

“North Pole ! South Pole ! land and water !”
 Up climbs Frisk, 'midst feline laughter,
 Clawing at the realms of ice ;
 Whilst young Whisk, a little later,
 Makes a journey round th' equator
 At his mother's sage advice.

Compasses give Trotty pleasure ;
 Fluff is helping him to measure ;
 Mrs. Puss exclaims with glee
 (In contented contemplation
 Of her kittens' education),
 “Won't my kittens clever be !”

J. G.

THE “DESPOT OF THE JUNGLE.”



F all wild beasts none are greater scourges of the countries which are unfortunately afflicted with their presence than tigers. This animal is truly Oriental, and has been aptly named the “despot of the jungle.” Its magnificent appearance only hides its cruelty of disposition, just in the same way as the gorgeous array and barbaric splendour of some Asiatic court in bygone days concealed the native brutality and savageness of its tyrant lord. We are all pretty well familiar with the duties of the police, but in Bengal that body of public servants is charged, not only with the preservation of peace and order, and the arrest of burglars and other law-breakers, but also with the destruction of wild animals. This fact will help us to realise the scale upon which tigers in the Indian presidencies carry on their operations. Not many years since a tigress had made life a burden to the inhabitants of the village of Russulpore, till at length the deputy magistrate determined to put an end to the terrorism which existed, and told off six constables for the purpose of hunting her down. She was known to hide herself in the jungle not a mile from the police-office ! The men proceeded to the spot which she was last seen to enter, and began to fire into the jungle, out of which the tigress suddenly sprang, seizing one of the constables, and wounding him seriously ; but with great courage he held to the animal till his comrades bayoneted her.

When a tiger quarters himself upon a village, the unhappy natives have to pay dearly for the monster's visit. Sallying from his lodging—usually a field or a garden in the neighbourhood—in search of food, he generally despatches at least a sheep or cow before returning to his temporary lair. The villagers, as a rule, have to suffer this havoc till help comes from outside, for few of them possess firearms or are skilled in the use of them. Any man attempting to interfere is felled to the ground with a stroke of the paw, or sometimes slain outright. Wherever English residents are to be found, however, they are generally glad to hear of such marauders, and to form shooting parties for their destruction.

Instances are on record where a tiger, in the exercise of his vocation, has really—though accidentally, of course—performed an act of retribution. It is related that a poor shoemaker was once returning home with a small sum of money which he had, fortunately, succeeded in collecting from some of his customers. He overtook a man apparently travelling in the same direction as himself, and as the way was dreary and dangerous, and his acquaintance was armed, he was glad of his company. He shared his food with him, and in talking over their affairs, he was unwise enough to mention the object of his journey and the money of which he was in possession. This roused the cupidity of his fellow-traveller, who, at a certain point in the road, made a murderous attack upon the poor cobbler. While they were struggling together a tiger leaped out of the jungle upon the cowardly assailant and bore him away, leaving the sword and shield on the ground, which the shoemaker at once secured, taking them home as tokens of the retributive justice which had been so signally manifested on his behalf. A North American Indian on the trail is scarcely more pertinacious in pursuing a victim which he has marked for his own than the tiger when engaged in the same unpleasant business. A recently-married camel-driver was bringing home his bride, when a tiger espied the party, and followed it with grim patience. At a turn in the road the bride was momentarily separated from the rest of her fellow-travellers, and in that moment the tiger instantly seized her and carried her off.

You may remember that Shakespeare makes King Henry V., when urging on his “noblest English” and “good yeomen” to the assault of Harfleur, declare that—

“When the blast of war blows in our ears,
 Then imitate the action of the tiger ;
 Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
 Disguise fair nature with hard-favour'd rage.”

Excepting that there is no reason to suppose that the tiger's nature is ever “fair,” its disposition is one continued state of “hard-favour'd rage,” for it is one of the few animals that positively love



AT PLAY IN THE JUNGLE.

"THE 'DESOT OF THE JUNGLE'" (p. 91).

cruelty for its own sake. A tiger, for example, will frolic about an antelope like a cat with a mouse, as if it enjoyed the alarm of the poor creature; and, should the antelope make a feeble effort to butt it, will clear its head at a bound. After the play has lasted some time the tiger will then crush its victim and begin its repast.

The tigress is much attached to her cubs, which are as lively and frolicsome as kittens, and at birth are about half the size of a cat. You would not like to peep into the real lair of a real tigress, especially if her ladyship happened to be at home to all callers. But if you will look at our picture entitled "At Play in the Jungle," you will be able to form an idea of the sportive way in which the tigress and her little folk amuse each other. One cub—as you will see—sits upon its mother's back, another toys with her ear, while a third, which is being "washed" by its attentive parent, taps her nose every now and then with its tiny paw.

They remain with the mother till they are almost full grown—that is, till they are about two years old, when they leave their home to provide for themselves. The tigress watches over them with great care, and so long as they are under her direct control she is remarkably vicious, while in the event of her being robbed of them, her rage is terrible to behold—so strong is the maternal instinct in the breast even of a tigress. She teaches them how to obtain their prey, practising at first on the smaller beasts, and so well do they profit by her example that they are far more

destructive. Experience, however, soon brings wisdom, and it is extraordinary to observe animals which, as youngsters, killed three or four cows in a day, in course of a very few years satisfy themselves by slaying the same number in a week. It would almost appear as if they had come to see for themselves the folly of wasting so much meat when a time might possibly arrive when the larder would not be filled without much difficulty and danger.

You would hardly believe that a man could be as ferocious as a tiger, yet that such can be the case admits of no doubt. For instance, Tippoo Sahib, the Sultan of Mysore, who was slain in the British attack upon Seringapatam in 1799, was of such a cruel and barbarous disposition that he has been called, by some writers, "the Tiger of Mysore." One of his thrones is said to have been in the form of a howdah, or covered seat, resting upon a tiger—the emblem of his empire. And after his death there was found in his palace a remarkable "toy," which consisted of the figure of a tiger about to devour another figure intended for a British soldier. By turning a handle sounds, meant to represent the animal's growls, were made to come out of this grim plaything. It shows that he must have deeply hated the British when he had a "toy" of this sort constructed for the express purpose of beguiling his leisure hours with the semblance of the hideous tortures which, could he have his will, he longed to inflict upon the brave soldiers who had broken the powerful empire built up with so much energy and skill by his father, the famous Hyder Ali.

SOME LITTLE ONES OF THE STREET.

THE NEWSPAPER - SELLER.

"**L**OSS o' life! paper sir! Dreadful accident! Fourth edishurn! Evening papar! Buy a papar!"

What a piercing voice the boy has! It rises above the din and traffic of the great thoroughfare of the Strand. The biting east wind that blows from the river, and comes with a rush round Trafalgar Square, carries the shrill sound right into the omnibus, where we are sitting closely packed, on our journey from Charing Cross to the Bank. When we stopped just now for one of us to get out, the cry of "Papar!" seemed a long way off on the other side of the road; and yet before we move on again here is the boy himself, standing on the step, and with enough breath left to repeat in a lower key all that he has been shouting. Before the conductor has time to say, "Now then, come

out o' that," he has noticed that three gentlemen are feeling in their pockets for coppers, and by the time the coppers are ready he has contrived to hand three papers into the omnibus, and to clutch twopence halfpenny—for two penny papers and a halfpenny one. But he hasn't done yet, for another customer, who *has* no change, tells the conductor to take a paper for him, and so the boy is still on the step, hanging on to the door of the omnibus with his elbow, that he may have his hand ready for the money, his other arm having enough to do to hold the many fluttering sheets of news, which are still quite damp from the printing-machine, and contain accounts of the strange events that have happened in various parts of the world since this morning.

A quick-eyed, quick-footed little fellow is this newsboy. Perhaps he would be quite a nice-