ?
(3) What seized him in the darkness ?
M. (1) What did John know ?
(2) Why did Bill sit down ?
(3) " He was so excited that ——" What
N. (1) " He must die ; he is a ——" Why must he die ?
(2) Where did a sudden sound come from ?
(3) " Let us go back to the camp for a ——" What ?
O. (1) What was the strange sight that they saw ?
(2) Where had most of the servants spent the last hour ?
P. (1) What did John think had happened to Damroo ?
(2) What did Damroo throw at the elephant ?
(3) What gives you double strength ?

CHAPTER ELEVEN

A. (1) How did the servants support the tent ?
(2) At what time did John wake up ?
(3) What did the monkeys watch ?
B. (1) Who was in charge of the cooking-stores
(2) " Monkeys cannot ——" What can they not do ?
(3) How does a monkey express pain ?
C. (1) What had Damroo in his hand ?
(2) " The monkeys' eyes were bright with ——" What ?
(3) With what did Damroo hide the paper ?
D. (1) What did the elephant throw into the air
(2) Of whom was there no trace ?
(3) What did the pony follow ?
E. (1) What was Moti doing when John found her ?
(2) What would the pony not be able to find ?
(3) How far was the broad stream from the camp ?
F. (1) What was John anxious to do ?
(2) Where was the wind whispering ?
(3) Where was the sun ?
G. (1) " '——!' she cried in a low voice." What did she cry ?
(2) How did Moti climb the tree ? " Like a ——"
(3) What did John suddenly observe ?
H. (1) " John thought what a —— she looked." What did he think ?
(2) What did the tiger hold high in the air ?
(3) How far higher did John and Moti climb ?
I. (1) " The great bird dropped —— from the sky." How did the bird drop ?
(2) What did John's tree do ?
(3) What did the tiger kill ?

CHAPTER TWELVE

A. (1) " They could hear the sound of ——" What ?
(2) " He made up his mind that ——" What ?
(3) How did the old hunter listen ? " With ——"

B. (1) When should you never trust a tiger ?
(2) " Bill —— his forehead and looked ——" What did he do ?
(3) What does a tiger like to show a tigress ?
C. (1) How many beasts did Damroo tie up ?
(2) What seems very wrong ?
(3) What had the elephant almost completely destroyed ?
D. (1) What did John see when he sat up in bed ?
(2) Where was the sun appearing ?
(3) In what direction did Damroo go ?
E. (1) Where were the cattle tied ?
(2) What did John see ?
(3) What was the deer ready to defend ?
F. (1) What did the deer raise ?
(2) What followed the deer down the hill ?
(3) What did one of the beasts smell ?
G. (1) When did John laugh?
(2) What is the law of the jungle ? " Kill ——"
(3) What noise did Damroo produce ?
H. (1) " An old bison can be ——" What ?
(2) " A leopard seizes an animal ——, a tiger seizes ——" How ?
(3) What did Damroo make among the branches ?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

A. (1) When did Bill send John to bed ? " As soon as ——"
(2) " Certainly his ears are ——" What did Damroo say about John's ears ?
B. (1) What did they drink ?
(2) " His —— under his arm, and his —— in his hand." What did Damroo carry ?
(3) " The shake of his head told John ——" What ?
C. (1) What did John's eyes shine with ?
(2) How did Bill show John the way to sit in a machan ?
(3) John sat " ready to ——" What ?
D. (1) What did John see arriving ?
(2) What did the crocodiles smell ?
(3) Where did the crocodiles climb ?
E. (1) " There before them was ——" What ?
(2) " A wounded leopard is ——" What ?
F. (1) For how long did they sit ?
(2) What did Bill put on his shoulder ?
(3) What had John forgotten ?
G. (1) What had Moti been watching ?
(2) Where did John hit the leopard ? " Six inches ——"
(3) What did the leopard's lips show ?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

A. (1) What rose from a long chair ?
(2) Whom has Bir Singh murdered ?
(3) Where did they find Ugly ?
B. (1) Where was Jerry fishing ?
(2) " Elephants are very fine ——" What ?
(3) How did the elephant whistle ?

C. (1) "I can tell you that I was ——" What?
(2) From whom did Bir Singh steal?
(3) What had John never seen?
D. (1) What did John see?
(2) Where did the dogs run?
(3) How did they ride? "Like ——"
E. (1) What surprised John?
(2) What did John notice?
F. (1) "It was a little —— fox, with a —— tail." What colour was the fox? What kind of tail had he?
(2) Where did the fox disappear?
G. (1) Why was John pleased?
(2) Where was the sun?
(3) How many men were in pursuit of Bir Singh?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

A. (1) How did John feel?
(2) Who killed the mother-tigress?
(3) How many children had the tigers killed?
B. (1) What did the old hunter not like?
(2) Why does Moti's uncle send her into the jungle?
C. (1) What had John decided?
(2) What had Damroo picked up by chance?
D. (1) On what did John almost put his foot?
(2) On what was the man riding?
(3) What did he bring?
E. (1) What did neither Damroo nor John enjoy?
(2) "We must be careful that ——" What?
(3) What did Moti cry?
F. (1) What had Bir Singh done to Moti's uncle? "He had —— him, —— money, and —— house."
(2) Whom did Bill prepare to follow?
(3) Where did Bill send help?
G. (1) How wide was the valley?
(2) Where was the monkey sitting?
(3) By what was the silence broken?
H. (1) What could they hear?
(2) At what did Damroo point?
(3) What did Bill wish?
I. (1) What did the tigress feel?
(2) Where did the tiger remain?
(3) What did the tiger seem anxious to do?
J. (1) What did Damroo seize?
(2) Who led the way? Who followed?
(3) What did the tiger put over the top of the cliff?
K. (1) What did John show himself to be?
(2) Where did John strike one blow?
(3) "He may go across the seas, but ——" What will John do?
L. (1) Whom did Bill meet?
(2) Where did he meet them?
(3) What did John hear outside his tent?

NOTE.—The story in this Supplementary Reader has been simplified and brought within the vocabulary of New Method Reader 4.

You know ALL *the words in the book except:*

BANG	BARK	GROWL
HISS	ROAR	WHISTLE
CLAW	COIL	CUB
HONEY	HORN	RUPEE
SUCK	TEMPLE	TRUNK