

Some Wild Animals I Have Met.

(W. C. Griggs, M.D., Bhamo, Burma, in 'Baptist Missionary Magazine'.)

THE FIRST ONE.

The first meeting might, I think, with propriety be called a surprise party to both of us. I had been travelling in the jungle for some weeks. The natives are such strict Buddhists that in many places they would not even sell us a chicken, as they feared that part of the sin of killing it might in that case attach to them, so that we often found it very difficult to get any fresh meat of any kind. Sometimes for days together the Commissariat Department was in a very bad way and the ration of plain boiled rice and Chicago canned beef became monotonous in the extreme. The country was almost entirely bare of game, and even if it had been the best game preserve in the world I am such a poor shot that I am afraid it would not have made much difference to the larder.

At last, one afternoon I saw some fine green pigeons in the distance which gave promise of a savory addition to our meal—if I could get them. Strange to say, I brought one down, however. It fell behind some trees and towards them I made my way, already smelling savory stew or a good curry. Alas, there's many a slip not only between the cup and the lip, but between the shot and the stew, for I was fated never to get that pigeon.

Directly across my path, though I was not aware of the fact, was a nullah or dry bed of a stream. These nullahs often have overhanging banks and are so covered up with trees growing right along their edges that it is impossible to see them till one is right on top, sometimes right in them, and is performing an involuntary toboggan slide down precipitous banks with the accompaniment of clouds of dust, clods of earth, small stones and a few shrubs which the traveller has brought along with him in his descent.

This nullah proved no different from others of its kind, and as I was pressing forward with my eyes fixed upon the tree, behind which I hoped to find a plump bird or two, my feet suddenly gave way beneath me and I found myself sliding down a nullah in a cloud of dust, while a small tree, roots and all, was assisting in the procession by gracefully bringing up the rear.

It does not take long to reach the bottom of a fifteen foot nullah, and before I had time to say the proverbial 'Jack Robinson,' I found that I had alighted within six feet of a big tiger who, with his chin between his paws, was enjoying forty winks at the bottom of the nullah into which I had intruded without so much as asking permission or saying, 'By your leave.' That is, he was, when I started towards him from the top of the bank.

A novelist of the realistic school perhaps might attempt to analyze the thoughts which 'chased each other through his mind,' as he opened his eyes and saw the miniature avalanche which was bearing straight upon him, and changed the expression of his face from happy unconsciousness to fright. For that tiger was scared and scared badly. Whether it was the dust, or the small tree that was following hard behind me I cannot say, but if ever a tiger was frightened half out of his wits that tiger was the animal, and if truth must be told, if ever a man was in a similar condition, I was that man.

We did not stop to exchange views on the

subject, however, for the next instant there was another, but smaller cloud of dust and dead leaves, which I take it for granted was raised by the tiger as he bolted straight along the bottom of the nullah. As for myself I do not believe the champion in a crack detachment of soldiers at a wall scaling exhibit, ever went up the side of an imitation fort any quicker than I climbed up the side of the bank I had come down but a moment before.

A MIDNIGHT INTRUDER.

Before we started for Burma Dr. Luther said to us, 'Now be sure you get a bedstead with high posts and frames so that you can fasten curtains to it and keep the mosquitoes out.' Good advice as we afterwards found, but the doctor advised better than he knew, for those frames kept out something larger than mosquitoes.

We had been at Mongnai on the Shan Hills but a short time; so short indeed that we had not yet been able to build a house, and were living in a native building near a monastery. It was made almost entirely of bamboo. Bamboo posts supported bamboo joists, upon which were laid split bamboo floors; bamboo mats composed the walls and bamboo rafters kept up a grass roof. Between the top of the walls and the ridge-pole of the roof, at either end of the building, was an opening to let in good, fresh air—something besides air, too.

Our bed with the tall posts and the mosquito net was directly beneath one of these holes, and one night I dreamed that we were in a boat and had shipped a sea which had thrown us on our beam ends and threatened to send us to the bottom. I awoke to find the bed had given a great heave, the two feet upon one side had gone clear through the bamboo floor, and Mrs. Griggs and myself were all mixed up beside it, and as I became more thoroughly awake I realized that something was tearing around the room and smashing things generally.

I seized a gun and jumped to my feet in time to see a fine large leopard spring through the open window at the other end of the room. He had entered above our bed at the opening under the roof and as it was a nice, bright moonlight night outside and the mat walls very thin, he could see the broad white muslin top of the mosquito netting beneath. I suppose it looked inviting, for he jumped at it. Luckily for us, he miscalculated the distance and instead of landing square upon us and spoiling our curtain at the same time, he struck the top bar of the frame and did no more damage than get a spill and a fright and give us both, too.

SMALL, BUT DANGEROUS.

At least one part of the book of Genesis is capable of being taken literally, for there is no doubt but what there is 'enmity' between man and snakes.

I had seen cobras in Lower Burma and killed them, too, but it was not till we went to Upper Burma that I met a snake which seems to embody all the bad traits of the species rolled into a very small compass. This snake is small, often not more than a span in length and has the stumpy tail and flat head that stamps it as venomous. Literally it is a 'snake in the grass,' for it loves to take up its position in short grass, oftentimes by the side of the jungle roads, and as it is bright green in color, it is sometimes almost impossible to distinguish it. The coolie, barefooted and bare legged,

plants his foot upon a tuft of grass; there is a cry, and unless assistance be rendered and that promptly, there is a funeral the next day.

I remember grabbing one of our school-boys by the shoulder and twisting him aside, just as he was about to put his bare foot upon one, and when he saw what was wriggling its way across the road he was so frightened he almost turned the same color as the snake.

The coolies once placed my bed upon the floor of a resting place, and tired out with the journey, I threw myself upon it. One of the men cried out, and as I rolled over on my side to see what the matter was I found that my bed had been placed right upon one of these little snakes and that he had wriggled himself free and was just raising his head to strike. Do you remember as a child touching the pin of a jack-in-the-box? Well, I felt, and I believe acted just like that jack, one with a good strong spring too.

ANOTHER SNAKE STORY.

I must finish, however, with the account of a wild animal I did not meet. I had been home but a short time and with my little girl, Edith, was walking across the open lots. I was pondering deeply upon something when instinctively I grabbed my little one up in my arms and looked around for a stick.

My little girl looked too, then grabbed me tight around the neck and cried, 'Snake, papa, snake!'

For that one moment I was back in Burma; the next I was in America again, and let Edith slip to the ground while I looked around this time to see whether any one else was near. At the same time I kicked a big piece of twisted electric light wire out of my path and explained to my little girl that there were no snakes in America, at least, not in West Philadelphia.

Mr. Clark's Experiment.

('Morning Star.')

The Rev. Abel Clark was in his study. It was ten o'clock on Sunday evening. A look of care and anxiety overshadowed his countenance.

'Yes,' he was saying to his wife, who had been detained from church this evening; 'yes, the meeting was a failure. In the first place I talked for twenty minutes on the subject of consecration. After I got through, Deacon Jones got up and talked about the sins of David. Then Sister Smith arose and talked of Paul's conversion. Then Bro. Johnson said a few things about the decline of religious ideas. Dr. Hall got on his hobby of evolution. While there were at least twenty took part, not one spoke of consecration. The meeting was a failure and I do not know the remedy.'

'How would it do to announce the subject beforehand?' asked Mrs. Clark.

'Oh, I believe in being led by the Spirit,' and so if I should announce the subject beforehand it might not be as suitable for the meeting.'

'Do you believe that God has the power of foreknowledge?'

'Of course I do.'

'Do you believe there is any limit to God's power of leading any one to select a subject?'

'Why, certainly not,' was the surprised answer of the minister.

'Well, then, if God has foreknowledge,

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