

Daily News (London),
Wednesday, October 5, 1859

A FIELD FOR SPORTSMEN.—The last number of the *Comptes Rendus* of the sittings of the French Academy contains a curious and startling communication from M. de Castelnau, French consul at Siam, with respect to the abundance of tigers in the island of Singapore. He says:—"In the little island whence I write this letter the statistics of the police show that, on an average, a man per day is devoured by these terrible animals; and as the Chinese and Malays, who are almost the sole victims, seldom report to the magistrates the disappearance of their friends, we may, without fear of exaggeration, presume that about 700 persons are annually devoured in a single island which has but a few leagues of surface. The most curious fact is, that when the English established themselves at Singapore, about 40 years ago, it was on record among the Malay fisherman who inhabited it that no tiger had ever been seen there, and, in fact, during the first five or six years none appeared; but, contrary to what one would have supposed, in proportion as the island obtained a considerable population, it received a numerous emigration of tigers, which swam across the Straits of Malacca." M. de Castelnau relates an extraordinary instance of the audacity of these formidable brutes, which appear to have become emboldened by the cowardice of the natives. Forty or fifty men had formed a sort of village in an island; a band of tigers swam to attack them, and, in spite of a desperate resistance, carried off 20 of the inhabitants of the village. Although a considerable premium is paid for every tiger's head, the natives dare not hunt them, and it is rare even that they attempt to defend themselves when attacked.