

Before starting, Clement had proposed that we should take our swords with us, so that at the conclusion of our sport we might indulge in a little sword-practice, of which he was passionately fond, and at which he was a great adept. To this I agreed, and accordingly we gave our swords to the care of two Indians that were to accompany us to beat the bush.

Arrived at the jungle, we lost no time in entering a small beaten path, our two Indians taking the lead. Wending our way through this for nearly an hour, we emerged on an open glade, in the centre of which stood two palm-trees. Towards these we tacitly directed our steps, and having sent our Indians to beat the surrounding jungle, we kept close under the shade of the trees, anxiously awaiting the result.

We could scarcely have been waiting more than ten minutes when a fierce growl suddenly startled us both, and almost at the same moment a full-grown leopard sprang from the jungle.

Clement and I fired almost simultaneously, and the large brute fell dead almost at our feet. Before firing I had taken care to aim for the shoulder, where I knew a wound would prove fatal, and as I had fired steady, I was pretty sure my bullet had told. It had struck me, however, that Clement, who was usually such a skilful marksman, had this time entirely failed, or that he had wounded where he had intended to kill. After the smoke of our rifles had cleared away I was the first to speak.

"You have not sustained your old *prestige* as a shot, Clement," I said, addressing my friend; "for you see you have only wounded where mine has killed."

"What do you mean?" he said.

"I mean that for the first time in your life you have not succeeded in your aim," I replied, pointing to the dead body of our late antagonist, "and the death of that leopard is due to me alone."