

CHAPTER VI

SIR FREDERICK (AFTERWARDS LORD) ROBERTS

SOON after our return to Ambala I got orders' to join the 33rd Bengal Infantry at Agra. It was an awful wrench leaving the dear old Cheshires where I had been so happy, and I liked to feel that the regret appeared to be mutual.

Before I had been at Agra very long the desire for Indian Cavalry became so strong that I wrote to Colonel Revel Eardley-Wilmot, D.Q.M.G., Simla, and begged him to help me, with the result that within ten days I was appointed squadron officer in the 11th Bengal Lancers at Sangor. At the same time I had applied for, and obtained, six months' leave to study the languages and, taking the usual ten days' joining leave always allowed on a transfer, off I went to Simla. There I came in for my third birthday ball in two-and-a-half years, and also made the personal acquaintance of Sir Frederick Roberts.

The Chief, having apparently noted my appointment to the 11th Bengal Lancers, and being a friend of the girl I was to marry, told her to send me to see him the next time I came up. Interviewing Colonel Pole-Carew, his military secretary, on the matter, he said I was to go to Snowdon at 11 a.m. the following Tuesday in uniform.

Sir Frederick was very kind, saying I mustn't mind his pointing out that few men who went to the Indian Army were men of means; that he understood I intended to get married; that I was in a very expensive regiment, with my chargers and polo ponies to keep up, etc., etc., and did I think I could manage it all? Explaining that I hoped to get along with help, he asked why I didn't try for Gurkhas, which would give me a permanent hill station. Telling him I had no chance whatever, never having had a relation out in India, he astounded me by saying that

he intended raising some new battalions, and would try and fit me in if I liked.

Of course I jumped at it, but on asking if I could get Gurkhas from cavalry, he said: "Dear me, no! That would be looked upon as an awful job; you must go back to infantry for a time." Then seeing my face fall, he added, "But I'll see you get a good Punjab regiment."

Walking back to Ranken & Co.'s shop, the great military tailors of India, where I had changed, I was horribly concerned about payment for the undress uniform I was wearing and all the rest that was on order, but only "basted" and once tried on, up to date. It was a most expensive kit, the eleventh, with a very elaborate mess waistcoat embroidered with gold lace, which alone cost over £20. Imagine my relief then when the head partner told me that, being stock size, they would say nothing about it if I gave them the order for my Gurkha outfit. Very handsome indeed of Ranken & Co., I thought it was.

I think it was at this year's State ball at the new Viceregal Lodge that a rather awkward incident occurred. The Lieutenant-Governor of the Punjab was to have taken Lady Roberts in to supper, but got ill, or pretended he was ill, and went home before it came off. By some mistake the Viceregal Staff omitted to allow for this, and when the exalted guests trooped off to supper, Lady Roberts was left stranded. This I happened to notice myself as, passing the dais just afterwards, I saw her standing there alone, fanning herself furiously and looking very cross. I missed, of course, the opportunity of a lifetime, for had I only rushed up, offered my arm and taken her in, I should have got a lucrative appointment on the staff within a fortnight.

However I didn't, and although Lord Dufferin himself came back from the supper-room and escorted her in, when the dreadful mistake was discovered, a considerable time elapsed before she was rescued. Next day the Viceroy went over to Snowdon personally, to make his apologies, but the lady was very sore and not to be comforted. He is supposed, when expressing his deep regret, to have said she could imagine what his feelings were like by thinking of her own, had such an unfortunate incident occurred at Snowdon. Lady Roberts replied tartly that it *couldn't possibly* have happened at Snowdon!

On the occasion of their silver wedding the Chief and Lady Roberts gave a fancy dress ball in the Snowdon ballroom. Two men from every regiment that had taken part in his famous march from Kabul to Kandahar were present, in pairs, round the ballroom and approaches. The decorations were very fine and what people thought so nice on the part of the Robertses, was the fact that on many of the banners were the words, "Kandahar to Kabul," as a compliment to the late Chief, Sir Donald Stewart. There were plenty of people there who knew the significance of this, for Sir Donald had carried out his march under great difficulties with a very scratch lot of transport. On the other hand, for Sir Frederick Roberts, all Divisions had been denuded of their best mules, carts, camels, etc., so that he should start as well equipped as possible for his marvellously successful leap in the dark from "Kabul to Kandahar."

• This ballroom was still further enlarged later on. For the benefit of those who do not know, it may be added that Snowdon is situated at the opposite end of Simla from Viceregal Lodge. Built on a narrow spur, it has very small grounds and not a great deal of accommodation. It was Lord Roberts' own property, but sold by him to Government for the official residence at Simla of the Commanders-in-Chief in India.

At this particular fancy ball, not seeing why ladies should have the monopoly of the simple disguise called *pouf*, I adopted that dress myself. As it only entailed powdering one's hair, putting on a little rouge and adding a few patches, it was both inexpensive and easy to don. While waiting in the hall for a partner, I was astonished to see the Indian policeman on duty inside the door wearing his native shoes. Such a breach of the ordinary customs of the country and such want of respect so roused my ire that in my best, and recently acquired, Hindustani, I told him what I thought of him and requested him to remove them.

Although the Hindustani was crude, I knew it was perfectly intelligible to any ordinary native, yet he didn't seem to understand a word. I noted he was of slight build with a good-looking, well-bred face, and appeared honestly distressed that he could not make out what I wanted. Wondering what I should do next, as he was

not in the least obstructive or objectionable, up came Charlie Hume, one of the A.D.C.s. Explaining the reason for my indignation he burst out laughing and told me the quasi policeman was Ava (Lord Dufferin's heir who was afterwards killed in South Africa). He certainly scored one here, and was prouder than ever of his disguise.

My language leave being in order, off I went to Poona and, working hard, managed to pass the Higher Standard in the autumn. Meanwhile my transfer to the 30th Punjabis at Peshawar had been gazetted, so I soon found myself in that frontier station for the second time and attached to a Punjab battalion of the highest distinction. The second-in-command being at home on leave, I was offered his charger to keep, which I found to be a nice-looking, cobby waler up to great weight. But the horse, having been much neglected, had a long scrubby tail, heavy coat, bad corns and a mangy-looking mane. Having doctored him, cut his tail, and hogged his mane, he looked quite smart, but I heard afterwards that his very unwieldy and untidy owner, on his return, refused at first to take him over or believe it was really the confidential charger he had left behind! There is no accounting for tastes!

Amongst the troops, and in addition to the gunners, I found the 1st Bengal Lancers with Gartside-Tipping commanding; a battalion of the 60th Rifles with Kinloch, the big game hunter, as C.O.; a battalion of the Wiltshires and my own unit, the 30th Punjabis, with Colonel Campbell at its head and C.R.A. Bond acting as Adjutant. Gartside-Tipping was the M.F.H., but was shortly leaving the station. Kinloch, who never wore a sun-hat between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m., was getting peculiar. In the evening he used to come to the club dressed entirely in khaki mufti, with a sola topee, in a khaki cover and khaki-coloured canvas shoes.

To advertise the new fast-dyed drill, Kinloch got one penny in the pound from Lieman and Gatty, the producers, which he said brought him in about £600 a year. He also said that without it he could never have afforded to take command of a battalion of the 60th. The Government had just negotiated a contract with Lieman and Gatty for the supply of the new drill to the whole Army, but, before this, units had made their own arrangements to dye, locally, a suit or two per man of the Government issue of white.

The Cheshires were very particular about the *shade*, and at an inspection at Delhi, on one occasion, General Dillour, commanding the improvised Division for manœuvres, called out to our colonel: "How well your men are turned out, colonel; what is the dye used?" "Cow-dung, sir," replied Colonel Patton in a loud voice—which was quite true!

The 1st Bengal Lancers had a wonderful yellow cloth tunic for full dress, a very effective, but at the same time, most expensive garment. In the early nineties, one of their subalterns went to a levee at St. James's in his new coat. While waiting at one of the barricades an old gentleman, covered with orders, and evidently one of the Court officials, touching his tunic, said: "I suppose this is what you call khaki in India!"

Major-General Sir Hugh Gough, V.C., was commanding the Peshawar District and had as his senior staff officer, termed D.A.A.G., Major Brunker of the Cameronians. Sir Hugh had known me before and, meeting him at the club, told me I was to come and see him next day. At this interview he informed me that quite recently there had been a meeting at the club regarding the Peshawar Vale Hunt, when a monstrous proposition had been put up by "Jackal" McCall, of the 60th, with a considerable following, that the Hunt should be abolished. The reason given was that now polo was being so much played, officers could not afford to keep animals for both.

"Now," said Sir Hugh, "you have had hunting experience with the Cheshire regimental pack, Gartside-Tipping is shortly leaving us, and I want you to do all you can to help this Hunt to flourish. I should die of shame if, after all these years, the P.V.H. ceased to exist during my tenure here."

* I told him I would do all I could and would be very glad to act as whip, but that neither my years, experience, nor pocket justified me in aspiring to M.F.H. The result was that I whipped for a short time to Gartside-Tipping, and later carried on with Oliver Nugent of the 60th, who succeeded him. My fellow whips were Markham of the 60th (a Brigadier in France during the War) and J. E. Capper, a Sapper (now the Governor of Guernsey).

Gartside-Tipping was about the best M.F.H. we ever had in India; for, coupled to a wonderful eye for country, a firm seat, sound judgment and perfect hands, he was a

real hound lover, with a voice that seemed to go to the heart of every hound in the pack, whether outside or inside covert. He was *always* "talking" to them, but musically and ever so quietly. I once saw him, as a stranger, take out the Meerut pack, which had been showing very poor sport, and the way those hounds answered to his voice at the end of one morning was a revelation.

One run in the Peshawar Vale comes to memory very clearly, though I forget the names of places. Anyhow, we had a sharp burst of about fifteen minutes, and being put down at a gridiron (two or more ditches with some six feet of earth between each), I only caught hounds at a check. The "jack" (jackal) was in a basin of red soil on the edge of the Nagoman River (a tributary of the Kabul) with his back to the bank and all the pack in front of him, but not one plucky enough to tackle.

Having got his wind the jack, snapping right and left and rushing through the whole lot of them, made for the water and started swimming across with the hounds at his brush. The river was pretty broad, but did not seem otherwise formidable, and had a nice shelving bank on the near side. Close beside me was Davis of the 1st Lancers. I looked at him, he looked at me, and together we turned our horses to the river and walked them in. At this moment the native huntsman called out that it was a bad stream and there was a bridge close at hand. It was too late, however, and on we went, while the Master and all the field dashed round to the bridge. It was rather difficult landing and I lost a stirrup, owing to forgetfulness to cross them over my mare's neck, but the worst of it was that the hounds were soon at fault on the far side and we never killed that jack. I mention this run because, from the accounts I read, it seems very much the same spot as the one where poor Irvine, the M.F.H., was drowned in 1919. Probably Davis will remember.

Brunker, the D.A.A.G., was very fond of practical jokes and "leg pulling." Having pulled Bond's, and also mine, badly, we thought we should like to get even, but the result was most disastrous! There was to be a "field firing" of the whole garrison, and Brunker had specially timed it so that the musketry inspector would be away in the Malakand. He disliked this musketry inspector intensely, and mainly because he was not under the Peshawar Dis-

trict in any way. The scheme was quite a big one and worked out by Brunker to the minutest detail.

Now Brunker messed with us (30th Punjabis), and as he was dining out the night before the manœuvre, it struck us that evening it would be a splendid "leg pull" if we sent him a letter purporting to be from the inspector, to say he had managed to come after all. We added he was staying as usual with Thompson of the 1st Lancers, and would Brunker kindly send him all the detail of to-morrow's parade with general and special ideas, description of targets, route, arrangements for clearing ground, etc. Brunker was entirely taken in, went back early from dinner to his quarters, and, as in duty bound, sat up till very late writing out and putting together all the necessary detail.

Next day, Bond and I went with the battalion to the rendezvous, where such an unconscionable delay occurred that we strolled over towards the District head-quarters and heard Sir Hugh, who looked very cross, tell Brunker to send for Thompson. When he appeared, Sir Hugh called out:

"I say, Thompson, where the devil is that damned musketry man?"

Thompson denied all knowledge of him, saying he had not seen him since he stayed with him two months before.

"But he wrote to Brunker last night to say he was staying with you," blustered Sir Hugh.

"Very sorry, sir," said Thompson, "but I know nothing about it."

Bond and I began to feel a bit uncomfortable, although we realised there was nothing to be done. As we sneaked back, for the show was then to begin, we heard Sir Hugh say he would report the matter to the Chief.

• That evening in the club we saw Brunker reading out my letter, *supposed* to be the inspector's, to an interested crowd, and at dinner he told us that Sir Hugh was writing to the Chief next day reporting the whole thing. Bond then got nervous and it was arranged in our room at midnight that we should both go and confess to Brunker at his office next morning and that *I* was to be the spokesman! We went at 10.30 a.m. and the following conversation ensued:

Self. "Who do you think, major, wrote that letter from the inspector?"

Brunker. "The musketry man, I suppose."

Self. "No! Bond and I concocted it to pull your leg, as you are always pulling ours."

Brunker. "Then I'm d—d sorry for you, because Sir Hugh is furious and wrote to the Chief about it this morning."

Brunker looked very gruff, so we left him, but we heard afterwards that he went off to the general the moment we disappeared and got the letter stopped. Our colonel was ordered to give us an official wiggling and Sir Hugh regularly cut Bond and me everywhere. I tried to find out his feelings through his daughter May (now Mrs. W. G. Hamilton), but she only said she did not know what I had done to her father, for only a few hours before she had proposed my name as a guest at dinner when the Chief and Lady Roberts came in a few days, and he had scratched it out at once.

A few days later, Bond and I drove up to Flagstaff House to write our names in the Chief's book. Sir Frederick and the general happened to be in the verandah and we heard the latter say: "Halloo, here are the arch fiends," at which the Chief said: "Why, that's young Woodyatt, what's he been doing?" Sir Hugh replied: "Oh, I'll tell you what it is as we drive to hospital." This was all said very cheerily, but as the "cutting" continued unabated, Bond persuaded me to write to the general after about ten days more and ask that we should be forgiven!

I still have Sir Hugh's reply, which runs:

"DEAR NIGEL,—

"Little boys shouldn't play with edged tools!

"Joking apart, you not only pulled Brunker's leg, but you pulled my leg and were within an ace of pulling the leg of the C.-in-C.

"However, except as a joke, it is all forgotten and, as a joke, I don't think you had the best of it!

"Yours sincerely,

"(Sgd.) HUGH GOUGH."

Shortly afterwards Sir Hugh was promoted to the command of the Lahore Division and Peshawar knew him and Lady Gough no more, to the infinite regret of all the station.

Much mention has been made of the Commander-in-

Chief in this chapter, who was then at the beginning of his seven years' command. His cold weather consisted of an extended tour, including a few weeks in residence in his quarters in Fort William, Calcutta.

No Chief, not even Lord Kitchener, made such a systematic business of his cold weather touring as Lord Roberts. His immediate successor, Sir George White, the most gallant of soldiers, found it much too irksome and soon dropped it, until his winter developed into a vast shoot. The published itinerary of his inspections, until you knew, made you think what a towelling the stations were getting. You would read an entry like this: "Meerut arrive 5 hours 5th December. Depart 17 hours 19th December." The unwary would conclude that the garrison was going to be turned inside out for a fortnight. Instead, one unit would possibly be looked at on the 5th, on the way from the railway station to some mess for breakfast, preparatory to proceeding to a camp in the old bed of the Ganges for snipe and duck shooting. On the 19th one more unit would be inspected, on return from the shoot and en route to the railway saloon.

But he was a grand fellow, Sir George, and a great sportsman, one of his last actions being to break his leg paper-chasing in Calcutta. It must never be forgotten that it was he, in 1894 or '95, who, by a scratch vote in Council, got the first increase to the Sepoy's pay. The finance member unwarily mentioning that he had a big balance to the good, Sir George pounced on this immediately, and carried the grant of better pay, which was so badly needed.

He held all sorts of records for runs and walks round Jakko, to which was added a further achievement in that his wife presented him with a baby during his tenure as Chief! Not to be outdone, the Viceroy's consort (Lady Elgin) did the same! Perambulators are not usually required at Viceregal Lodge and Snowdon.

There was a British soldier, a batman, at Snowdon, who was sacked by Sir G. White for using His Excellency's hair-brushes. Lady White, however, had found this man so invaluable that the Chief had to reinstate him. Snowdon could not be run without him!

When visiting a station, Lord Roberts saw every unit, every hospital and every transport corps. In addition, days and hours would be told off for seeing officers. Any

officer, however humble in rank, could ask for an interview, and generally got it. We soon learnt to know, therefore, how great an interest he took in his officers, how deep was his sympathy, and, although he could be firm enough on occasion, how kind was his heart. He made a point of knowing everyone and, in fact, took immense pains to ensure full recollection of officers' names, faces and history. He had that wonderful gift of recognising people in an instant, and he not only cultivated it, but was glad of any assistance, if at fault. Let me illustrate this by an anecdote.

I was once on temporary duty on his staff at Meerut on the occasion of a garden party given by Lord and Lady Roberts to the whole garrison. For a lengthy period Lord Roberts stood at the entrance to the camp receiving his guests, with his favourite aide-de-camp, Neville-Chamberlain, beside him. There was a hiatus in the guests' arrival, when up drove a stout man in a dog-cart, and the Chief asked his A.D.C., quickly, who it was exactly, as he thought he knew him. Like a shot N.-C. answered somewhat as follows :

"Major Jones, sir—Punjabis, conspicuous in the attack on the Peiwar Kotal, wife had triplets last year, all lived, etc., etc." Then the Chief took a pace or two forward, shook Jones warmly by the hand, called him by his name, referred to the Peiwar Kotal and asked after the triplets. All to the enormous gratification of Jones.

Lord Roberts had also, in a most marked degree, the attribute of *sympathy*, which, coupled with a wonderful magnetic personality, endeared him to all ranks. This was the case with the Indian Army to quite an extraordinary extent. The majority of Indian officers are very fine fellows and possessed of acumen, perception and sound common sense far above their fellows, or they would not be where they are. To see a batch of them talking to a man like Lord Roberts, or Birdie,¹ or a Divisional Commander they know, and have tested, will always be a revelation. It must surely be a source of enormous satisfaction to be the recipient of such confidence and trust.

"Birdie," as the Anzacs—or any troops he commanded—will tell you is never so happy as when making friends with his men. Years ago he took the trouble to learn

¹ General Sir William Birdwood, Commander of the 5th Army in the Great War, and now G.O.C.-in-C. Northern Command, India.

"Khas Kura," the *lingua franca* of Nepal. This last summer, when on tour in his command, he was actually able to talk to the Gurkhas at Abbottabad in their own language. The surprise and delight of the Gurkha officers and men at hearing their own dialect spoken by an officer of such high rank, and the way their faces lighted up, would be ample reward for the trouble taken over "Khas Kura."

It is no exaggeration to say the men *adored* Lord Roberts, and would have done anything for him. Indeed, "Bobs Bahadur" was so popular in India that it was really difficult to keep the ranks steady on parade when he was present. Other leaders have had the welfare of the troops ever so much at heart. They have honestly tried to be just, upright, and liberal in all their dealings; but, with the exception of Lord Roberts in the old days and Birdie in the present, none that have come under my ken have been able to communicate from themselves to others that wonderful bond of sympathy which attracts, influences, and finally enslaves.

I have mentioned one or two personal instances which brought this home to me so forcibly, I will briefly refer to one other. Lord and Lady Roberts and their eldest daughter made a short stay at my hill station of Almora when he had been Chief three or four years. His A.D.C. (Oxley of the 60th) asked, in the little club one evening, if any one wished to see the Chief next morning. In pure chaff I said, "Yes, I do," and when he enquired the subject, I took his pocket-book and drew a sketch of myself on my knees before Lord Roberts, with the words "very badly placed," underneath. The next morning, when at the tail of a procession walking up from hospital, I heard my name called. Hurrying to the front, to my horror, the Chief took me by the arm, saying, "You wanted to see me." I was dreadfully taken aback, but that horrible pocket-book incident flashing across me, I stammered out something about wondering whether I could get an adjutancy anywhere.

It is necessary to explain that the custom then was, for this most interesting of all appointments to be released, automatically, by an officer on getting his troop or company, after twelve years' service. The next subaltern then took it on, if he was in any way fit for it. There was usually little *selection*. So it sometimes happened that in one case

a man held it for eight *years* and in another for eight *months* ! The man just above me was September, 1882, whilst my commission was May, 1883, so I could only hold the appointment for the latter period. The Chief understood this and told me King-Harman, commanding the new 2nd Battalion of the 4th Gurkhas, had mentioned to him in Calcutta, a few days previously, that he didn't know what the devil to do for an adjutant, and advised me to apply. Thanking him profoundly, I walked off, grateful indeed to have escaped so easily, but with no intention whatever of applying, as I did not want to leave the 3rd.

However, after breakfast, I got a little note from the Chief himself, saying he was writing to Colonel King-Harman and should he mention my wish to be his adjutant ! The fat was now in the fire, so hurrying off to Barry Bishop, my C.O., I told him the whole story and he agreed I *must* say "Yes," or else it would be a second case of "leg-pull." So "Yes" it was ; but before it actually came off a new second battalion was raised to the 3rd Ghurkas, and I got the adjutancy of that instead. Still, it was nice of the Chief, and it was things like that which endeared him so to all ranks.

He was an early riser and always rode before breakfast. Being fastidious about his clothes, he was invariably beautifully turned out, and once told me that he owed a good deal of his successful career to being always well dressed and well mounted.

I saw him frequently just before the Great War, when he was very busy with his National Service League, a movement that would have had much more moral and material support from many distinguished soldiers, if they had not felt, rightly or wrongly, that the time to press for a modified form of conscription was on his return from South Africa in January, 1901, when at the height of his popularity and fame. Their contention was that, after so much shame and humiliation out there, a definite announcement by him then, that the sacrifice *must* be made, would have carried the people, and *ipso facto* the politicians with him.

Most people have heard of Lord Roberts' antipathy to cats and how the presence of one in the same room made him downright ill. This is quite true, and I can give an example. In 1882 he was Commander-in-Chief in Madras,

and dined one night with the old 44th (1st Essex Regiment) in Fort St. George. Knowing of his antipathy to cats, the only one in barracks, a large Persian cat belonging to Captain Orman, the adjutant, was tied up with a cord in Orman's quarters. In the middle of dinner, Roberts put down his knife and fork, saying he could not carry on because there was a cat in the room. The colonel said this was impossible, explaining what had been done and referring the general to the owner of the only cat, who was sitting on the other side of him. "Very sorry," said Sir Frederick, "but I feel there is a cat in the room, or close to, and I must go away if it is not removed."

Search was then made and there was no cat in the room. In Fort St. George there are two ante-rooms adjoining the dining-room at either end. When searching the first of these, a cupboard was seen ajar, and there sure enough was the Persian cat, fast asleep, with a broken cord attached to his collar! Visit the M.C.C. pavilion on the occasion of any first-class cricket match, and the owner of that cat will corroborate my story.

We had a good hunting season at Peshawar that year, but although the Artillery wheel was stiff with jackals, so much so that hounds always got split up in cover into half a dozen packs, there were many bits of lovely grass country further afield devoid of "jacks" altogether.

During the season I went to Agra, and it was suggested I should bring back some "bagmen" with me. Sixteen were eventually secured the night before I was due to leave, by a very early train next morning. Seeing them about 8 p.m. in a long box with partitions, allowing for one "jack" in each, I was disgusted to find that all their mouths had been sewn up. Quickly cutting all the stitches, water and food were given and they appeared quite happy, but about midnight set up the most appalling row you ever heard and continued it the whole night long.

Fortunately I was off too early to meet my future mother-in-law next morning, but I heard a good deal about it later on. Booking them to Peshawar as "pets," under a concessional railway clause, I felt fairly satisfied as regards their safety, for, on from Tundla, where we changed, ran a through carriage and through van all the way to Peshawar.

Just as I was beginning breakfast at Tundla, a railway guard came to me in the refreshment room to say

that one of my "pets" was loose in the Agra van and would I please come and catch him. Off I went and outside ran into Archdeacon Tribe with his daughter (now the Duchess of Bedford), who enquired why I was in such a hurry. "Catching jackals," I called out. "Come and help." Now catching jackals by hand is not a pleasant experience at any time; but when it means hunting one with a blanket from corner to corner in a semi-dark railway van, while your breakfast is getting cold, it is more than damnable. We had to keep the door open a bit to get any light at all, and as I stalked the beggar Miss Tribe held the doorway, and when he rushed from one corner to another, she bobbed down to fill the open space to prevent his escape.

Eventually I had him by the nape of the neck through the blanket, carried him to the waiting van for Peshawar and, with much difficulty, got him into his partition again. Not that it very much mattered, for I then noticed that nearly all of them had eaten through the walls to such an extent that they must soon be free in the van. This I pointed out to the guard, and suggested he should warn his relief not to put in anything else. However, he forgot, or his relief forgot, and next night at Rawalpindi a prize ram was bundled in, with the result that he was killed and eaten by my pets before reaching Peshawar. The owner tried to make the Hunt pay an enormous price for him, but was referred by me to the railway authorities who, as common carriers, I maintained were bound to take the requisite precautions.

The first two jackals we put down, not running a yard, were ignominiously chopped in covert at one afternoon's meet. Jogging home with the pack, Colonel Green of the 12th Cavalry rode up alongside me and after a few remarks, said: "I would not like to suggest what we were hunting to-day, but if you take off an inch of the brush with a very sharp pair of scissors on turning down, then a jack, or a fox, will run quite straight till he drops, and the occasional drip of blood helps the hound." Then he disappeared. I never neglected this in future, and the result was wonderful.

There is another tip which will be useful to those who get several bagmen at once and have to keep them. Make a pit in dryish soil about fifteen to twenty feet deep and of suitable breadth. Put in the bagmen and let down their

food and water. They soon burrow, but at night and at other odd times they are continually trying to get out, which keeps them in hard exercise, and makes them extraordinarily fit.

Just before importing the sixteen jackals, a jemadar¹ of the 1st Lancers brought us a wild young black buck caught near his village. Taken out in the commissariat bread van, with a little aniseed rubbed on his tuft, on release, he gave us four or five very fast runs before coming to an untimely end. One nuisance was that if he got on a road or track, he would follow it, until frightened off by something like a pedestrian, or bullock cart. He was quite wild, in that he would allow no one near him; but being kept in cantonments on a long rope did not tend to give him the wind and stamina of a jungle buck.

When uncarted he would generally graze until he heard the music of the pack, when he bucked off at a great pace, much too fast for the hounds. Then he would trot, uncertain where to go, until they got closer, and then buck off again and so on, each pause making him wilder and more excited. Until really tired, he could always get clean away; but when quite done, with his tongue out, he would make for a village, where some of us managed to whip off the pack and get him caught and roped until arrangements could be made for his return to Peshawar.

One day, at a distant meet, this village habit was his undoing. Some excited Pathans, undoubtedly thinking they were doing us a good turn, broke his leg with a stone and he had to be shot. One haunch of venison was given to the general, one to the chief civil officer, and the rest of him the hounds ate.

One amusing incident happened that winter in connection with my hunting. The colonel did not quite approve of so much of it as two days a week for a young officer just joined, especially as one of them happened to be an orderly room day. In the 30th Punjabis, orderly room was held twice a week and was called "Durbar." There were seldom any prisoners, but an hour or so was spent by all the British and native officers discussing such regimental matters as the C.O., or others, brought up. I used to ask leave of absence for hunting days, but on my third or fourth attempt the adjutant told me the colonel disapproved of so many

¹ Indian officer of cavalry.

absences and I must be present the next time, which was two days ahead.

At the club that evening, happening to meet Sir Hugh Gough, he asked me what hour I was starting for the next meet as he would hack out with the hounds. I told him unfortunately I was not going. "Not going," he roared, "what do you mean by not going when you are a whip?" I then explained the reason. The result was an urgent circular letter to all commanding officers next morning to say the general wished every facility to be given to officers to hunt.

In the evening the adjutant told me the hour of Durbar had been altered and I must attend for half an hour, which would give me ample time to get to the meet. He added that I might come in mufti. The C.O. was generally before his time, and when I arrived he was in his chair with all the native officers round him. Now my mufti happened to be the hunt uniform which none of those present had seen me wearing before. My rather elaborate white stock, pink coat, grey helmet with red pugri and gold cord, as well as immaculate leathers and mahogany tops, were too much for the old boy, and I was never told to attend again.