

A TALE OF A TIGER.

BY BARON MUNCHAUSEN THE YOUNGER.

ALTHOUGH I have the honour of bearing Her Majesty's commission afloat, still I inherit, very naturally, some of the proclivities of the illustrious ancestor whose name I bear: so I think I may as well relate an adventure with a tiger which happened to me the last time I was at Singapore.

That place, as you know, swarms with tigers, and the statistics show that the said tigers are in the habit of devouring about one man and a half a day, which fact offers a nice little sum for our youthful readers to work out, in order to find out how many men they eat in a year. The tigers are very fine and very large, quite as big as the Royal Bengal tiger, and as a great part of the island is covered with jungle, they have plenty of space to hide in. Well, I and one of my shipmates were quietly riding from the town down to the place where the steamer is anchored, in a thing called a shigram (very much like some of our worst cabs at home), when, as we were just passing by a bit of jungle, there was a sudden spring, and we heard a heavy weight descend on the top of our cab, which, I almost thought, was coming in. The man who was driving us gave a shriek, and jumping down from his seat ran off as fast as his legs could carry him; and the horse, left without a driver, set off at a hard gallop. I had some notion of what had occurred, but was surprised to hear no roar or any other disturbance. The horse, too, when he came to consider, did not seem to see much cause for alarm, and dropped at length into a quiet walk. I then jumped out, brought him to a stand still, and went to see what was the matter. It was a very dark night, and though I could make out there was something on the top of the cab, I could not tell what it was, till I got so close to it that I knocked my nose against the paws of an immense tiger.

Luckily the brute was fast asleep, so I had time to consider how I should part company with him. It would have been easy enough to have left him there asleep and walked on, but I was tired; and besides, I did not like to leave the horse for him to make a breakfast off in the morning. So, remembering what a dread these animals are said to have of fire, I tied my handkerchief to the end of my stick, and borrowing my companion's cigar, managed to set fire to the corner of it; and then, moving round cautiously so as to face the beast, as soon as the handkerchief was in a pretty fair blaze, I made a noise in order to wake him, at the same time waving the handkerchief round quickly in a circle close to his nose. He gave one tremendous roar, and sprang with a wonderful leap back into the jungle. I immediately mounted the box, and laying my stick over the horse's back, set him off as fast as ever he could go, and fortunately reached my ship safely. The driver had arrived before us, and told them on board that the tiger had carried us both off into the jungle, so that when we arrived they were just about starting in force to make a search for us, or rather for our mangled remains.

I determined to serve the old gentleman out for frightening us, and therefore, next morning before breakfast, I started off alone, to see if I could find any traces of him. I had not gone far before I found one of his footmarks. Following it up and peering through the thick jungle, I saw my friend of the previous night sleeping as comfortably as possible with one of his fore-paws stretched out, and his head resting on it. I drew back quickly, intending to get some reinforcement and attack him: but the thought struck me that if I could possibly manage him by myself and take him home for breakfast, I should win no end of glory on board H.M.S.—

However, how to kill the beast was the question. I had no arms but an unloaded blunderbuss and a small clasp knife, and I was about to give up the idea, when I remembered that I had with me a packet of strychnine, and my plan was instantly laid. I crept along quietly through the jungle till I got within reach of his

(tail; opening my claspknife, I laid hold of it gently and severed about four inches of it. The brute gave a growl and rose up in a fury; but, after looking all round and seeing nothing, he licked the stump leisurely and contentedly, and again laid him elf down to rest. I skinned the piece of tail I had obtained, and then, loading the meaty part of it with sufficient poison to kill half-a-dozen tigers, I took aim with it at his nose, and hit him just on the muzzle. This roused him up again; and, as I had anticipated, not being able to see any one, he turned his rage on the missile which had hit him, and opening his huge jaws he swallowed it at once. I was so anxious to witness the effect that, in getting a little closer to him, he discovered me. He rose up, fixed his eyes upon me, and was just about to make the fatal spring, when the poison began to act upon him, and, uttering a roar of pain, he fell back in strong convulsions. In another minute all was over.

As I was making my way out of the jungle in order to procure help to carry away the body of the animal, I stepped on what seemed to me to be a long, narrow piece of rock appearing through the mud. The end of this piece of rock flew up with a jerk and upset me backwards into the dirt; when I got up I found the rock was really an enormous crocodile. As I gazed at his massive proportions, the thought struck me that I might save myself a heavy load and make him carry my dead tiger for me, and I went to work as follows:—

I took off my jacket, and stuffing a quantity of leaves into it, and tying it up into a bundle, I soaked it well in the blood of the tiger. I then cut a long and stout pole from one of the trees, and, using it as a lever, managed to roll the body of the tiger on to the back of the crocodile. Next, I tied the ensanguined bundle to the end of the long pole, took my seat on the creature's back, and holding the pole firmly, let the bundle hang about two feet in advance of his nose.

He soon smelt the blood, and began to move forward to seize the morsel; but, of course, as he moved on, so the bait moved on also, and thus I got him into a good trot, for the weight of the tiger and myself were as nothing to him. I cut a rather curious figure journeying thus on the public road, and everybody that I met stared at me with astonishment. However, after a short swim down the river I arrived in triumph alongside of my ship (for the crocodile being amphibious I did not think it worth while to take a boat), and then, willing to keep him quiet, let him get hold of the bundle to munch. The men on deck quickly hoisted up the body of the tiger, and I, jumping on deck, allowed the crocodile to go his way. Then—like the great Tom Thumb after he had killed Rebellion—I went to breakfast. We had the paws carried for dinner, and gave rest of the flesh to the natives, who are very fond of it, believing that it will make them courageous and strong, on the same principle, I suppose, on which the Professor of Laputa used to make his scholars swallow paper pills with learned words written thereon.

I made a present of the skin to the lovely and fascinating daughter of a powerful Malay prince, and I can assure you that Miss Zoona Kuckarwhurrie Dhee has since looked upon me with very favourable eyes; so perhaps, if the course of true love goes smoothly, my parents may one day have the honour of calling her a daughter.

MUNCHAUSEN, JR.

Sudden resolutions, like the sudden rise of the mercury in the barometer, indicate nothing but the changeableness of the weather.

In the historical collection at the palace of Berlin there are two cannon-balls, each with one side flattened, said to have been fired by opposite parties at the siege of Magdeburg, and to have met together in the air.

A POWERFUL human voice, in still air, with no objects near to reflect the sound, can be heard at a distance of only 460 feet. Heavy cannon-ading has been heard at a distance of 99 miles.

PASTIMES.

We shall be glad to receive from any of our friends who take an interest in the column original contributions of Puzzles, Charades, Problems, &c. Solutions should in each case accompany questions forwarded.

FLORAL ANAGRAMS.

- 1. Ache in Rats.
2. Cago Morkon.
3. Get men on it.
4. Cass is run.
5. In sea for plows.
6. Vale of Tellyhiyl.

CIVIS.

ENIGMA.

Worn out with hunger I espied
A tree well hung with fruit:
Perhaps 'tis poisonous said I—
I'll try if it be mute.
Reveal to me thy name, fair tree,
That I to eat may dare,
And if thy fruit I boldly grasp,
My life, say, wilt thou spare?
The generous tree I plainly heard
Its name salubrious give,
And, uttering no other word,
Enjoined me to survive.

KATE,

CHARADES.

- 1. I am composed of 22 letters.
My 15, 9, 12, 17, 6 is what all should cultivate.
My 4, 20, 21, 19, 18, 6 is a great division of the earth.
My 22, 9, 10, 11, 15, 18, 4, 15, 6, 7 was a keeper of keys.
My 5, 1, 3, 6 is a clinging plant.
My 8, 14, 12, 22, 16, is a country in Europe.
My 8, 9, 13, 13, 10, 2 is an animal.
My 8, 19, 13, 10, 3 is a welcome friend.
My whole is a proverb.
G. T.
2. I am composed of 17 letters.
My 17, 4, 11, 3 is a part of a house.
My 13, 10, 14 rigging of ships.
My 9, 12, 15 is a plant.
My 16, 7, 2, 6, 15, 5, 8, 10 is a small supply.
Dot.

- 3. When you've got my first in order,
Then, young men, you'll have to find
A nice second, else disorder
In your first will plague your mind.
To my second once united,
Should she prove a first-rate whole,
You ought then to be delighted
That you've reached so fine a goal.

PUZZLE.

I am prostrate at the soles of your feet. I have been part of a tree. I can swim like a duck, and have saved many a life. Though my element is the water, yet without me you could drink no wine. Though I have no money whatever, yet folks often say I am near to a screw. I am a splendid ornament to Ireland.

A. H. B.

DOUBLE ACROSTIC.

- 1. A disease of the throat.
2. An interjection.
3. A viper.
4. A country of Europe.
5. An animal.
6. A Jewish name.
7. A salute of guns.
8. A town in China.
9. A female's name.
10. A man's name.
11. A glutinous substance.
12. An adverb.
13. A returning motion.

The initials and finals will name two British admirals.

ANSWERS TO DECAPITATION, &c.

No. 72.

- Decapitation.—Mouse. Ouse. Sou.
Charades.—1. A stitch in time saves nine. 2. At-ten-dance. 3. Caper.
Double Acrostic.—Sir Walter Scott, Alfred Tennyson. 1. Siberia. 2. Idyl. 3. Ruff. 4. Woodpecker. 5. Ape. 6. Lead. 7. Trent. 8. Eagle. 9. Reason. 10. Sweden. 11. Cryptography. 12. Olympus. 13. Toronto. 14. Toulon.

Problem.—200, the number wounded.
175 " " killed.
35000 " " at first.

ANSWERS RECEIVED.

- Decapitations.—Poppie, Bericus, Alto, Camp, Snowflake, Argus.
Charades.—Bericus, G. T., Alto, Argus, Query, A. R. T., Camp.
Double Acrostic.—Bericus, Alto, A. R. T., Argus.
Problem.—Query, Camp, H. H. V.