

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. MEANING OF THE WORD *nihilam*.

DEAR SIR,—In Leyden & Erskine's translation of Bābar's Memoirs (p. 28), there occurs the following passage, descriptive of Sulṭān Maḥmūd Mirzā, a paternal uncle of Bābar: "In the earlier part of his life he was much devoted to falconry, and kept a number of hawks; and latterly was very fond of hunting the *nihilam*." To this one of the translators has appended a note—"I do not know what animal the *nihilam* is. From its name it may perhaps be the *nīlgau*. It is said to be *gawazin koh̄*."

P. de Courteille (I. 54) thus renders the same passage: "Dans les premiers temps il était passionné pour la chasse au faucon; plus tard il chassa beaucoup le *behem* (espèce d'antilope)."

P. de Courteille used Ilminski's Turkī text (Kasan, 1857). Mirzā Muḥammad Shīrāzī's Persian text (Bombay) has *nihilam*, and so have the B.M. MSS.

The word *nihilam* occurs in the *Akbarnāma* (*Bib. Ind.*, I. 255), where it is said that Humāyūn amused himself after illness (A.D. 1546) with *shikār-i-tasqāwal* (تسقاؤل), of which, Abū'l-faẓl explains in a parenthesis, the Badakhshī equivalent is *shikār-i-nihilam*.

The account of the hunting and the explanation of *tasqāwal* are taken from the Memoirs of Bāyazīd *Biyāt*, who was with Humāyūn in Badakhshān in 1546.

Again, Abū'l-faẓl (I. 318) tells a story of Akbar's *tasqāwal*-hunting on the skirts of the Safid-sang, and he uses the

word in a manner which shows that it is not the name of an animal. Dogs were employed by Akbar, "*ba dast-i-har yakī az khidmatgarān-i-nazdikī, sagān-i-shikārī sipurda būdand, ki tasqāwal bāshand.*" Men drove the deer (*āhū*). When the deer reached the *tasqāwalān* (*chūn āhū batasqāwalān rasīd*), the servants who had charge of the dogs were not at their stations, and the hunt was a failure.

I have searched many dictionaries for the meaning of *tasqāwal* and of *nihilam*, but without success until to-day (Aug. 2nd.), when I have found *tasqāwal*, with variant, *tashqāwal*, in a Turkī-Persian dictionary of the Mullā Fīrūz Library in this city (Bombay). It is explained as a shutter-up of a road (*rāh-band kunanda*). It would thus seem to be a sort of earth-stopper, and perhaps was applied to an obstacle placed in the path of the driven deer to turn them or to check them for the convenience of the sportsmen.

The dictionary which yielded this explanation is entered as No. 27 (p. 54) in Mr. Rehatsek's valuable catalogue of the Mullā Fīrūz Library and it is described by him as the work of Mīrzā 'Alī Bakht, whose poetical name was *Az fārī*, and it is consequently known as the *Farhang-i-az fārī*.

What is the derivation of *tasqāwal* I am unable to say, but it seems clear from Bāyazīd and Abū'l-faẓl that it is not an animal's name but that of a form of sport. It may correspond to the English 'driving.'

HENRY BEVERIDGE.

Bombay, Aug. 2, 1899.

2. "OSPREYS."

102, Cheyne Walk, Chelsea,
London, S. W.

Saturday, Oct. 21, 1899.

SIR,—I am much obliged to Mr. F. W. Thomas for his courteous note upon my somewhat random suggestion about the '*kūṭājvara*.' He is only a little too modest in saying that he can throw no light upon it, because this note (in our October number, p. 906) pretty nearly settles the question.