

GORILLA HUNTING IN THE FORESTS OF GUINEA.

FROM THE FRENCH OF HENRI REVOIL.

M. DU CHAILLU, a name illustrious among sportsmen, claims to be the discoverer of the Gorilla, or as the natives call it the Nshiego-onbourés, though in the opinion of Du Chaillu, there is a difference in the two animals.

The gorilla is a ferocious beast, unconquerable, of herculean strength, whom no being can resist, let his vigour and strength of nerve be what it will; but the Nshiego-onbourés are susceptible of education of civilization even; for they construct cabins from fifteen to twenty feet in height, and lean them invariably against a tree, separated from others and surrounded by a clear space.

The gorilla, on the contrary, lives in the most impenetrable thicket, which makes the chase of them extremely difficult. In killing one of these animals, one requires to be within eight or ten feet, and if he misses his aim, he is a dead man.

Before M. Du Chaillu, in 1847, missionaries had brought from Gabon the skulls of gorillas that the inhabitants declared to them were the heads of certain hairy and ferocious men living in the impenetrable forests of Guinea; but they had never been in the presence of these legendary beings.

M. Du Chaillu was the first to meet one day, to his great astonishment, the "king of the forest," as he was pleased to call the gorilla. This bold explorer had entered Guinea amongst a tribe of Fans, bound to seek out this animal, of whom the inhabitants had given such a fantastic description. Although these Africans were reputed the bravest in the country, their warriors were by no means willing to meet the gorilla, and hunted him only when they were in great number.

The chief of the Fans, called Ndiagi, greeted with a certain cordiality the white man, who so bravely risked himself amongst his cannibal tribe.

According to Du Chaillu, his host did not offer precisely one of these countenances which reassure and give heart to the visitor.

I have said that the subjects of Ndiagi were cannibals; it is, perhaps, because of this taste for the flesh of their equals, that they give themselves to the chase of the gorilla. The brain of this animal passes in Guinea for a true talisman, to give courage to those who have none, and success to those who want it.

The negroes of Guinea relate that the gorillas place themselves in