

JUNGLE TALES OF A GRANDFATHER

By P. M. LUSHINGTON

No. 1. THE TIGER—KING OF THE FOREST

I have not been without experience of this beautiful beast for, when living at Coimbatore, I had a youngster living in my back verandah in amity with my cats and dogs for a short period but the time came when I had to go to camp and I felt that I must part with him. So off he went to the zoo and I heard no more of him.

In the year 1898 I had the good fortune to marry Lily Minchin and, after a short honeymoon, we went to camp at Chellampatte, at the foot of the Burghur Ghat. The day we left that camp was an eventful one, for after an early tea we set out on foot, having sent on our horses about a mile, so as to have them ready for the ascent of the hills. We were having a quiet talk when suddenly there was a stir behind us and the Ranger came up and told us that if we went back a few yards we would see a tiger. Sure enough, there was His Royal Highness, perched in the open, on a pinnacle of rock not 300 yards away. Through our glasses we saw him have one good look at us and then he went on with his own business. Licking his paws like any old cat he was performing his ablutions in just the same manner, clearly telling us that rain was not far off, though we did not believe him. By this time I had experience of tiger-jungle for over 10 years and had never seen a sight like this. I had seen a tiger more than once but usually it was a flash of yellow and on this occasion we watched the washing performance for at least 10 minutes and I had to issue strict orders that it was not to be disturbed. Little did I know that only 2 years later, in the Tinnevely District I was to get a much closer view of Her Royal Highness having her morning wash. This was quite a different story. Whilst camping at Kannakatte Rest House I went out early one morning, clad in pyjamas and a dressing gown, and after examining a mulberry tree to see if the fruit was ripe, I looked towards a running stream from which I often took a drink of water. There, less than 30 yards away sat a full grown tigress with her paws in the water. I was startled and commenced to retreat but turned and saw that she was still engaged in washing, so I walked slowly backwards. She looked at me but showed no signs of ferocity. I saw her do a most uncatlike action in throwing the water on to her chest and licking it off. Then I went safely back to the bungalow. I warned the servants to close all doors

and windows and not to go out for at least an hour, but they evidently had a good look out for in less than half that time they came to tell me the tigress had gone off.

Now I am going to tell a much better story of a tiger. Randolph Morris, owner of the Attekhan tea estate in Coimbatore District had the misfortune to get badly gored by a bison.¹ For a long time he was at death's door, but eventually got better and went home leaving his brother Charlie in charge of the estate. The latter somehow got hold of a tiger cub of about three months old. He got a Sholiga (a hill tribe) boy of about ten to look after it, but not to hit or punish it in any way. He gave him the key of a horse stable, a monthly allowance, and instructions to feed the cub. To that youth the stable was a palace, the tiger a royal gift, and the allowance a fortune. The boy and the tiger lived together, ate together, and slept together. In quite a short time the young tiger became quite tame and the Sholiga not only took him for walks all over the estate, but also used the tiger's soft tummy as a pillow during the night. Alas it so happened that the boy got malarial fever and left his companion to sleep by himself that night with the result that the tiger rendered the night hideous with his howls. Ill as he was the boy slept the next night with his friend and, strange to relate, soon recovered. All went well again until one afternoon Charlie had a garden party at Attekhan and the guests were assembled to be photographed just before tea and one of the ladies had brought with her a pet goat. To complete the picture the Sholiga and his pet were sent for. The tiger was now nearly full grown and, when he saw or smelt that goat, gave signs that all was not well. Quickly the men formed up to shut out the view of the goat, and the Sholiga and tiger were got back to the stable. Charlie told me that afternoon that he thought that it was time the animal was sent to the zoo and I agreed.

Soon after I left the District and did not see the tiger again for at least eight years. Just before my retirement, whilst waiting for a steamer, we were stopping with Toby Martin and his wife at Bangalore. Toby, about whom you will hear a good deal later, was himself a great tamer of wild animals and he suggested a visit to the Lal Bagh (Red Tiger), the Bangalore Zoo. When we got there it was evident that he was well known for the door-keeper and all the other keepers greeted him as a friend, and it was soon evident that he had other friends there

¹ *Note*.—The Gaur. Commonly called "Bison" in India but not to be confused with the American or the European Bison.

for when we got to the Monkey House, a young chimpanzee jumped into his arms and giggled with delight on seeing him. Chairs were brought and Toby continued to nurse and tickle that youngster who showed clearly how devoted he was to Toby.

When we got to the Tiger House I got a surprise for there I was admiring a grand specimen of a full grown tiger, when the keeper told me he was quite tame and went by the name of "Charlie". After a few questions I asked to see the Head Keeper and found that the tiger had been sent by a planter in Coimbatore called Charlie Morris without a word as to how he had been tamed by the wonderful loving kindness of that young Sholiga.

I.U.P.N. SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY

From Notes given by Dr. G. F. HERBERT SMITH

The second session of the General Assembly of the International Union for the Protection of Nature was held in the Institut de Sociologie, Leopold Park, Brussels, from 18th to 23rd October, 1950, the first having been held two years previously at Fontainebleau, immediately after the establishment of I.U.P.N. The United Kingdom was represented by Dr. G. F. Herbert Smith (Leader), Miss P. Barclay-Smith, Dr. John Berry, Captain Keith Caldwell, Mr. A. B. Duncan, Dr. F. C. Fraser, and Dr. J. Ramsbottom. Thirty-four countries and twelve international organizations were represented. The President and Secretary-General were Dr. Ch. J. Bernard and Mr. J. P. Harroy who hold corresponding offices in the Union.

The opening day saw the appointment of Nominations and Finance Committees and the transaction of routine business. The Secretary-General reported on the first two years' activities. Miss E. Sam representing UNESCO described the work done since the Technical Conference at Lake Success in 1949, dealing particularly with the educational side and the fostering of youth movements for nature conservation. Thirty-six bodies were admitted to membership of the Union.

On the second day various countries reported on nature conservation and it was decided to allow institutions and societies in Germany and Japan to become members. Technical discussions took place on the third day. An Education Section is to be opened at Washington. A questionnaire is to be issued to clarify the meaning of such terms as "national park" and "nature reserve" and their use in various countries. On the Saturday morning the accounts and the budget for 1951 were