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ENGLISH SPORT



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EDITED BY

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PREFACE

WITH a view to subsequent appearance in book form I lately published in the *Badminton Magazine*, under the general title "Masters of Their Arts," a series of papers intended to place on record the manner in which the chief English sports and pastimes were conducted and practised at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. "Masters of Their Arts" seemed appropriate, for the reason that those from whom I sought contributions might be fittingly so described. I drew out a list of the authorities whom I considered best able to supply what I wanted, and was extremely fortunate in obtaining a favourable answer to my requests in every case. Perhaps it would be presumptuous on my part to say that I do not see how the list could well have been strengthened; that, however, is a matter I leave with no little confidence to the judgment of readers.

In *The Badminton Magazine of Sports and Pastimes* the title selected appeared to serve, for it was naturally understood what "arts" were indicated. A book which stands by itself is,

however, a different affair ; and this volume is therefore called "English Sport" as a name suggestive of its contents. A very captious critic might, indeed, take exception to it as not entirely accurate on the ground that Lord Delamere deals with African sport and Lord Walsingham with an expedition to Spain ; but "English Sport" may well be held to include the sports of Englishmen. I have only to add that the articles have been revised, and that Lord Hawke has made an important addition to the chapter he so kindly supplied.

ALFRED E. T. WATSON.

11 ALBERT COURT,
KENSINGTON GORE.

September, 1903.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOX HUNTING By the late Lord Willoughby de Broke	I
FROM A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW Lady Augusta Fane	33
WILD STAG HUNTING Viscount Ebrington	46
HARRIERS : ANCIENT AND The late Earl of Suffolk and MODERN Berkshire	61
SHOOTING The Marquess of Granby	75
RACING The Earl of Ellesmere	92
FISHING The Marquess of Granby	104
CRICKET Lord Hawke	123
POLO The Hon. Lionel Lambart	137
MOTORING Alfred C. Harmsworth	146
ROWING W. H. Grenfell, M.P., and Sir John Edwards-Moss, Bart. . . .	157
FALCONRY The Hon. Gerald Lascelles	189
SKATING The Countess of Minto	205
STEEPLECHASING "A Gentleman Rider"	212

CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOOTBALL : ASSOCIATION R. E. Foster	231
RUGBY F. H. B. Champain and E. G. N. North	252
GOLF Horace G. Hutchinson	272
LION SHOOTING Lord Delamere	290
THE SPANISH IBEX Lord Walsingham	323
BILLIARDS Major W. Broadfoot	346

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Persimmon's Derby. From a Painting by G. D. Giles	<i>Frontispiece</i>	
"Well Over!"	<i>To face page</i>	I
The Pick of The Pack	"	13
Stragglers. From an Oil Painting by T. Blinks	"	23
"Well With Them!"	"	33
Woodcock Shooting. From a Water Colour Sketch by J. M. W. Turner, R.A. . . .	"	75
Setters	"	86
A Start	"	93
The Gentle Art	"	105
Polo	"	137
Finish for the Grand Challenge Cup, Henley .	"	157
Skating	"	205
His Majesty's Grand National Winner, Ambush II.	"	212
A Military Steeplechase. From a Painting by G. D. Giles	"	216
Manifesto	"	220
The Water Jump	"	224

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“WELL OVER!”

ENGLISH SPORT

FOX-HUNTING

BY THE LATE LORD WILLOUGHBY DE BROKE

I. ADVICE TO MASTERS OF HOUNDS

THE first thing to be done on taking a country is to get the land and covert owners on your side. Write to all of them asking leave to draw their coverts, and express a hope that they will extend the same kindness in the preservation of foxes to you as they have always done to your predecessors. Of course, in all but the most favoured countries, the great difficulty that you will have to contend with is the game preservers, not only with those gentlemen who preserve game largely in their own coverts, but more especially with the rich tailors, candlestick-makers, &c., who take shootings, in these latter days, from the impoverished county landlords. I contend that these gentry have no sort of right to come and take shootings in what they know well to be a hunting country, and to have been a hunting country long before they were born or thought of, and then spoil the hunting by

warning the hounds off during the cub-hunting season, and indeed in many cases up to Christmas, or even later, till after they have shot. They seem to think that, if they do not actually tell the keepers to destroy foxes, they have done plenty for the Hunt and for their popularity.

I have always noticed that these shooters, who keep hounds out of their coverts half the season, are most troublesome and insistent the moment their coverts are shot, pestering the Master with letters saying they are overrun with foxes, and that it is no use keeping them if they are never hunted. Probably, when you go, you will find one or two fine specimens from Leadenhall, which the keeper has most likely got down and turned out on the shooting-day. Headed back everywhere by "stops," each fox is seen five or six times over, and this, assisted by a copious hot luncheon, is quite enough to make each "gun" say he has seen five or six foxes. I know that there *are* keepers who will preserve foxes, and are glad and proud to do so, who come up to you at the meet and tell you they *think*—no real fox-preserve is ever certain—that you will find. You do not see the regular velvetene vulpicide at the meet. There are keepers I have never seen at all, often as I have drawn their coverts. Where they disappear to on a hunting-day is a mystery to me. No doubt foxes and pheasants can be simultaneously preserved, but it requires a surgical operation of the most radical nature to get the fact into the heads of most keepers. Still, I would advise as much compliance with the wishes of game preservers as is consistent with hunting the country fairly. But there is one

thing I could never find it in my heart to do, which is, to stop the hounds *when running hard* for a game preserver's covert. If you are Master of a pack which belongs to the county, I say you have no right to spoil the hounds belonging to the county gentlemen by disappointing them in this way. No; by all means steer clear of the shooting-parties, and meet the shooter's wishes as much as you can, but by no means, and for no man, stop your hounds when running.

Now we come to the farmers, a class of men with whom I, personally, have never had any difficulty, nor will any one else if he will only treat them properly. When you give a hunt breakfast, do not have two rooms—one for your swell friends, the other for the farmers. Remember all people are equal out hunting, and a farmer who preserves a litter of cubs on his farm does far more good to the sport than one of your swells, even if he rides 300-guinea horses over windmills in the ardour of the chase, as Mr. Jorrocks says. But wire! I hear some one say, What is to be done about that? I suppose the only plan is to trust nothing to committees, hunt secretaries, or people of that sort, who often have no knowledge of country life, and do more harm than good; but go round yourself in the autumn, call on the farmers, and ask them to remove it. Above all, never consent to the erection of danger-signals, notice boards, &c. I have always said, when this has been proposed, that I would a thousand times sooner break my neck over wire, and have done with it, than see those horrid un-English-looking signals all over the country. Happily in my country we have neither

wire nor wire signals, and I do really think I may flatter myself that this is not a little due to my determination never to recognise the latter. In some countries farmers appear to think that, if they only placard their farms, they may put up as much wire as they like and do no harm. This is probably the fault of some ass of a hunt secretary, who has said to the farmer, "Well, if you will not take your wire down, flag it well." Farmers like to be spoken to, and to have an interest taken in their proceedings. They are pretty good judges! I remember at a general election some years ago accompanying a Conservative candidate, hailing from a large town in the North, who was contesting a purely agricultural constituency. After a village meeting the candidate and I went, with several large farmers, all strong Tories, to one of the farmhouses for supper. Afterwards the cigars and whisky-and-water went round, and the farmer and I began talking farming. To my horror, on glancing at the candidate, I saw that, instead of trying to pick up something about farming, he had taken a newspaper out of his pocket and had begun to read! I thought, "My friend, these men may vote for you, but they certainly will not *work* for you." He was not elected. There is one thing, however, I wish the farmers would not do; that is, erect in their fields stick-heaps over heaps of old tree-roots as a covert for rabbits. Foxes soon take to use them, and runs that promise to be real good ones end in the most annoying way by the fox getting into one of these heaps. It is nearly impossible to bolt foxes from them, as the rabbits make holes underneath into which the foxes crawl.

I should never advise any one to take a country in which there is an old-established huntsman, a favourite with every one, and one whom it would be something like high treason on your part to dismiss. He will be master, not you. You will simply be a paying machine to settle all the bills and mount him, and he will constantly be grumbling about his horses, and perhaps will even give vent to his feelings in his speech at your puppy-show luncheon. Far the best plan is to start fresh with your own man, keeping perhaps one of the old staff to show the rest the way about at first. Choose a man of fair experience, and above all do not listen to the accounts of hunt-servants' riding, and be led into taking on one of the boys who get huntsmen's places in these modern days. The majority of hunting-men seem to think that, if a man or a boy will only jump big places, he must be a good huntsman, and boys get pitchforked into good situations as huntsmen before they know how to whip-in or even to behave. When I began hunting, whippers-in did not look to be huntsmen before they were well past thirty. Nowadays it is no uncommon thing to find the huntsman the youngest of the three servants. I do not mean to say that a huntsman should not ride ; of course he should ride up to his hounds and see how far they have carried the scent, but every one can ride if he only gets a horse good enough ; the difficulty is to get a man who knows *when* to ride, and will do so *only* to get to his hounds, and *not* to win the approbation of an ignorant field. But always mount your men well, if only for economy's sake ; they will take care of good horses, but will not do so of bad ones.

Be careful how you breed your hounds. In forming a pack you will have to be dependent, in a great measure, on sires from other packs. But do not be tempted to run after a hound because he has won at Peterborough, or is very good-looking, or is even said to be very good in his work, if he comes of a strain that you do not like, or if his pedigree contains a lot of soft blood, or if his ancestors come from a kennel that you cannot trust. A chance-bred foxhound is like a chance-bred race-horse : he may be very good at his work, but he is worthless for breeding. Not being carefully bred himself, the faults of his progenitors are certain to be reproduced in his offspring.

There is a good deal of nonsense talked about looks in these days, but, depend on it, the best *working* hounds in a pack are never the worst looking, though, of course, a real beauty, a Peterborough winner, *may* turn out useless in the field. This is a good lesson. Turn up his pedigree, and you will find where the mistake in his breeding has been made. Never breed from a hound in his first season. He may develop all manner of faults, and you cannot *breed* a fault out : you must *stamp* it out. Some people think that if you breed from a noisy bitch and a mute dog, or *vice versa*, you will have hit the just medium in tongue. Far from it. In all probability half the litter will turn out mute, the other half noisy. Of course neither hound ought to have been kept, much less bred from. Always draft a mute hound. There is no fault so bad, and the better he is in his work the more harm he will do. Then there is straightness. Everybody in his heart of hearts likes his hounds

straight. In my experience it is only those who cannot breed straight hounds who prefer crooked ones ; some even go so far as to say that a straight hound cannot be good in his work ! But I always notice that when hound-breeders of this sort happen to breed a straight hound, they are as proud of him as a hen is of one chick. Of course you must have plenty of good walks to breed a good pack of hounds, so that you can mercilessly afford to draft mute, noisy, skirting or lame ones, without getting your pack too short.

A puppy show and luncheon after it are good things ; but do not have your huntsman's health proposed. You would not have your butler's or your stud-groom's health drunk, why then your huntsman's ? If you, or your huntsman, or both of you, are new to the country, I should say certainly go cub-hunting yourself every morning, so as to learn the locality yourself, or show it to your huntsman, as the case may be. And let cub-hunting be cub-hunting ; keep your hounds on the dark as much as possible, and never try to have a run across the open. No man can really ride to hounds, in the Midlands at any rate, while the leaf is on the hedges ; consequently fences get pulled about, gaps are made, the farmer's stock, especially the grass bullocks, injured, and altogether much more damage done by a few horsemen than is done by many in regular hunting. In dry hard weather the hounds' feet are often hurt, and in any weather at all they run a risk of being spoilt. They check : no one is with them, off go some of the entry after a hare, taking most likely a few of the one- and two-season hounds with them, and in about half

an hour all the trouble you have taken in breaking during the summer and autumn is lost. Sport for the field cannot be said to begin till November 1, but it is in the two or three months prior to this that a pack of hounds is made or marred, and these months *must* be given up to the Master and Huntsman to make the pack. I am fairly astonished to see that some establishments have actually taken to advertising their cub-hunting fixtures. This is the height of folly. There is no greater nuisance than a parcel of men, women, and grooms, the former most likely smoking, all of them out on fresh horses, and talking, in the rides of a covert. The Hunt servants cannot get about to do their work and the hounds get kicked. Never commit the fatal mistake of not beginning cub-hunting as soon as the corn is cut ; and never take fright, and leave off, because the ground gets hard. To do this is ruination to your entry and to the one- and two-season hunters, who will begin forty times wilder than the young ones. Breed your hounds with good legs and feet, and they will not take much harm, and if you do screw up a few old cub-hunting horses, what matter ?

I now come to poultry and damage funds—ever-increasing items of expenditure, and most vexatious to boot. As a rule, it is best to pay as soon as you can, but damage to crops can only be assessed at harvest time. I remember one of my tenants, a heavy clay-land farmer, coming to me with tears in his eyes to say that his wheat-field had been ridden over by hundreds of horses and well-nigh ruined, and asking what I would do ? “Wait till harvest,” I said, “and I will come to

look at it." Happening to be out for a ride just before harvest I met my tenant and had a long talk with him. I was rather surprised that he said nothing about his damaged crops, so just as I was leaving I said, "How about that wheat-field?" He smiled and said, "It contains the best crop on my farm!" Surely enough, it was looking beautifully, and I defy any one to have said where the horses crossed it. It was only by going on one's hands and knees, and creeping about the field, that one could just see the old tracks. Poultry, however, is best paid for at the time the damage is done, and it is always easy to get some friend to ride over and find out if the claim is a genuine one or not. I think the Master should manage all this; he practically has to do so now, for if the hon. secretary does not pay the claimant what he thinks his due, the latter is very likely to write to the Master, and say, "I don't care whose business it is to pay, but if my claim is not paid in full by some one I shall put up wire and kill the foxes." Besides, the hon. secretary may have no knowledge of country life, may not be in touch with the Master, or may be unpopular with the farmers. I know an hon. secretary to a pack of hounds who actually beds his horses on moss litter and wonders why he does not get on with the farmers. I cannot help believing that in every Hunt it would be better to have a secretary, paid either by the Hunt or by the Master, whose duty it should be to attend to all these claims, earth-stopping, &c. Surely young fellows could be found to whom a salary, of, say, £200 a-year would be an object, who would work under the Master and look after these things. This

sum would enable such a man to keep a couple of hunters at any rate, and I think it is an arrangement that would work well. There is nothing like having some one to find fault with if things go wrong. A serious loss to a farmer, such as hounds running through his ewes and causing them to slip their lambs, the death of a valuable cart colt, or bullock, if caused by hounds or hunter, is, I think, best paid for liberally and at once, and the simplest way to do this is by a collection from those who were out hunting that day. This could be easily managed by a secretary such as I have tried to describe.

In breeding your hounds make up your mind what sort you like and stick to that sort. If you like Welsh hounds (of which I have little knowledge) breed Welsh hounds and have a Welsh pack; but if you prefer English hounds, try and breed them as good-looking as possible. In the Midlands I am quite certain that the best sort to aim at are the best looking. I do not mean the largest-boned animals—they do not have to carry weight—nor do I insist on great spring of the ribs. There is a medium in all things, and ribs and bone must be kept up to a certain extent, or your hounds will look shallow, and, as Mr. Bragg said, “only fit to hunt a cat in a kitchen.” But I will never believe that a hound tires because he is light of bone; my experience has been all the other way, against “that useless appendage,” as Lord Henry Bentinck called bone. In my opinion, the thing that makes a hound stoop to the scent easily is a good neck and shoulders, so that he is always running at his ease and thoroughly within himself. I would

never sacrifice necks and shoulders to bone, straightness, or ribs. But I hear some one say "Nose!" Well, I suppose there are hounds more tender-nosed than others, and if these are found out they should, of course, be bred from. But I am not quite sure that dash, intelligence, and perseverance do not insure what is called a good nose. A hound may have ever such a sensitive organ of smell, but he is no use if he is shy, idle, or slack. Any hound will run hard on a real good-scenting day, but give me one who will try for you on a bad-scenting day; who will jump a gate when casting himself, and will jump it back again if he does not hit the line off; in short, one who is miserable if he is off the line, and does not go and contentedly lie down and lap in a pond. I have often been quite sorry for good hounds who have worked so hard to no purpose on a bad-scenting day. But these are the boys to keep and breed from; if one could get a whole pack of them very few foxes would get away.

I think the best size for hounds is $23\frac{1}{2}$ inches for dogs, and rather lower, but not much, for bitches. In a grass country no hound, however big, can jump a stake-and-bound fence with a ditch to him, to say nothing of bullfinches, and small hounds do get through these fences quicker and with less tailing than big ones. In a wall or bank country I do not suppose it matters so much, though I doubt whether big hounds are able to jump better than small ones. Foxes must be hustled to be killed. Mr. Jorrocks says, "Full well he knows, to kill their fox they must have nose," but also he knows "that to kill their fox

they must press him at some period or other of the chase."

There is great difference in foxes. Some come to hand easily, but there are others that will beat any pack of hounds, unless at some time or other in the run they are hard pressed for half an hour at least ; indeed, there are some foxes who seem, over grass in dryish weather, to be able to keep going nearly all day. It is certainly not bone which enables hounds to catch foxes of this sort. They *must* have good necks and shoulders, and they *must* be in tip-top condition. That is how the foxes are killed, by care and careful conditioning in the kennel, and by being in good heart and confidence, with plenty of blood.

Lastly, unless you are genuinely fond of hounds and hound breeding, do not have anything to do with their Mastership. The blanks in an M.F.H.'s career are many compared with the prizes. A good day and a kill in the open is a splendid thing. Every one is pleased ; the ride home seems short, and the port tastes well in the evening ; but continuous bad luck, bad scent, and every one taking a pleasure in telling you how well the neighbouring Hunts are doing is hard to bear. Still it is a consolation when you get back among your hounds, which you have carefully bred yourself, to know for certain that the temporary loss of sport is not their fault, that they will do all they can for you, and that your turn must come again.

Buy your forage, and as many of your hunters as you can, f-om the farmers in the Hunt, and never use moss litter or any other stinking substitute for straw.



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THE PICK OF THE PACK.

II. ADVICE TO HUNTSMEN

Stay at home and look after your hounds.
Remember Garge Ridler—

Let fools go travel far and nigh,
We bides at home, my dog and I.

So stay at home and look after your dogs summer and winter, and do not go gadding about to all the puppy shows in the kingdom. At your own puppy show, if your master is foolish enough to allow your health to be drunk, simply acknowledge the compliment, and do not follow the present practice of huntsmen in making what you doubtless think is a clever and facetious speech.

When the hunting season is over, and your young hounds will go pretty quietly without couples, get on the hacks and have the old hounds also out. I do not mean to fast exercise, but long walking exercise, keeping under the trees and in the shade as much as possible. Anything is better for hounds than lying all day on the hot flags. Give some boiled vegetables in the old hounds' food at this time of year. Young nettles gathered before they get tough and stingy are as good as anything. The young hounds will do very well on navy ship biscuits soaked and mixed with some good broth.

Towards the latter part of July, say about the time of the Peterborough Show, you will begin to trot the old and young hounds along, and will find as many hares, deer, &c., as you can. Keep your

hounds moving right up to cub-hunting, and have them on the *light side* to begin with, or if the weather be hot they will tire before the foxes, get disgusted, do themselves no end of harm, and will very likely leave the foxes instead of breaking them up properly. It is a grand thing for hounds if you can show them some riot just before throwing them into a covert where you are sure to find a litter of cubs. Allow yourself plenty of time to reach the meet; five to six miles an hour is quite fast enough to travel, but when cub-hunting you can move a bit faster than in regular hunting. In cub-hunting always let the hounds find their own fox, and do not have him holloaed over a ride *at first*. Do not have him headed back, or help up *till he is beat*, but then do so for fear of changing. The more foxes you kill cub-hunting *after good work for hounds*, the steadier and keener your pack will be; but do not go and surround small places and pick up two or three foxes at once. This does not benefit the hounds more than killing one, and in a good country is wanton waste. Always dig your fox cub-hunting if he goes to ground in a practicable place. In regular hunting it is better to go and find another than to keep the field starving in the cold; but always remember that you cannot have steady hounds without plenty of blood, and that in a country where foxes are numerous, if the pack are riotous it is always the fault of the huntsman. So begin November with your hounds "blooded up to the eyes," as Lord Henry Bentinck wrote. Never mind what people say about giving foxes a chance and letting them go. In a small covert let the best foxes who break

covert first go, and stay and kill the worst one, but never be tempted by what anybody says to try and have a run in the open.

It is all very well for those who come out. Their horses are fresh, as they have been standing about, while you and your whips have been working yours hard. The field can jump or not as they like, and if they lose the hounds they can go back to breakfast, while you and the whips must stick to the hounds at all costs. Besides, the young hounds do not understand it at first, and simply follow the old ones, and do themselves no end of harm by getting lost, stopping in ponds, &c.

Always remember you are the servant of your master, not of the field, and his orders should always be not to get away in the open in the cub-hunting season.

In going to a halloa over a ride stop about fifty yards before you get to the place the fox has crossed, turn your horse's head across the ride in the direction the fox has gone, and throw the hounds on to the covert. This will prevent their taking the scent up heel way.

In regular hunting the whole system is reversed. Then you try and get away with the first fox that leaves, presumably the best one. If you cannot get all the hounds, at all events get enough to go on with; because the pack are running another fox do not stand blowing, still less move a field or two away and blow, but gallop back as quickly as possible, get *up wind* of your hounds, and blow them away. If by good luck they happen to throw up for a moment, out they will come to your horn, and you can lay both ends on the line

together. Unless the fox goes straight away up wind, it is almost always better to blow your hounds out at a place where your fox has *not* gone, and lay them on all together. Always have one way of blowing when the fox is away—one that neither the field nor the hounds can mistake—and unless the latter are running very hard, you will see how they will come tumbling out to it. All hounds hate struggling in thick covert, and are more or less anxious to get away. But never be tempted to use this note for any other purpose. If you do, its charm is gone. You cannot, to quote Lord Henry Bentinck again, lie to your hounds with impunity. Indeed, in hunting a fox in the open you should hardly use your horn at all. I am no advocate for much horn : as Mr. Vyner says, in season it is like a word, “How good it is”; but when it is blown I want it to give forth no uncertain sound, so that every one may know what is meant by it, hounds and all. If you are always blowing your horn, whether you want hounds or not, you might as well be playing the concertina for all they will care for it.

When you come to the first check it is almost a certainty that the fox has turned right or left. Of course, if a good one, he may turn again and make his original point, so do you sit still. Try and keep the field off the hounds, and encourage them to try, up wind at first if possible : the fox has most likely turned down wind, but the hounds will almost swing their own cast unaided up wind ; and if the fox *has* turned in this direction and they hit him off, he is yours ; nothing but an open drain can save him. Meanwhile, cast your eye well forward

and down wind, and try if you can see the fox or anything suggestive, such as a man running, sheep disturbed, or having a run together, to show where he is gone. When the pack have finished their cast, then, and not till then, *go to them* : don't stand and blow ; whisper a word of encouragement in their ears, and cast them on the best scenting ground you can see, in a body *in front* of you. You will be able to keep the field off their backs much better in this way than if you started off jumping with the pack at your horse's tail and all the hard-riding fools of the field mixed up with them. If the assisted up-wind cast and the down-wind cast both end in silence, it looks bad ; but always remember that if your down-wind cast be a wide one the fox *may* have gone to ground short of it, or you may have cast over his line owing to a bit of bad scenting ground. All you can do then is to use your discretion. I remember a season or two ago, after having come a considerable way, the hounds threw up among a perfect sea of greasy wheat-fields, in which there seemed to be positively no scent at all. The orthodox casts having produced no result, I noticed there was one grass field about a mile and a half ahead—an oasis in the desert. I thought, " Well, the fox is lost anyhow, but if by good luck he has crossed that field, the hounds will show a line." I cantered on, and they did show a line, with the result that we were able to keep on after the fox and eventually kill him in a neighbouring country.

When you come to a covert let your hounds hunt the line through it. I do not like the plan of having them whipped off the line and casting

beyond it. Never take the hounds off their noses if you can help it. Similarly, when your fox is beat, and you see him before hounds, hold your tongue, and by no means take them off their noses unless you are *perfectly certain* you can give them a view. If the fox pops through a hedge and they do not see him you will have lost a lot of time, as the hounds will not hunt for a few minutes, but will stand staring about, expecting to see the fox. The only time it is allowable to lift them after a beaten fox is when they are running for a head of open earth or a covert full of fresh foxes. But never, under any circumstances, go and ride the fox, leaving your hounds. I have seen many huntsmen do this, but I never yet saw one catch a fox by himself, though I have seen some very nearly do it.

Your fox is dead and the day over. Travel home quietly, and do not have the hounds hurried. Stop somewhere if the day has been very hard, and give your horses some chilled water or gruel if you can get it ; but do not stop long, and never go inside a house, no matter whose it is. When you get home feed your hounds *yourself*, with judgment. The man who hunts the hounds should always feed them ; not because feeding them makes them any fonder of him, but because the huntman knows, or ought to know, how much each hound requires. Never let them eat to repletion ; if you do, what is the result ? In every pack there are some slow, shy feeders : while these are playing with their food the greedy ones are fairly gorging themselves. The next day's hunting will find the light feeders some two or three fields ahead of the gorgers, to

the detriment of the looks and sport of the pack. Years ago hounds were always washed after hunting. I do not think this a good plan—they will soon clean themselves in the straw ; but if it is pouring with rain when you return to kennel, so that whatever you do you can make the hounds no wetter, I can see no harm in throwing some nice warm broth over them, and it certainly makes them look well the next day. Always have two lodging rooms for your hunting pack ; put them in one directly after feeding, and shift them into another for the rest of the night in about an hour and a half's time. This will prevent a lot of kennel lameness, which is really rheumatism.

In breeding I see no reason why pregnant bitches should not run with the pack if you are at all short : of course they must be stopped in good time. They should then be turned out of the kennel and given their liberty all day. I know this causes some complaint if the kennels are near a village, as these old ladies are sad thieves ; but having kennels near a village is such a manifest advantage to the latter that complaint really ought not to be made. Five puppies are quite enough for any mother to bring up. After the middle of May four are plenty. Do all you can to induce farmers and others to walk puppies ; without good walks every pack *must* deteriorate. Show an interest in your puppies by looking them up at summer exercise. When they come in from quarters, and distemper and yellows break out, you will have your hands full, and must not mind having to get up in the night and attend to the sick ones. There are all sorts of recipes, homœo-

pathic as well as allopathic, but the best medicines are warmth, care, and attention. It is not sufficient to drop the food down before the puppy ; you must stay and see that he eats it. Yellows is a much more dangerous disease than distemper, and coming with it, as it often does, is almost always fatal. Calomel in some form or other seems to be the only remedy, and that a very uncertain one. Never let the old and young hounds lodge or feed together till cub-hunting. If rabies break out, it almost always comes from some hound having been bitten at quarters. If you have once had rabies in your kennel you will never forget it.

Ride your horses fairly, and do not try and gain the praise of ignorant onlookers by jumping unnecessary fences ; and do not be always quarrelling with your horse and jaggng at his mouth—the best riders are those who are on good terms with their horses. Don't grumble ; don't quarrel with the stud-groom. Remember you are one of the luckiest men in the world, paid for doing what is or what ought to be your greatest pleasure. Do not be downhearted if you get into a run of bad luck and are tempted to think you will never catch a fox again, and when you hear things said which would try the patience of Job. Luck will change, and you will begin to think you can never lose a fox again. Talk to your hounds and make much of them ; never speak angrily or uncivilly to them. Whatever you do, always try and get them to think they are doing it all themselves. If you *have* to stop them at dark, or off a vixen, try and do it when they come to a check ; but if you are obliged to stop them roughly, get off your horse and make

friends with them again. Show them they have done no wrong by persevering on. Always ask to have the mute hounds, skirterers, and noisy ones drafted at once. These are faults that always get worse, and as Jorrocks says, a skirting hound, like a skirting rider, is sure to have a lot of followers. I don't call a hound a skirter that cuts corners going to the cry. This is what every good hound ought to do.

Be kind to your whips; do not try and slip them. When you turn back drawing a covert always let them know by a good loud "Yooi, try back!" They will work all the better for you if you help them in these little ways. When you have made up your mind to go to a holloa, take your hounds off their noses and travel along. Do not, if you can help it, let them hunt again till you have found out from the man who holloaed exactly which way the fox really went. He very likely turned him, and the hounds may take it heel way; it is poor consolation to be told by a grinning rustic, after the hounds have settled with a good cry, "They be a running back scent." It is easier to strike the line heel way than people think. Casting you may get on the heel line of another fox which has left the covert since you did. I have often been laughed at for doing it and told to trust my hounds; but even if they are running hard, and I come across a man who has seen the fox, I do not think a few seconds are thrown away in finding out which way the fox's head was. As my father used to say, take every advantage you can of your fox. He will take every one he possibly can of you.

Look out along a road. It is a curious thing, but hounds hardly ever turn out of one exactly where the fox has gone. They either go too far or more commonly not far enough. If you can manage to get half the pack in the road and the other half in two lots on each side of it, you are in a capital position; and when those in the road throw up you can press on without fear of overrunning the scent. Do not hurry the hounds in a road, and beware how you encourage one that is always making a hit under these circumstances. If you make too much of him you will turn him into a rogue. Always acknowledge to your master when you have lost the fox, and do not go dragging on, and slip the hounds into a covert and count the fresh fox you find as the one you have been hunting. Your Master may wish the covert drawn in a different way. Be cheery in drawing woods; make plenty of noise, so that the hounds may know where you are. If they are very fond of you, they will be listening about for you if you go on the silent system. Hounds that habitually hang back in covert should be drafted, but after you have drawn one blank you will only make these offenders worse by standing and blowing. Move on, and they will catch you up. Once more, but it cannot be too often repeated, never interfere with your hounds at checks till they have made their own casts first. Again to quote Lord Henry Bentinck, hounds that are repeatedly messed about and cast will in a short time become demoralised so that they will do nothing to help themselves.



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STRAGGLERS.

From an Oil Painting by T Blinks

III. ADVICE TO WHIPPERS-IN

Summer Exercise, and Breaking Young Hounds.

OF course, during the first few weeks of horse exercise, no young hound should be allowed to break away at all, or the whole entry will soon become wild and demoralised.

Later on, if a hare gets up, or any other temptation to riot arises, the hounds should be allowed a good look at the cause of it without any one saying a word. The steady hounds, when they see what it is, will do nothing, but if one of the wilder customers wants to have his fling, let him go for at least two hundred yards, as long as he gets through no fence over which you cannot follow him, and then ride quietly and quickly to his head, and let him have it as hot as you can. When he has felt the lash, then, and not till then, rate him soundly and frighten him back to the huntsman.

If you ride after a riotous hound, holloaing at him from behind, you not only destroy your chance of hitting him, but will, by your ill-judged noise, as often as not make some of the others join him. Similarly, in the hunting season, when the pack is being cast, and a young hound starts after a hare, *the quieter you are, and every one else is, the better.* Get to the offender and punish him severely if you possibly can, but do not begin holloaing at him, and thereby causing the rest of the pack to get their heads up. It is far from an easy thing to hit a hound when he is running riot, and it is an

accomplishment that few whippers-in, in these days, seem to possess ; but remember, the less noise you make before you get to him, the better chance you have, and above all never be tempted to revenge yourself *by hitting him at some future time when he is doing no harm.*

If a hound hang back in covert after it has been drawn blank, ride in and give him a hiding if you can, but never hit one and cut him off from the huntsman after he is outside. Hounds that habitually hang back in covert should be drafted speedily.

Always be attentive when the pack is travelling along a road to prevent their picking up anything, and always be ready to open the gates in turn.

Drawing and Running in Covert.

Remember that the moment the hounds throw off you are as much on duty as a sentinel at a Royal Palace, and if any of the field be foolish enough to try and engage you in a conversation you should respectfully, but firmly, decline to have your attention taken off the hounds. Always remember that the Master is your master, and not "the field" or any member of it. I have actually seen a whipper-in standing in a ride, in a wood, where we had a beaten fox before us, and where there were several fresh foxes, waiting while one of the field fumbled for some time in his pockets, to find a sovereign for him, I suppose.

When a large covert, where there are plenty of foxes, is being drawn up wind, which should

always be done if possible, the whippers-in should both keep near the hounds, about level with the leading ones and a bit wide, one on each side of the pack, and should not ride on to view a fox. You will get no credit from the huntsman for holloaing a fox a quarter of a mile off when the pack have unkennelled a brace and are on the point of dividing close to him. I have more than once seen a whipper-in get so far up wind of the pack that the latter have found a fox and turned short back down wind, and he has gone riding on and known nothing about it. Besides, it is far better for hounds to find their fox for themselves than that they should be holloaed to him over a ride, and they should always be allowed to do so in the cub-hunting months. The case is altered later on in the season, and if a woodland be drawn down wind, or there be no wind at all, or if foxes are very scarce, or the covert is very thin. In most of these cases one whipper-in should keep well ahead of the huntsman, or the best, or perhaps the only, fox may slip off without being seen and get a long start. There is a vast difference between up and down wind and thick and thin covert, yet some whippers-in never seem to understand this.

Wherever you are, as soon as you hear the hounds find, and your huntsman cheer them, *get to them as soon as you can*, and take a ride parallel to that along which the huntsman is riding so that you may have the pack between you and him ; do your best to maintain to his horn and holloa, and prevent the pack from dividing. If they cross a ride into another quarter let him know at once. *Stick to your hounds and never mind the foxes.*

In cub-hunting when your orders are to head the fox back, be careful to stand well out from the covert, keep your eyes, as the American saying is, *skinned*, and crack your whip and halloa at the fox the moment he shows his face ; it will be too late to do so if he gets twenty or thirty yards away before you see him. When you have turned him back, let the huntsman know by halloaing "Tally-ho-back !"

If you are in a ride which you have been told to prevent a fox from crossing, a little *judicious* use of your voice may help to do what is wanted, and will do no harm, *as long as the pack are running with a good cry* ; but the instant they throw up, shut your mouth and tap your saddle, or you will get their heads up at the very moment when every hound should have his down looking for his fox. Nothing is more irritating to a huntsman than to have the attention of his hounds taken off at this critical moment by a fool of a whip halloaing "Loo-Loo !" just when he ought to be perfectly quiet.

In watching a ride or looking out for a view anywhere, never take your eyes or your attention off for a moment. If you do, the fox will surely cross at that very instant, and you will look an idiot if you tell the huntstman the fox has not crossed or gone your way, and the pack come up and take the scent up with a good cry. When the hunted fox crosses be sure you halloa "Tally-ho-over !" and if he turns back "Tally-ho-back !"

You will do more harm than good by turning a fox back in a wood unless he is almost done, as

hounds will run him better on fresh ground, and if he keeps straight on. But when he is beaten he should be kept back in one quarter if possible. This should always be done, both in cub-hunting and regular hunting ; also if there are many fresh foxes in the covert, so as to avoid changing on to one of them.

Breaking Covert in Regular Hunting.

Where your object is to view the fox away, stand close to the covert, and in a position where you can see as far along the side of it and over as much country as possible ; let the fox get right well away, a good field, at least, and then holloa " Forward away ! " as loud as you like. Watch him as far as you can, and observe, at all events, where he went through the first fence. If he goes away a long distance from you, do not ride up to the place where he broke and begin holloaing down wind, where no one can hear you, but rather turn back towards the huntsman so as to make certain of being heard.

Similarly, if you hear a halloa that the huntsman cannot, do not ride on to the person who is halloaing, for if you do the huntsman will be no more able to hear you than him. Turn back towards the huntsman and pass the halloa on to him.

Never ride after the fox or on his line at all. Should the fox show himself and turn back, *keep perfectly quiet*, and he will probably go away directly. If, however, the day is a very bad scenting one, and the huntsman is evidently going

to draw over his fox, you must let him know in some way or other that there is a fox in the covert. When the fox is away, and the huntsman is coming up with the pack, ride close up to him and tell him quietly what has happened, and how far you saw the fox.

Always remember that the whipper-in who gets most credit from the huntsman is he who makes the latter's task the easiest.

If one or two couples of hounds come out on the line of the fox ahead of the rest, *it is your duty to stop them at all hazards*. If they get two or three fields start in a stiff country they will spoil any run, however good the scent. This is especially the case on a wild windy day when the fox has started down wind. On days of this sort, and indeed on a good many others, it is better for the huntsman to blow his hounds out of covert at a place *where the fox has not gone away*, and lay them on in a body afterwards. One minute *judiciously* spent in giving every hound a fair start will be saved over and over again in the course of the run.

When the hounds are away it is usual for the first whip to go on with them, and for the second to stay and see them all away ; but if the second whip halloas the fox away, and the first is a good distance back, the former should go on with the huntsman till the latter comes up, when the second whip can fall back and save his horse, which may have to carry him all day.

When you are bringing up the tail hounds, and you are near the body of the pack, be careful not to make any noise, or you will infallibly get the

leading hounds' heads up should they happen to be at fault. If the latter are running hard those with you will soon leave you and join them.

Hunting a Fox in the Open.

When you have to turn hounds remember that you cannot do so *unless you get to their heads*. Very often one sees a huntsman blowing his horn, an unjumpable fence between him and the pack, and the whipper-in on the same side of the fence as the huntsman rating and halloaing at the hounds. He is really doing his best to drive them still farther from the huntsman and increasing his difficulties. No huntsman who knows anything of his business will be angry with you for not being at the heads of the hounds on all occasions, as it is often a physical impossibility for you to be so ; but he will be angry, and rightly so, if, just to show you are somewhere near, and are doing something, you get between him and the pack and rate them farther away from him. Similarly, when he is blowing them away from a covert after a fox, get to them and rate them on if you can, but if that be impossible, do the next best thing and hold your tongue.

When the pack are running riot or heel, and you go to stop them, take a look at the fences and gates before you start, and make up your mind exactly where you will get to their heads, and do not ride crossways at the middle of the pack only to cross the line behind them just as the tail hounds are going through a fence.

In the open when you have turned the hounds, which, if you get to their heads, is done with a word, your work is finished for the moment ; on no account ride after them cracking your whip and rating them, or you will very likely drive them clean over the line of scent, and on a bad scenting day are nearly sure to do so. Your best plan is to canter back towards the huntsman so as to be ready to help him to prevent any of the hounds from taking up the line heel way. This stupid bungle is generally the huntsman's own fault, as he ought to cast his hounds *in front of him* ; but sometimes on windy days, when the fox has gone straight down wind, it is a little difficult to prevent it. When you are sent on to obtain information from some one who has seen the fox, find out as quickly as you can all he has to tell you and then *take off your cap*, and point out the fox's line. If you point with your hand only it is often quite impossible to see it from a distance.

When the pack run into a covert of moderate size the first whip should watch which side the huntsman goes, and should ride along the other, taking care to keep as nearly opposite him as possible. The second whip, especially if the hounds are running up wind, or have a tired fox before them, should hang back till he is quite certain they are "forward away" on the line. If they are running with even a moderate scent, the whips will do more good by acting in this way than by galloping on to the end for a view, as they will run no risk of heading the fox and perhaps spoiling the run of the season. *If the fox keeps straight on the hounds will run him* if there is any

scent at all, but he will very likely be lost if the whole establishment goes forward and he lies down and slips back without being seen.

Some huntsmen, on nearing a small covert, are fond of catching hold of their hounds, and holding them forward so as to hit the fox's line if he has gone through. If this be done it is an absolute necessity that one of the whips should hang back till the line has been hit off. If the covert be a large one, the huntsman will, of course, go in with his hounds, and the first whip should take a ride parallel to him, so that the two may have the hounds between them. If the hounds are running down wind the second whip may with advantage get on to the far end, but if it be up wind or the fox be tired, he will do better to keep a quarter behind the huntsman, as in these cases the fox is sure to turn back before he has gone far, *and if he does not the hounds will soon run into him without help.*

A hunted fox is a most difficult thing to be certain about, and at times even the most experienced will be deceived. A fox that is very tired indeed will not seldom, and especially if he is being halloaed at, look and move exactly like a fresh one ; but if you are lucky enough to get a good view of him without his seeing you, you can generally tell. If you are a good way ahead of the hounds, and the hunted fox comes up to you and lies down, and you hear the pack hunting up to him, *let him lie* ; watch him, but do not say a word. Every minute he lies there is bringing his enemies nearer to him, and making his death more certain. Of course, if the hounds be manifestly at fault, or have changed on to a fresh fox, you must attract the huntsman's

attention somehow. In the open this can generally be done without moving the fox by holding up your cap ; in covert you will probably be obliged to give him a halloa, but you must not do so till other means have failed.

Lastly, save your horses as much as you can consistently with doing your work, and save them before they are tired ; it is too late to do so afterwards. Always choose the best and soundest going you can. Jump no large fence when a small one or a gate will land you as near the hounds.

Try and keep up your zeal and attention all day, and be as keen in the evening as in the morning ; and as long as the huntsman thinks it worth while to persevere after his fox do you persevere too, and do your level best to help to end the day with a kill, *however hopeless such a result may at times appear.*

Always be neat and tidy, and take a pride in cleaning your hunting things well and putting them on smartly.



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WELL WITH THEM 19

HUNTING FROM A WOMAN'S POINT OF VIEW.

BY LADY AUGUSTA FANE

I IMAGINE that there are very few readers who will differ from me in the opinion that fox-hunting is the finest sport in the world. Fishing, big-game shooting, pig-sticking, etc., each and all have their attractions and merits, but they do not combine the varied interests of a fox-hunter's life. Besides the primary motive of finding, hunting, and killing a fox, there is the art of riding, the love of horses and hounds, the excitement of possible danger, and the delights of an outdoor existence. Add to these the pleasure of cheery companions all intent on the same amusement, and I think even the members of an Anti-Sport League would hardly assert that there was not a great excuse for our madness!

Certainly hunting is the one sport in which women can absolutely hold their own with men. For one thing it may be asserted that the majority of women are infinitely better riders than the majority of men; and it is essential to the real enjoyment of hunting, and for the safety of all concerned, that everyone who hunts should know

how to ride. By "riding" I mean, first, having complete control of one's horse, and, secondly, some definite idea of the right way to put a horse at every variety of fence. For instance, it is certain death in the long run for anyone to gallop with a loose rein all day over ridge and furrow, or through heavy plough land, and then try to jump stiff timber without even attempting to steady his hunter by pulling him back and making him jump off his hocks; and yet I have seen people enormously astonished and inclined to feel very ill-treated when they have taken a heavy "toss" entirely due to their omitting to do what is absolutely essential. It is also as well to remember that there is a difference of 2 feet and more between the top of the ridge and the bottom of the furrow; therefore, if a horse be allowed to rush along out of hand and take off out of the furrow, the fence will be 2 feet higher than if he had jumped from the ridge; and there is a mighty difference between 4 feet rails and 6 feet ditto!

Racing at blind ditches generally leads to disaster, and so does ambling slowly down to a wide brook. Serious accidents are constantly occurring from sheer ignorance of horsemanship. Many lives would be saved if only this rule could be made compulsory: that no one should be allowed to hunt until he or she could show some knowledge of how to ride over a country.

Women usually enjoy the great advantage of having ridden much more when children than men. Girls are tearing about on ponies when the boys are at school, so that riding becomes a second nature by the time they are young women. Then

the side saddle is a great assistance ; the grip of the pommels gives a firm seat, and longer reins are also required. Now a firm seat and long reins go some way towards securing the greatest gift a rider can possess—namely, “light hands.” Some people say that “good hands” are a fairy present, born not made ; that they can never be gained either by practice or precept. Personally, I think it is quite practicable to improve heavy hands if their owner will recollect to keep them as low down on the horse’s neck as possible, and turn the thumbs up, using the spring of the wrist instead of dragging at the reins and hanging on to the horse’s mouth with the whole strength of the arms, which a rider must do if his hands are up in the air. Luckily, with the habitual conceit of human nature, everyone is convinced that he or she, at any rate, has first-rate “hands.” Note how easy it is to sell a hard-mouthed pulling horse, provided he is a fine fencer. The intending purchaser mentally murmurs to himself, “A mere matter of hands—he won’t pull with *me* !”

Many women ride with a spur. This much more often than not irritates a horse and makes him fidget and strike out ; moreover, it is of no earthly use, and if he be a refusing brute he will require a spur on either side to keep him straight at the fence, and if he be only a sluggard the pressure of the heel is quite sufficient. A long spur is both cruel and dangerous ; it constantly gets caught in the girths when the rider is thrown, and to be “hung up” is a most unpleasant feeling. No woman should ever bring a horse out hunting which deliberately kicks in

gateways. Tying a red ribbon on its tail or wearing a card on your back with the word "Kicks!" printed on it is no excuse whatever for running the risk of breaking another person's leg or for laming a hunter. A horse will not kick out in a crowd, if you hold his head well up and keep working the bit in his mouth to occupy his attention, unless he is really vicious; in which case it is unpardonable to stand in a crowded gateway at all. Either sell the horse or else keep well out of the way.

A most necessary accomplishment is to learn how to open a bridle-gate quickly. There is nothing more provoking, or that gives rise to so much bad language, as to be kept waiting at a gate with hounds streaming ahead, an unjumpable obstacle on either side, and a duffer poking at the latch with the crop in the wrong hand, endeavouring to open the gate against his horse's head. Naturally, if you hit a horse on the nose, he runs back, and slam goes the gate. It is so very easy to take your crop in your left hand for a gate that opens to the left, and *vice versa*, placing your horse so as to give yourself plenty of room to swing the gate well back. The same applies when you are cantering through a gate that has been already swung back and is not fastened open: have your crop ready in the hand nearest to it, and give it a push to prevent its closing on those following immediately behind you. This is only showing ordinary good manners: you would not let a door bang in anyone's face. I once heard of a lad having £500 a year left him by an old gentleman because he held a hunting gate open for the veteran. This was one of those rare cases of virtue being rewarded! If

you kick a gate open with your foot be sure and take the latter out of the stirrup first ; it is not a very safe proceeding anyhow, as your toe may catch in the bars and give you a very nasty fall by pulling you out of the saddle.

Having thoroughly acquired the art of riding, the next thing to possess is a keen eye, a cool brain, self control, and the power of being able to think. Useful attributes, you will say, in any walk of life ! Yes, but what is the hunting-field but a small world in itself ? In this world, moreover, it does not pay to be selfish or ill-tempered, and no true sportsman ever is. What can be the use, for instance, of flying into a dreadful rage when you get a bad start in a hunt ? It is annoying, certainly, to be left behind because you have funked the first fence, or been chattering and not attending to business (usually the reasons why one does get left), though should such an untoward event occur dozens of other causes are put forward by way of an excuse, regardless of the fact that nobody cares in the least whether you are out of it or not. Be a philosopher and keep calm ! Use your eyes and brain to get you out of the dilemma. Don't gallop wildly at the tail of the hunt in a "follow my leader" style, but look which way the hounds are turning ; if you cannot see them, consider for which covert the fox is most likely to make, and endeavour to get there as quickly as you can, taking care however, if you should arrive first, not to head the fox—a dire offence. With any luck you will be able to join in the gallop before all the fun is over, and half a loaf is much better than no bread.

Some women are quite contented to follow in the wake of their particular male belonging, and go anywhere that he leads. Surely this is very dull and uninteresting? It is impossible in the Shires for a lady always to go first and take her own line, but she ought to have her own ideas, and consider for herself which is the best and quickest way out of a field. If she makes a mistake and takes a wrong turn it is much better to have done it "on her own" and know the reason than to get lost through someone else's stupidity. As a famous American writer said, "He who never makes a mistake never makes anything"; and if you realise where you were at fault it helps you for the next time. To see a run really well, endeavour to keep in the front rank with those who are riding either on the right or on the left of hounds. Never ride just behind hounds. If they check suddenly you will jump into the middle of the pack and make an enemy of the huntsman for life; or if you avoid this catastrophe you will drive the hounds still further off the line. Some years ago a well-known follower of the Quorn was asked where he had been in a certain gallop. He replied, "In my usual place; forty yards to the right of Ruby!" Ruby being a celebrated bitch on account of her having been the heroine of a remarkable incident. It was in the season of 1889, very late in the afternoon. We drew Walton Thorns in the Quorn Monday country, and had one of the best and fastest gallops of the year. Towards the finish it was so dark no one could keep near the hounds, though we could hear them, like magical music, now close, now far,

then silence ; and at length we knew they had killed their fox. As Tom Firr was standing in the lane, near the quaint little church above Welby Fish Ponds, blowing his horn, Ruby came up and laid the mask at his horse's feet.

Foxhounds are most sagacious, and there is surely nothing prettier than to see a good pack cast themselves away round a big pasture. Observe how busy they are, each one working all he knows. Suddenly one picks up the line, and gives out a triumphant note, calling the others. Then off they go, with a dash and a drive, as though their lives depended on it. Of course there are individual hounds who are much cleverer than the others ; these will take the lead when there is any difficulty, and are invaluable to the huntsman. If you are fond of animals it will interest you to watch and learn for yourself which these are. Numbers of people come out hunting for the sole purpose of jumping fences ; at the end of the day they can tell you little or nothing about the hunt, but a great deal about the places they have got over ; and it is very strange how many enormous fences they seem to find. To hear them talk you would gather that the whole country they had traversed was composed of 8 feet rails and 20 feet brooks, not to mention a railway gate or two ! Really, a gallop round a steeplechase course would have done just as well, if not better, as the hounds would not have been in their way !

But, still, what does it matter ? Everyone hunts to please himself, and I am the last person to suggest that jumping fences is not a great pleasure and excitement. On the contrary, a run without

any leaping is flat and unprofitable. The exhilarating feeling of sailing across a fine grass country, carried by a perfect hunter over every obstacle that comes in your way, with hounds racing before you, is to my mind the most perfect of all human sensations. For those who have never experienced it I have the most profound pity. Mercifully, they do not know what they have missed, or they would commit suicide on the spot ! Unfortunately there is not a screaming scent nor a great gallop every day of the week, neither can one always be on a paragon horse ; therefore it is a great thing to be really fond of the science of the sport. If you are, even the worst day has its charms. Try to imagine what you would do if you were the huntsman, or where you would go had you been the fox ; the latter thought is the chief preoccupation of the former. One conclusion you will arrive at very quickly, and that is how extremely difficult it is to be a first-rate huntsman, and you will never join in again with the would-be-clever ignoramuses who hold forth and expatiate on the demerits of that invaluable functionary, finding continual fault with everything he does. I should like them to try for one day to hunt a pack of hounds, just to see what sort of a hash they would make of it. The more one hunts, the more one finds out the truth that it takes a genius to be a great huntsman, and that without this *rara avis* it is impossible to have any continuous sport, no matter how good the country or how well bred the hounds. A huntsman has so much to contend with : bad scent, foxes headed, hounds over-ridden, collie dogs and cattle in every field, besides the fox being one of the cleverest and

most cunning little beasts in the world, up to every conceivable dodge and trick. He disappears in the strangest way ; just when there seems to be every chance of catching him he vanishes, apparently into the air ; all the time he is probably looking out from some familiar corner of his own and metaphorically holding his sides with laughter at having outwitted his enemy.

Worthy folks who fancy they are more humane than their neighbours write about the cruelty of fox-hunting, drawing fancy pictures of a poor, timid, terrified little creature pursued by savage dogs, ruthless viragoes, and brutal men ! As a matter of fact, foxes constantly live to a green old age, and defeat their pursuers season after season. They do not even pretend to be frightened. How often we have seen a fox break out of covert, look round, give himself a good shake, and, whisking his brush, trot off without the slightest sign of fear ! He knows where he means to go, and all the safe refuges *en route* ; and if he gets tired he is familiar with the woods where he can find a friend to take his place.

Foxes really are amazingly cool hands, if that phrase be permissible. I was hunting one day with the Belvoir near Buckminster when I saw "Mr. Charles" calmly pursuing the even tenor of his way with a fine fat goose thrown over his back. Hounds were running in full cry, not 400 yards away, after another fox. It would, indeed, be a sad day for reynard if hunting were ever stopped. He would then be treated as vermin, poisoned and trapped, and this beautiful little quadruped would soon be extinct. It sounds Irish,

but, literally, a fox owes his existence to fox-hunting. He is looked on as almost sacred, and the man who shoots him is an outcast beyond the hope of redemption.

To prove the consideration shown to foxes, I was once told a most original reason why a certain M.F.H. would not cub-hunt when the ground was hard. This gentleman said he did not mind laming his horses, nor did he fear for his hounds' feet, but he knew if cubs were rattled about on hard ground they lost their action !

One of the curses of modern hunting is the artificial "earths." These induce many foxes to go to ground, and the places are known to every poacher who wants to steal foxes for sale. If it were only possible to follow the precepts of old Tom Smith and have all the earths stunk out and closed from October till March, very many runs would cease to be spoilt by the fox getting to ground.

Numerous theories are propounded as to the best method of preserving foxes ; but they are naturally a wild breed of animal, so the less they are treated artificially the better. It is even a doubtful experiment to bring them from other countries with a view to improving the home-bred ones, as imported foxes constantly get the mange from being fed on dead meat instead of live rats and rabbits. Before they can roam about in search of their own food, being strangers in the land, this horrible complaint takes hold of them. Some Canadian foxes were brought over by the late Mr. Martin, of Barrow-on-Soar, in the spring of 1884. The excellence of the following season, called by

many the "best season on record," was attributed by some authorities to the strength and enduring qualities of these colonials and their progeny. The oldest Meltonian, however, declares that 1884 was the last wet season in Leicestershire, the grass was almost too deep to ride, and that there is never an extraordinary scent such as they had that year, unless the country is really soaked with rain. Since then the land has been terribly over-drained ; all the springs are running dry, and there is an alarm every few months of a water famine. Certainly all the best gallops take place now when the ground is hard and the dust flying.

But who can explain the vagaries of that strange thing "scent" ? No one ! Why is there a burning scent at one hour, and none the next ? Is it caused by wind and temperature ; or do some foxes exhale a stronger scent than others ? Is an east wind with a high barometer propitious, or a southerly wind and a cloudy sky ? Tom Firr averred that there never could be a scent with a blue haze, and that he knew if it were a good scenting day by observing how hounds came out of covert after their quarry. If they hovered and dwelt a few moments before settling to the line, the scent was good ; for if it were poor they knew it at once, and came rushing and tumbling out, making all the haste they could not to lose what little scent there was.

In conclusion, I must add a few words about the good fellowship that exists amongst hunting people. Hunting is a great attraction in itself. Social duties are so easily disposed of. No ceremonious calls are required, necessitating a long

drive on a cold afternoon, concluding with the laughable farce of hot tea and a red nose. You can have your chat at the meet or on the way to draw. If you are bored with one person it is easy in a crowd to drop back and talk to another, leaving the bore in happy unconsciousness that you quitted him on purpose. Twenty "visits" are got through in this way without any fatigue, and when you have invited everyone who is likely to pass your house on the way home to come in and refresh, you have completed your whole duty to your neighbour. Open-handed hospitality is the rule, and a total stranger is treated as a friend. How can you stand on ceremony with a man or woman who, for instance, has had a bad fall? You must take the victim of bad luck (or bad judgment or clumsiness) into the nearest house, send for a doctor, and do your best for him. No time to find out if the lady has been presented at Court or if the man is a burglar! All you know is that the sufferer was enjoying "the sport of kings" and belonged to the brotherhood of sportsmen; that he has met with misfortune, and must be helped.

It would be an excellent thing, let me add before I finish, if all women who hunt knew what to do in an emergency when a doctor is not to be found on the spot—how to bandage broken arms and legs, so as to prevent a compound fracture when the patient is moved, etc. A few weeks in the summer would be well employed by attending a "First Aid to the Wounded class." I know it is the fashion for the moment to jeer at the manners and customs of hunting people, and try to find evil

which does not exist in everything they do. If only our traducers would come and see for themselves, I think they would be surprised to find the extraordinary amount of kindness that is shown, and good that is done, in a neighbourhood composed of hunting folk, and they would be forced to acknowledge that hunting ladies do not compare unfavourably with their town sisters. The latter spend their lives in playing bridge, talking gossip, and gambling in stocks; eat four huge meals a day, sit up all night, and for exercise loll about in an electric landaulette. A fashionable dame remarked to me one day that it was useless to have any nerve and stupid not to be frightened. Now I ask of anybody, what sort of a son would a woman like that give to her country? Surely it must be better for future generations that women should lead a healthy outdoor existence. It is obvious if you want to hunt four or five days a week, and wish to keep your nerve and your good looks, that you must go early to bed, eat little and drink less, and lead a healthy life generally.

WILD STAG HUNTING

BY VISCOUNT EBRINGTON

A GOOD many people are in the habit of visiting the West Country, in order to see something of that wild stag hunting which of late years has become so well known and fashionable in the sporting world.

I am afraid not a few go home disappointed. The scenery on and around Exmoor is beautiful enough to please the most exacting, but sport is not always good ; indeed sometimes for weeks together it is indifferent. First-rate runs are rare in every sort of hunting, and though one man may have the luck to drop in for two fine chases within ten days, another may return after a three weeks' holiday without having shared in aught but woodland hunting, of which, though never very far from the hounds, he may in fact have seen next to nothing.

Whatever the comparative merits of stag and fox hunting may be, the latter has one distinct advantage : you very seldom exhaust your day with one fox, and though the first found may be a short-running brute, there is always the hope and the chance that a second or a third may show

better sport. In stag hunting, however, a second draw is exceptional : the bringing to hand of any one deer is generally a fair day's work for the pack. However badly a stag may run, you cannot pretend you have marked him to ground and so trot away to another covert ; while even if you did you could not in any way depend on finding another, or on there being daylight to kill him if found.

You have to take for better or for worse the deer the harbourer puts you on to, bearing in mind always that the length of the stag hunting season is only ten weeks at the outside ; that it is very difficult to do justice to the whole country in that time ; and that the deer preservers in the neighbourhood of each fixture have what they regard as their own deer—often friends of old standing, the neglect of whom would cause bitter disappointment.

There is no preliminary cub hunting with the staghounds. The master will have the pack out three or four times perhaps before the opening day to get the hounds in wind and to blood them if possible ; but until the regular hunting begins the county is virtually undisturbed, so early in the season the stags do not take freely to the open, and woodland hunting is the rule ; good of its kind, and full of difficulties for huntsman and hounds ; but alas ! not so full of enjoyment for their followers.

The experiences of a stranger during August might be something of this kind.

Arriving punctually at the meet, at say Cloutsham, he would be in time to see the huntsman

dismount, and shut up the pack in an outhouse, while the master, after a little coffee-housing, engages in mysterious conversation with a mounted game-keeper.

Then the huntsman lets out four couple of hounds, remounts his horse and disappears. Half an hour later a glimpse may be caught of him drawing the mile-long covert that clothes the opposite hill, and then for two hours the proceedings to the uninitiated will practically be a blank. Occasionally hound or horn, cheer or rate, will be heard in the distance. From time to time the master and his men will be seen riding hard in various directions ; once in a while the tufters will show up plainly against the heather, and then be lost again in the sea of greenwood ; once or twice dark forms, which may be recognised as deer, will be visible across the valley, and these forms (though generally hinds) are proclaimed by the spectators to be stags of prodigious size.

All this is not very interesting. By 12.30 the stranger feels less inclined to blame the carriage parties who began luncheon at 11.15, and by 1.30 he is not sorry to accept an invitation to join one of them. But he has hardly got fairly started on his meal before long blasts on a horn are heard nearer and nearer, and the huntsman appears at a gallop, his horse showing unmistakable signs of hard work, and the three hounds following at his heels having evidently run fast and far.

Eager questions are rained upon him ; but, beyond uncomplimentary references to hinds and calves and to a "false old toad" with whom they have been in league, he is too wise to say

much, though, as he changes to a fresh horse and lets out the pack, he makes known that he is bound for Lee Corner. Whereon, to the stranger's surprise, a large portion of the field turn their backs on the hounds and betake themselves in another direction, in order, as presently appears, to go by the short cut through the woods, which the huntsman dare not attempt under the circumstances. For the whip is busy elsewhere, and there would be risk that the hounds might cross a line in the covert and break away.

Our friend, like a good sportsman, sticks to the pack, and after half an hour's trot through various narrow and very crowded gateways, along a rough track and across two deepish valleys, finds himself at Lee Corner, where the master and whip and all the knowing brigade are waiting with a couple of the tufters; the other couple having been last seen going out over the wet ground on Dunkery, two miles away, after a hind. The cool air on the open ground is welcome, for the sun in the sheltered lanes has been very hot; our friend's horse is in a lather, and he feels himself as if he would sooner bathe than hunt.

However, the pack are now laid on, and he is not the man to turn away; but the ground is dry and they cannot make much of it, for the deer is forty minutes ahead and has gone across the enclosures between the Horner and Hawkcombe valleys. For two or three fields the hounds can be followed closely; but now they disappear, bearing right-handed into a field of standing corn.

This necessitates a *détour*, but it is plain they have gone into the wood below; and soon the field

is jammed, a reeking mass, on a steep and stony cover-path, while the huntsman can be heard casting the hounds up the stream beneath, and the master remonstrates with another crowd of horsemen who are hurrying too close on the path behind them. Anon a hound speaks, and the huntsman cheers him once and again ; a second joins in, and very soon an outburst of melody proclaims a fresh find, while yells from the hill behind us show that the natives have viewed the stag crossing the enclosures on the further side of the valley. The field clatter down the path and urge their horses up the opposite steep, the foremost just reaching the top in time to see a tail hound or two disappear into the Porlock covers. Our friend follows his leader for half a mile along the higher path, and when the horse in front of him stops, he finds the whip halted at a spot which commands a great extent of the woodland and affords a beautiful view of Bossington Point across the rich Porlock Vale.

But, beyond the view and a few disturbed wood-pigeons, there is nothing to be seen. Distant horse hoofs are audible on a road below, but, listen as he will, the stranger hears nothing else but the panting of the horses near him, and the conversation of some ladies who are much interested in the defect of the new habit of a mutual friend.

Suddenly a jay begins to swear, and the whip rides on a few paces ; then he gathers up his reins, and our friend, who has watched his movements and is close behind, sees an antlered head disappear into the high larches just beyond. At the same time he hears a hound or two speaking, and

suddenly realises that the pack are running hard quite near him. Others also have seen the deer and tally him loudly, though he is in fact but a three-year-old, little bigger than a hind. Meanwhile the whip has quietly headed the hounds and turned them back to the huntsman, who retraces his steps a few hundred yards to the combe under the keeper's cottage, and puts the pack on the heel of the male deer, whom the hunted stag has turned out to do duty for him.

The hounds do not care much about it, but he rides with them as best he may through the coppice, and soon there is a crash that shows that they have roused something. Our stag it must be, too, for the huntsman blows his horn lustily, and hurries his horse back to the path to follow the pack. These are presently to be seen crossing the road, and people begin to talk about going to sea at the Wear. A strong contingent, however, leaving the road which points seaward, take a different path uphill, and our friend, seeing the whip's red coat in front, follows them. At the top of the cover there is another halt; the whip leaves the ride and pushes his horse through the stunted oaks to a point where he can overlook the combe that runs down to Ashley Combe House. Except that the birds are flying out, there is hardly anything to show that hunting is going on, but watching attentively a narrow space where the foliage is less thick beside the stream, our friend gets a glimpse of a hound's stern waving busily, and he hears the huntsman's cheer.

Next there is a shout from the harvest field opposite, "There goes up," followed by much

running and gesticulation. The whip knows what it all means, and is off at once ; and soon our friend is surprised and gratified at finding himself beside the leading hounds, who are not a hundred yards from the lane up which he is riding and are running hard over grass fields in the direction of the moor.

Unluckily a wide belt of plantation and a road intervene ; the hounds are so close to the stag that they push him through the former, and it looks as if he must face the open. But the road is thick with carriages, bicycles, and tourists, and every mouth that has not a sandwich in it bawls at the deer as he shows himself. It is too much—he turns short back—and in another five-and-twenty minutes our friend finds himself again very near the spot where the hounds were laid on and hears a breathless rustic inform the huntsman that his quarry is down the water, not two minutes before him.

The huntsman does not need the hint to hurry to the rivulet below ; the hounds are there already, and of their own accord are casting themselves downward. A glance at the freshly splashed pebbles shows that they are right, and Anthony trots briskly on. Presently the whip's whistle is heard a quarter of a mile ahead ; he catches hold of his hounds and gallops to the spot, and in another moment the unmistakable clamour of the bay proclaims that the pack have got up to their deer. The field gather like vultures to the sound, and soon the narrow path beside the water is a mass of hot humanity and perspiring horses. Presently the hound chorus dies away as the stag, galloping now

in, now beside the shallow stream, makes another effort for his life.

The field follow in hot pursuit. Our friend is rather tired of hammering along stony tracks, and drops to the rear of the cavalcade. Suddenly there is a cry of "Look back !" and he becomes aware that the hounds are running towards him through the wood above. He is watching them eagerly, when a rattle on the shingle turns his attention to the stream, and lo ! there is the stag, full of beauty and dignity, as he waits with head erect for his fate. Another minute and the hounds have caught a view ; the bay begins again ; the deer is quite exhausted now—"properly runned up," to use the expressive vernacular—and is soon secured and killed ; and after his antlers have been duly admired, and his age fixed as positively as though the poor beast had put in a baptismal certificate before he died, the field separate.

The farmers and deer preservers are well pleased at the death of a stag whose size and weight show that he had lived at free quarters on their crops for many a year. The master is not ill satisfied. No one loves a gallop better, and he would have liked to have given the field more fun ; but he has killed a stag that wanted killing. The fresh find after cold hunting was very improving for the young hounds ; the long bay will have greatly helped to enter the puppies, for it gave them a good view of their game, and only two of them were kicked. Those who hunt to ride are naturally disappointed with what, from their point of view, has been a thoroughly bad day ; while those who ride to hunt, though regretting that, thanks to the tourist in

the road, the run was nearly all in cover, are gratified at the way in which the hounds have done their work in the face of many difficulties. For strong and sweet as is the scent of a deer, the difficulties have, after all, been considerable. Many hinds and calves on foot in the great cover first drawn ; a long start given perforce to the hunted stag ; fresh deer roused in the course of the run ; the stag turned back on to foiled ground just as he was trying to break to the open ; and a broiling sun all day. There is nothing to appeal to riding men in the skill, the patience, the woodcraft, and the houndwork by which success has been obtained ; but people who understand hunting know that the result would have been different if either the master, his men, or his hounds had not been up to their business.

Another day everything will go right. The stag will be by himself, will be found directly and break forthwith to the open, when the lay on will be followed by a racing run of from an hour and a half to two hours without a check worth naming. When the line is from the Bray or Bratton Covers to Badgworthy, and beyond, there is little to do but sit down and ride. You must race for the first few gateways through the big enclosures that fringe the moor. But the crowd soon drops off ; the wet ground that is encountered pretty early on either course weeds out all horses that are short of condition, and by the end of twenty minutes the field is tolerably select. The only difficulty, and that is no small one, is to keep a good place without galloping your horse to a standstill. If a check occurs you are divided between thankfulness

for the breathing time it gives you and fear for the advantage it may be to the ruck in the rear ; but the straightgoing deer who shows such runs as these seldom "beat the water" at Farleigh or Badgworthy for any long distance, and the respite, if such there be, is too short to be much use to any but those in the very first flight. The hounds are soon away again, and if they once get a start take a lot of catching. There are some very long and very fast runs on record, notably that from the Bratton Covers to Luckham, on October 9, 1889, when over twenty miles (sixteen from point to point across the map) was covered in two hours and ten minutes.

It was extraordinary how many people got to the end of this severe chase. Just the latter part was not fast, and the hounds had to go much further than the horses down the Horner Valley ; but before the field dispersed there must have been over twenty of us on the rectory lawn, which, after allowing for those who joined in after the run began and for others who had posted a second horse on spec. and found him, was more than might have been expected. If by a mixture of hard riding and judicious nursing you can see a day of this sort from start to finish, and are not haunted afterwards by an uneasy feeling that you have been a bit unfair to your horse, there are few events in the way of sport which it gives more satisfaction to recall.

But I am not sure that less exhausting runs do not give more real enjoyment at the time. Here is a specimen of one, taken from the master's diary—not an historical day's sport by

any means. But at its close I, at least, was in perfect charity with all mankind, for the hopes, fears, and anxieties of the forenoon were all forgotten in the success achieved before night.

September 16, 1885: Pitcombe Head.—The deer had been using a good deal about Yarner, so drew in the coverts below for a stag who was there yesterday, but was not forthcoming to-day ; probably stared out of countenance by the new keeper, an amateur harbourer. Then tried the plantations about Silcombe for a stag the real harbourer had slotted in this morning ; and then Greenclose Wood, where Mr. S. was now confident of his deer. All entirely blank. By this time it was two o'clock ; we had not moved a deer of any sort, and the only other information was that Miles had slotted a stag in the morning near Smallacombe (who might be there or anywhere else within a mile), and that he *believed* he had a deer at the further end of the Porlock Covers, fully three miles away. Pleasant for the master. Mr. S.'s stag, however, might be in one of the larch-clothed combes below Culbone Stables, and these had not yet been drawn for the season, so it was decided to try them with half the pack. A lucky hit as it turns out, for by 2.30 a stag and another deer are on foot. At first the stag heads eastward, but presently doubles, and the master gets his glasses on him as he comes back beside the road. Not much of a deer, but one cannot be particular under the circumstances, and if the crowd in the aforesaid road (who by this time are very much on the ride) can only prevent his heading seaward, we ought to have some sport.

Vain hope. If it had been the other way about, and we had wished the stag to cross from the sea side inward, one man would have turned him ; now fifty cannot do it, and the brute jumps the wire fence into the big plantations where we were this morning, and has now eight miles of almost uninterrupted woodland before him. The only thing to do is to lay on the pack, and that is done at 2.45. They run him fast for two miles through the stunted firs, near the end of which, after sundry doubles, he puts out a young male deer, probably the Smallacombe "stag." The man-œuvre profits him little, and he raises our hopes again by turning his back to the woods and going right up to where we met in the morning. But the sight of some horsemen in the road heads him back, and our spirits sink. Presently he lies down and hounds fresh find him. This frightens him, and now he crosses the dreaded highway, regardless of aught but the eager pack in his rear, sinks the hill to the stream below, and goes up the valley beside it. At last we are on the open heather, and know that we must have more or less of a gallop. It looks at present as if Horner were the point ; but those who are riding wide to the left on that calculation are out of it, for there are the hounds streaming away to the right and running hard toward the forest wall. The air is getting cooler every minute now, and scent is first-rate on the moist ground. We have a nasty bottom to cross, so the pack have the best of it for the next three or four miles, which brings them to Badgworthy Water, between the Deer Park and Malsmead. They cast themselves down

stream and press eagerly on. The stag meanwhile has been seen to come up the water, so every yard they go downward is to his advantage ; but nobody is quite near enough to turn them without some delay. However, in ten minutes or so they are running again, and are going quite fast enough for our horses as they carry the scent over Brendon Common into Farleigh Water.

A hound speaks down stream, and the huntsman casts them downward and still downward till we reach a little hamlet. The deer must have left the water here if he had come so far, but the hounds hit no line. He must have broken out behind us, and a long cast is made in the direction where he ought to have gone. No result, and the huntsman returns to the stream at the place where the hounds originally came to it. The deer undoubtedly went a certain distance downward, but he did not go as far as the hamlet ; nor has he gone westward. There is just a chance that he left the stream on the east side without the hounds having caught the scent, but probably he is lying fast. The huntsman dismounts and tries the hounds once more down the valley. Stale and foiled though the line is, they can just own it, and carry it the length of two or three fields, at the end of which there is an enormous obstacle across the stream, placed there to prevent cattle trespassing.

No deer would jump that in cold blood, and he could not have passed right or left of it without the hounds hitting him off ; he must have backed it and be above us, up stream somewhere.

The huntsman shamles back to his horse and

tells his tale. It is more than half an hour since we were first at fault, and with the start he gained at Badgworthy—where also, we remind each other, he went up stream—the stag must be nearly an hour ahead. It is a chance if hounds are able to hit him, for scent at the best is but weak when a deer first leaves a stream, owing to the water that drips off his sides to the ground ; it is getting late too, and most of the field have gone home. Still there is another hour of daylight, and it is little out of the way back to kennel to make it good up the valley.

Accordingly the huntsman tries his hounds carefully up beside the little burn ; but the odds seem all against us : there are no overhanging boughs or bushes that may have caught a particle of scent as the deer passed, no boulders or fences ; there is nothing to have prevented his walking right up in the bed of the stream. For a considerable distance the hounds made no sign. We are just thinking that it is a bad job and that we have lost our deer, when suddenly they become busy, and lo ! there is a stag lying on the combe side just in front of us and watching the pack with all outward indifference.

Is he a fresh deer ? Impossible to say for certain till he gets up ; but the head is similar to that of our hunted stag, and a fresh deer would hardly lie there with the hounds so close. They are picking out a line towards him too. Surely it is all right. Up he jumps, plunges down the cleave into the stream, dashes through the tail hounds and gallops up the other side as if he were good for another ten miles ; but as we make our way to where

the track crosses the valley we see him come round, and our last doubts are removed : the poor beast has got stiff while lying down, and cannot face the long ascent. The pack nearly catch a view as he turns, and gain on him all the way as he struggles back through the Farleigh enclosures to the stream. In the water he stands to bay, but only for a very short time. His enemies are too strong for him, and before we can scramble over the fence he is down and dead.

Time 6.10. Only ten minutes from the fresh find. A most satisfactory finish ; but it was a near thing, and it is almost too dark to count the hounds by the time they have had their reward and can start on the ten-mile journey back to kennel.

Hæc olim meminisse juvabit. May every sportsman who visits the Devon and Somerset take home with him the recollection of some days as good.

HARRIERS, ANCIENT AND MODERN

BY THE LATE

EARL OF SUFFOLK AND BERKSHIRE

CONNOISSEURSHIP in good living often, nay generally, accompanies refined appreciation of other arts ; and the Athenians of old, who in the days of Athens' glory were undoubtedly the most cultivated people on the face of the earth, were so fond of the hare as an article of food that the Greek word for hare's flesh was used synonymously to express "dainty diet." We are told on good authority that when the Peloponnesian war had done for the Attic race what our Ground Game Act has accomplished in many parts of England, the privation of their favourite dish was severely felt by all classes : the destruction of the Piræus wall was a national disgrace—that of the hare a national calamity. For hunting, however, it is best not to have the game too thick upon the ground, and Xenophon—the earliest authority on the sport, who is believed to have written his treatise after the Retreat of the Ten Thousand—does not imply that there was any chance of a blank day in the neighbourhood ; and as there can have been no close time, for he speaks of hunting all the year round,

“pinned” or in at the elbows. As he disliked them “whole-coloured,” which he declares to be the sign of a wild breed, we must suppose the reds, blacks, and whites of which he speaks were not uncommon—it would be difficult enough to find them now. His ideas as to the growth of hair are fantastic, but he is orthodox in his dislike for curly coats, and his love of a good “cry” is quite in accordance with modern ideas. The faults for which he drafted—and he ought to have had considerable trouble in disposing of that draft—were manifold; with some of them we are to-day only too familiar. What M.H. has not in his time been pestered with culprits who “pounce on false scents, and exulting in whatever they find, take the lead at once, though conscious they are deceiving the rest”? Perhaps this is rather a long and pedantic description of what we call “a d——d babbler,” but the idea is the same. The skirter and mute runners were of course condemned then as now; nor is the hound “which starts in pursuit of the hare with great speed, but relaxes from want of spirit,” unknown in the present century, any more than is his fellow “who runs on, and then misses the scent”; but it is decidedly satisfactory to reflect that there are not in these days “many who, abandoning the pursuit, turn back from *dislike of the hare*, or from longing for the society of their master.” Surely as a rule they must have found him very bad company after they had played that trick two or three times. Nor are complaints often heard of hounds who “faint away from pain in their feet.” None the less will every hare-hunter endorse the dictum of Xenophon, that

“Such dogs may disgust people with hunting who have a strong fancy for it,” while hare- *and* fox-hunters will alike applaud the injunction, “Foxes we should not allow the hounds to hunt, for it is a great means of spoiling them, and they lose their sense of duty.”

As the hounds were led to covert in leashes, the turn-out in the morning must have had a rather coursing-meeting appearance. They were early birds those old Greeks, and like our own forefathers, were wont to hunt up to her in her form, and get away close at her scut. Xenophon greatly appreciated the scream of delight from the merry ones as she broke into view, and like all huntsmen of all times, could not resist cheering the flying pack with “Forrard on, hounds! forrard on!” when they were running their hardest. In the first ring—Attic hares were regular ringers—it is clear that he was always out of it; but if she was not at once killed or—oh, shame!—run into the nets, the science of the huntsman was often called into play, and the patent all-round-my-hat cast is advocated. Masters of harriers who have ere now been insulted and grieved, when walked out of scent on a cold evening, by the flippant advice of irreverent friends to “put a stick in where you left off and come again to-morrow,” may take comfort on being told that the idea originated with so keen a hare-hunter as Xenophon, who says, speaking of the huntsman, that “where the scent is obscure, he ought to take a stake as a mark for himself, and draw the dogs round by this, cheering and soothing them till they plainly recognise the track.” Alas! he does not mention the Greek equivalent for the

universal "*Yoiyeot*" wherewith we cheer and soothe our hounds as they strive to work out a puzzle.

The final exhortation to perseverance is as edifying and appropriate now as it was 2,300 years ago ; for however tired the pack and however late the hour, this sportsman of old says in effect, you should try on to the last possible moment. With a hare you have always got a chance, as she may be sitting close to you just as you think about giving her up. Probably untroubled with large fields, he does not add the reflection which has cheered the soul of many a M.H. : " At any rate, as everybody has gone home, if she does jump up, they won't be overridden." Between ancient and modern rites connected with the chase one difference is specially worthy of notice. Xenophon, who was nothing if not a deeply religious man, enjoins his pupils just before taking off the couples, to vow to Apollo and Diana the Huntress a share of what is captured. The hunter of to-day, though he may promise nothing beforehand, is for the most part mindful to make offering to Bacchus in due proportion for the sport vouchsafed.

The difficulties attendant on the getting together and starting a pack of harriers vary according to the means at the disposal of the would-be Master, since it goes without saying that, in this as in every other undertaking, the richer he is the less trouble he will have, and also depends very much upon the sort of hound with which he proposes to hunt the hare. The simplest plan of all naturally is to buy a ready-made pack, and this often proves the least expensive in the long run ; for, except

when some unusually well-known and popular pack is broken up, there is little or no competition for harriers either at public or private sale. One of these unusual cases occurred indeed, a short time ago, when the pack which belonged to the late Comte de Paris, and many years previously to the Duc d'Aumale, was dispersed, and the prices per couple almost attained to foxhound importance ; but as a rule they go cheaply enough. So if the aspirant can only make up his mind to enter upon the cares of office just at the exact moment when some impoverished or satiated sportsman is laying them aside, he may find himself at once in possession of a pack such as would have taken years to collect, and quite possibly be their owner before he has made even temporary arrangements for their board and lodging—a Bugginon without a Jorrocks to fall back upon. Or, if there is no pack likely to come into the market, and he wishes to buy hounds in bulk, he may run down to Mr. Wilton's kennels at Hanwell, where he can be fitted out with as many couple as he pleases of the size he prefers. By the way, one cannot help wondering why a tradesman whose business does not more or less depend upon the custom of the lunatic asylum should ever establish himself at Hanwell. The place is so inseparably connected in men's minds with lunacy, that if you advise a man to go to Hanwell for any purpose, he thinks you are either insulting or chaffing him ; and the first idea that would occur on the suggestion that he should buy hounds there would be that you were recommending him to a home for lost dogs.

But whoever will take the matter seriously will

find that he might make many worse starts than by going to Mr. Wilton. The proof of this pudding also is in the eating ; for if he did not give satisfaction to his numerous customers, his immense business—he sometimes has over a hundred couple at his place—could not have lasted all these years ; he buys drafts or whole packs from every part of the United Kingdom ; and last, but by no means least, he never buys an *old* hound, so that whatever he offers for sale possesses its canine vices or virtues in full vigour.

There is too a certain independence about going to a dog-dealer which must always have its charm. You avoid having to await your friends' convenience, and pretending to believe their pleasant fictions about the select lot they propose to place on your hands. The dealer can always be dealt with, and as he can have no personal experience of the merits of his wares, he either does not lie or does not expect to be believed.

Still this is a very unusual way of setting to work, and those who cannot afford to buy, or have not the opportunity of buying, a pack, must get together their "cry of dogs" little by little—a process which, though it has its cares and anxieties, is by no means devoid of amusement. If then, the prospective master has made up his mind to use dwarf foxhounds, he had better at once take his pen and write quickly to half a score or so of M.F.H.'s, or their kennel huntsmen, asking for the refusal of the next draft of undersized hounds, specifying at the same time the height he would prefer. And here he will be confronted with the chief blot on the system of using foxhounds ; it is so difficult to

get them small enough that, rather than be bothered with a search for lilliputians, the buyer may be tempted to take them up to 21 or 22 inches, whereas 19 inches should be the full standard for anyone who honestly means hunting hare and nothing else, and hunting her scientifically. But if he wants a succession of screaming bursts from ten to fifteen minutes, mostly in view, or has a sneaking fondness and longing for an occasional turn-up with a fox, together with an open mind on the subject of deer, outlying or carted, nor now and then disdains the flying red herring, he need trouble himself not at all about size; he can rapidly acquire a fortuitous concourse of atoms which will hunt anything, and, fox-hunter and farmer permitting, may constitute himself the Wild Huntsman of the surrounding district. He will have lots of fun and jumping for his money—will often have blood, including possibly that of a few lambs during the spring; his meets will be a centre of attraction for all the hard-riding horse-breakers and go-as-long-as-the-drink-is-in-them riff-raff of the neighbourhood, and by those followers he will be admired and extolled as a real sportsman, with no old-fashioned slow nonsense about him. As the Frenchman said when admitting that he was chiefly beloved by what old writers call the *bona-robas*, “C’est encore une position sociale.”

Another advantage the Master of the Happy-go-lucky Harriers will possess is that he will have no trouble in recruiting, and can easily fill up any gaps which process of time or his enterprising field may make in his pack. “Hounds with a bit too much drive for me,” as their owners may euphemistically

phrase it, will be at his disposal from all quarters ; he need never harass his mind with the worry of breeding.

But if a man “ means harrier ”—that is to say, if he means to hunt the hare only, and her chiefly by scent ; if he wishes to amuse himself and those who come out with him in orderly fashion to be welcomed by the farmers over whose land he has the privilege of disporting himself, and not to be regarded by surrounding Masters of Foxhounds as a privateer only a shade removed from a pirate, it will behove him to go warily to work, and to start from a very modest beginning, or he will find himself in the position of those friends of Xenophon already alluded to, who became disgusted with the chase, though having a great natural aptitude for it. As aforesaid, there is always the resource of the foxhound kennel, and with due care he may get a few couples who do not top 19 inches ; but he will do much better if, by hook or by crook, he can obtain a nucleus of from half a dozen to ten decent hounds from accredited harrier packs. Now, if asked to define what is meant by harrier, one can only say that he is a dog whose ancestry for some generations back have devoted their energies entirely to hare-hunting ; there may at some time or other have been a distinct breed—we have all heard the legend about descent from the old Southern hound—but if every harrier could trace his pedigree, nine out of ten would most likely find that they came from foxhound forefathers, and the tenth would decline to reveal what had been the result of *his* researches. The queer coats and odd colours we see amongst harriers more

than hint at such discredited lineage ; and what so probable ? Many a mixed lot of terriers and beagles originally intended for rabbit have by degrees been promoted to hare, and this promiscuous rabble, gradually weeded and improved, has in course of time developed into a regular harrier pack, with traces of the old leaven still here and there perceptible. Whatever its origin, however, it is from some harrier sources that the architect of his own pack should, if possible, get his foundation. It *is* to be done, though not easily, as private inquiry is necessary. Advertisement simply means letters from every dog-stealer in the country. But the M.H., more even than the M.F.H., has often great difficulty in making both ends meet, and he is not always averse from supplementing his subscription, in the improbable event of his getting one, or from paying a meal bill by the sale of some of his merry ones. The late Mr. Everett, who hunted the B.V.H., one of the best packs in England, could always be approached in this way ; the sport he showed was proof that he did not thus allow his own pack to deteriorate, and from personal knowledge, I can bear witness that the hounds he sold were what he described them to be in his letter of advice. He gave good straightforward characters, which were justified on experience. This was all the more remarkable, inasmuch as he had the credit of being a particularly sharp hand at a deal—he may have been so in the matter of price, but he always sent fair value for the money, which is by no means the case with all men who sell their hounds ; and the beginner will be lucky, indeed, if he does not at first get hold of some notable male-

factors. But, above all, let him beware of accepting a present in this line. You may not look a gift horse in the mouth, but you should never look at a gift hound at all. Many men are absurdly tender-hearted about putting useless dogs to death, and jump at any excuse for transferring that obligation to somebody else ; they would almost prefer letting loose hydrophobia on the country to having the supreme penalty carried out in their own kennels—at any rate, they have no scruples at all in bestowing their rubbish wherever they find a place for it. An offer to give hounds away is tantamount to a declaration that they are worthless or worse, all protestations to the contrary notwithstanding ; people don't give away *good* hounds, and don't sell their *best*—they would be fools if they did so.

Situated as he is, the buyer has not much more choice than the proverbial beggar ; but he can at least insist on the size he wants, which should be from 17 to 19 inches, though a few bitches at 16 will not spoil the appearance of the lot. In the matter of age also he can make his own terms ; but he will be wise to admit a veteran or two : though they be somewhat wan and worn, they are sure to stick to business ; if slow, are probably truthful, even if a trifle garrulous, and it is such a comfort at first start to feel there are one or two voices which may be safely cheered. A good hound, like a good horse, can never be of a bad colour ; if a man has a fad on the subject, he must be content to gratify his whim gradually. Mr. Surtees, as one cannot help fancying, never wrote except about what he had actually seen ; one of his works, *Hawbuck Grange*,

contains in the Goose and Dumpling Hunt chapter the best account of a pack of harriers and of a day with them that ever was penned. Even Whyte-Melville's master-hand failed him here, or rather the ruling passion ran away with him, and Tilbury Nogo has a blank day so far as hare is concerned, but winds up late with a tremendous run after a straight-going fox. The G. and D.H. are thus described : " Nearly reddish whole-coloured hounds, inclining to a brownish-grey along the back, they look like harriers, and were very much the colour of the hare herself." *Hawbuck Grange* was published in the 'forties, and this whole-coloured type is probably extinct. I certainly have never seen it; the Duke of Beaufort tells me that he remembers long ago seeing a nearly black pack which had a strong cross of bloodhound ; but there can be no advantage ; rather the reverse, in this sombre hue—it is so bad to see at any distance. Those tawny blacks of the G. and D.'s must often have presented the same difficulty, especially as their field never rode near them, which perhaps was the reason why Mr. Trumper the huntsman found it necessary to carry a pocket telescope. A nice variety, too, look smarter and more cheerful ; but if there is one colour to be preferred above others, commend me to the blue mottle ; it seems to carry nose and trustworthiness with it, besides having the true harrier *cachet*. Motley may not be your *only* wear, yet it is well never to be without it. Nose is after all the prime requisite, and this must be obtained somehow ; hence the advisability of not too readily rejecting hounds on the score of age. Dogs become deaf, blind, and in every way

decrepit, but the faculty of scent is the one power which they never lose in an appreciable degree ; another advantage of these old ones is, that having been at the game so long, they know a lot about a hare's dodges—*e.g.* they can form, and to those who understand, express a very decided opinion as to a hare having squatted—"They think she's down"—you will hear the master say, and "they" are nearly always right.

Eight or ten couple do very well for a beginning, and the rudiments of a pack once scraped together on the lines indicated, the new M.H. will of course begin breeding on his own account as soon as practicable.



WOODCOCK SHOOTING.

From a Water Colour Sketch by J. M. W. Turner, R.A.

Kept in the Museum of the Trustees of the Wallace Collection

SHOOTING

BY THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY

NOTHING in the history of British sports is more interesting to note than the evolution and development of shooting, whether as regards the improvement of weapons or the amount of game killed. Fishing remains much what it was in Izaak Walton's days. For although the rods, lines, and flies now made must be incomparably superior to those constructed and wielded by fishermen when Izaak and his compeers lived, nevertheless the difference cannot be compared to that which exists between the present hammerless ejector gun and—to go back no further—the old flint and steel weapon. Hunting, again, presents many of the same features in these days as it did hundreds of years ago, saving only that hounds are far more carefully bred than they were formerly. But much the same methods of pursuing the quarry, whether deer, wolf, or fox, obtained—speaking generally—five centuries ago as in the present year of grace.

This cannot be said of shooting; and it is possible that a few extracts from old records may be of interest to those who take note of such matters.

Let us consider first of all the question of the increase of grouse on English moors.

In the game-book of the Longshaw Moors in Derbyshire it is recorded that in 1826—the earliest date discoverable with regard to these moors—342 grouse were killed in twelve days' shooting ; two being the average number of guns on any one day. Selecting at random another entry in the same book, it seems that in 1833 a considerably larger number of grouse were killed—viz., 622. Twenty days' shooting took place, and the average number of guns was four.

Fourteen years later—in 1847—a still greater increase is noticeable in the size of the bags ; for in twenty-two days' shooting 880 grouse were killed.

Compare these figures with those of the years 1872 or 1893, when 6529 and 7000 grouse were killed on the same moors ; and the difference which careful watching, combined with the knowledge of how to provide grouse with a proper annual supply of young heather, as well as the advantages to the stock caused by driving, will be recognised as enormous.

The gradual acquisition of fresh pieces of moorland during the lengthy period to which allusion has been made of course accounts in some measure for the steady increase in the number of grouse killed ; while the appearance of the percussion gun in place of the flint and steel undoubtedly made a considerable difference. But that which has done more than anything else to increase enormously the stock of grouse on English moors is that system of driving to which allusion has

been made. Since driving has become pretty general south of the Tweed, the number of grouse on moors in England and Wales must have been a good deal more than doubled.

If it be a good breeding year the principal fear that a keeper—one who thoroughly understands his business—has, is that too large a stock of birds should be left. For that he knows adds to the risk of the appearance during nesting-time of the curse of a moor—grouse disease. Equally, a good keeper, when there has been a bad breeding season, or possibly two consecutive indifferent ones, is aware that it is essential to shoot a moor very lightly, and with careful judgment. For, as the writer knows too well, it is by no means an easy undertaking to coax a moor back into a favourable condition if matters have gone wrong with it for two or three years successively.

It has been stated above that since “driving” has largely superseded “walking”—in England, at any rate—the stock of grouse has considerably increased on those moors whereon the former system is followed. The principal reason for this change for the better would seem to be : (1) That when grouse are driven, the old birds come over the guns first of all, and, therefore, presumably a fair number are killed ; a larger proportion than would be the case were the grouse “walked up.” This is, of necessity, good for a moor, as ancient and combative birds interfere much with the nesting arrangements of the younger ones.

(2) By driving, the danger of killing off whole broods is obviated. When “walking up” grouse, during the early days of the shooting

season, it is a common occurrence to see entire coveys destroyed, the young birds getting up in twos and threes, or singly, thus delivering themselves over into the hands and game bag of the gunner in the most simple and confiding fashion.

For there can be no question as to which is the easier bird to kill in the earlier part of the year—a “walked-up” or “driven” grouse. Moreover, it frequently happens that, should the weather be hot during the week or ten days “contagious” to August 12, and, should long drives be undertaken, probably only about half of the latter broods will come forward over the guns. These young birds will merely fly a part of the length of the drive, then settle, and decline to rise again when the drivers approach them. By this means many a young, immature bird is saved and does not run his risk of life or death till the second week’s driving takes place, by which time he is far more able to look after himself.

But, however the matter may be explained, the satisfactory fact remains that, since driving has become general, the stock of grouse on those English and Scotch moors whereon that form of sport is practised has greatly increased; and, what is more, has become healthier than formerly. For grouse disease appears less prevalent now than it used to be before driving became so common.

Before leaving the subject of grouse-shooting and grouse-driving in particular, it would seem necessary very briefly to allude to the somewhat open question as to the date when the driving system became generally operative. No earlier mention of it can be discovered by the present

writer than that given in the Badminton Library in the volume on *Moor and Marsh* shooting. In that admirable book a letter from Mr. W. Spencer Stanhope—with whom the writer has had a most excellent day's grouse-driving—is reproduced ; and there it is stated that Mr. Stanhope's grandfather's keeper—this sounds somewhat like a French exercise !—first practised it informally near Sheffield about 1805. Mr. Stanhope also says that he used to drive in 1836, which seems to be about the earliest date when *regular* driving occurred.

As regards the shooting records now under the writer's observation, the first mention of driving is made on September 11, 1849, when in the Longshaw game-book appears the following note : "Flask Edge, Pheasy's Piece, and stubble fields below Brown Edge. The day was alternately sunny and cloudy and windy. The birds were unmanageable, and at 3 o'clock we took station by a wall dividing an oat-field from Brown Edge, and killed a few birds from packs which were driven past."

It may be concluded, therefore, that it was some time during the 'forties that grouse-driving was gradually coming under the consideration and observation of those happy enough to possess moors.

When, leaving the wild moorlands and the grouse, we descend to the more homely and accustomed fields and hedgerows, it will be found that the bird which is perhaps the most popular of all the game birds of this country—namely, the partridge—has, during the last hundred years, increased in numbers in fully the same proportion as

has the grouse. This is the case for one considerable reason. It is comparatively easy to restock by artificial means ground which has from one cause or another been denuded of partridges ; whereas not much can be done in this direction to grouse land. In the latter case all that can be effected is by means of careful shooting ; by intelligently conceived and carried out " burning " ; by persistent trapping of vermin ; by keeping within proper limits the number of sheep (if any are allowed) on the moor, and by steady watching.

On the other hand, with partridges much can be done to improve both stock and breed. Eggs can with advantage be shifted from one part of the ground to another ; Hungarian birds can be bought and turned down to cross with the English ones, thereby strengthening the stock by the introduction of new blood ; and eggs can be purchased and hatched under fowls.

This latter proceeding is, I think, not one to be much approved of, as too often the eggs come from a neighbour's land, possibly from one's own ! But—given the necessary funds and a clever keeper—it is not very difficult to change a moderate piece of partridge-shooting into a comparatively good one, even though it would appear that the soil was not the most favourable that could be selected for the purpose.

To return for a short time to the consideration of the gradual increase in the number of partridges in certain parts of England as recorded in the game-books now being investigated.

Taking the year 1803, in twenty-three days'

shooting, with an average of three guns, 652 partridges were killed at Cheveley Park, near Newmarket. The best day was 30½ brace, obtained by four guns ; though the Duke of Rutland, shooting by himself, one day killed 20 brace. That was on October 3.

One rather quaint note appears in connection with the entry of the game killed on October 15. It runs thus : " Sir John Shelley on ye road from Bury, between Kentford and Cheveley, 3 partridges, 5 hares."

Does this signify that Sir John Shelley got out of his carriage whenever he saw a covey in a field near the road, and stalked it, whether this manœuvre partook of the nature of poaching or not? It looks somewhat like it, I confess, for the note is written quite separately from the entry of the day's sport.¹

In 1805 a considerable number more partridges were killed at Cheveley—viz., 1102 in twenty-six days' shooting, and when we turn to the tale of the sport at the same place a quarter of a century or so later—viz., 1829 and 1834—it will be seen that matters remained much in the same position as in 1805. For in 1829 only 919 partridges were killed during twenty-one days' shooting; and

¹ Apropos of this, Colonel Hawker in his well-known and oft-quoted work, published during the early part of last century, writes as follows with regard to " Tricks of Trespassers " : " For stopping one (= any one) who carries a gun to shoot birds feeding as he travels along the road, the better way would be to tie down the innkeepers, by a threat of withdrawing your custom, not to allow their postboys or coachmen to stop for such purposes ; and through a fear of getting in a scrape, these men would most likely contrive to pass by, or frighten up the game." Judging from this, Sir John Shelley's performance does not seem an unusual one !

in 1834, 1443 partridges were secured in twenty-two days.

But what deserves notice is the undoubted advance in the size of the individual bags. During the first ten years of last century the largest total obtained by any individual gunner at Cheveley was in 1807, when one day in October—and here it might be remarked that nearly all the partridge-shooting to which allusion is now being made took place in October, not September—the Duke of Rutland shot 37 partridges. The average number killed by any single gun in a day's shooting was between 10 and 20 birds. In 1829, however, many bags of between 30 and 60 birds were made by one gun. For we find that on one occasion in that year the Duke of Rutland killed 42 partridges himself; on another, 30; on another, 40; while Mr. Sloane Stanley accounted for 38 one day, and the Hon. George Anson for 65. Again, a steady improvement is to be found in 1834, as bags of 30 birds and upward are comparatively frequent; while Mr. Sloane Stanley is credited with scores of 51, 50, 52, and 55 partridges. Other guns, amongst them the Duke of Rutland, often killed between 30 and 50 birds in a day.

In 1837, however, a sudden rise is to be noticed. For on October 21st the Duke of Rutland killed 69 and Mr. Sloane Stanley 83 partridges; while, on other occasions, the same guns killed 57 and 62, and 61 and 59 partridges respectively. Numerous other scores of between 49 and 70 birds are also noted. But it was in 1847 that totals are recorded which are practically on a level with anything

which could ordinarily be accomplished on the same ground in these times, that is, when the difference in weapons and general shooting methods is taken into account. For the game-book shows that 2049 partridges were secured in twenty-one days' shooting, and that on October 6, 242 partridges were killed by three guns, the individual scores being 55, 110, and 77; the guns were the Duke of Rutland, Lord Granby, and Mr. Sloane Stanley. Other scores of 88, 74, 68, 64, and similar numbers are of frequent occurrence.

From this date matters have either improved or held their own; till, during the years immediately preceding 1888, when the Cheveley property passed from the possession of the Duke of Rutland to that of Colonel McCalmont, 3000 partridges were easily obtained in the course of a season's shooting.

The only mention which can be found in game-books as to when driving was first practised, is made on November 11, 1850; where a note says: "Links Beat. Plenty of game of all kinds. Pheasants and partridges. The latter very wild; but by driving them round and backwards and forwards we had some excellent sport."

Again, under the date of October 25, 1859, occurs the following: "The Links: began by driving Mr. Gardiner's turnips."

But this leaves a gap of nine years to be filled in—and, presumably, driving became more usual during that interval.

Touching the year 1859 it is also noted that "the Hon. Spencer Lyttleton was shooting with a breech-loader."

Not further to labour the point, it would seem from the entries in these game-books that for the first twenty-five years of last century there was not much improvement or the reverse in the partridge-shooting on a fairly typical manor such as Cheveley ; whereas from about 1830 to 1845 a noticeable increase in the yearly partridge-shooting results took place. From that date onward, as has been above mentioned, the totals of the numbers of the "little brown birds" killed have become much larger and now they assume proportions such as those to which allusion has been made.

With regard to pheasant-shooting, it is, perhaps, difficult to form a reasonable comparison between the bags of a hundred years ago and those of the present day. Because the science of rearing has now reached such a pitch of excellence that, given a competent keeper, moderately favourable soil, and plenty of money, it becomes in these days merely a question of how many pheasants the woods on a property will hold ; whereas in the olden time not a pheasant was reared, as far as one can judge from records such as the Belvoir ones. This hardly accounts altogether for the enormous difference between the number killed then and now ; but in this respect, better watching, more systematic vermin killing, and more scientific game knowledge among keepers in general, may very likely make up the difference.

However largely the bags of these days may preponderate over those of the early part of last century, in one characteristic—and that a most important one—the sportsmen of a hundred years ago would seem to be superior to those of the later

period. That characteristic is keenness. Let us examine for a short time some of the game-books now before us, and see what sort of sport amongst pheasants was actually obtained in, say, 1804.

On January 4 of that year the Duke of Rutland, T. Thoroton, Esq., and George Brummell, Esq., secured between them at Belvoir, on a beat not named, 1 hare, 1 pheasant, and 1 woodcock ! of which the Duke shot the woodcock, Mr. Thoroton the pheasant, and “ Beau ” Brummell the hare.

Turning to a slightly earlier date it will be found that on December 3, 1803, Mr. Brummell killed near the Castle at Belvoir 1 pheasant ! But a note on the entry says, “ *after hunting !* ”

This note appears very frequently ; so it would seem that our forefathers were in the habit of going a-hunting very early, coming home for the mid-day meal, and then going out shooting for an hour or so. This is not bad work for an exquisite such as was “ Beau ” Brummell.

Take another day's pheasant-shooting in 1804—viz., that on January 18. Here it will be seen that the Duke of Rutland and the Hon. W. Howard killed 1 pheasant apiece, and nothing else, in the course of a day's shooting at Belvoir. Such entries form the large majority of those in the Belvoir game-books of 1803, 4, and 5. Much the same condition of affairs existed in 1806, as the record of the day's shooting in Middlesdale and certain other of the Belvoir covers reads thus : Duke of Rutland ; G. Cornewell, Esq. ; Thos. Smith, Esq. 8 partridges ; 6 hares ; 5 pheasants,” and on January 30 of that year three guns shooting covers called

Saltbex, Calcraft's Close, and some others, obtained 4 hares and 3 pheasants.

These two days are mentioned for the purpose of comparison with the amount of game now killed on the same beats. In January of this year 168 pheasants were killed in Middlesdale on ground practically identical with that above mentioned ; and on December 2, 1901, 524 were shot in Saltbex and Calcraft's Close. It is interesting to compare the results obtained from the same covers in the years 1806 and 1901-2. It may be added that no pheasants are now reared in the Middlesdale beat, and only a moderate number on the other.

To return for one moment to the subject of the keenness exhibited by the sportsmen of the year with which we are now dealing. Fancy asking a young "blood" of the present day to go out shooting after coming in from hunting, and all on the chance of killing perhaps one pheasant or a stray woodcock, or imagine inviting three or four modern young men for a few days' shooting when the total of a day's sport would not be more than one of those which have been just quoted ! What horror would be expressed in their countenances, and how soon would they receive strange and sudden telegraphic summons to return at once to London or elsewhere ! Of course, it is not quite fair to compare the feelings of a sportsman of 1902 with those of one of 1803. When one is accustomed to pheasant-shooting where the bags rarely number fewer than 800 or 1000 head, and possibly more, or to grouse- or partridge-driving with a 200 brace average, to conceive asking people to shoot when the result would be 15 or 20 head is,



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of course, ridiculous. But, nevertheless, it is open to question whether there is as much real keenness about working for their sport amongst the younger generation of gunners as there used to be twenty or thirty years ago, let alone a century. A wild, rough day's shooting does not nowadays apparently appeal to many. The large majority of gunners would not say "thank you" for the offer of such a day's sport. It would look as if the deliberately competitive system of shooting which now so largely prevails—by which I mean that very often the owner of one shooting place seems to vie with the next door one as to the amount of game he can kill off his property, and appears seriously annoyed if he hears that any one round about him has had an exceptionally heavy day's sport, or one better, as regards numbers, than any he can produce—has to a great extent unfamiliarised the rising and just risen race of sportsmen with those days when hard walking, and consequently good condition, coupled with some knowledge of wood and field craft, were necessary if any satisfactory results were to be obtained. But comparisons are, we are told, "odious," and therefore let us return to our pheasants.

Turning over the pages of the game-books till we come to the "'twenties," and taking at hazard the account of a day's shooting at Belvoir during November 1827, it will be found that on the 24th of that month the Duke of Rutland, two of his brothers, and Sir W. Welby killed in Hallams and Conygear woods 16 pheasants and 7 head of other game. A note adds, "We found a good many pheasants." So this is obviously a typical day's shooting

of this date in the Belvoir country. But, indeed, not many pheasants seem to have been killed Belvoir-ways till much later than 1827. From 400 to 600 in a season seems to be about the number shot up to as late a date as 1848, when it appears that 598 were killed during that season. From this date onward the number of pheasants has steadily increased, till nowadays a fair average quantity can be found inhabiting those covers, together with many a fox.

Curiously enough, it appears that the first appreciable increase in the number of pheasants killed at Cheveley took place much about the same date—viz., 1847. For in 1804 only 28 pheasants were shot at Cheveley, which, by the way, is, and always has been, eminently a “shooting” place, in contradistinction to Belvoir, which has equally always been considered a “hunting” place. In 1808, 205 pheasants were killed at Cheveley; in 1828, 236; in 1838, 102; and in 1847, 511 were obtained. From this date onward more and more pheasants have been killed on this manor.

So far we have only touched on matters concerning the three principal kinds of game birds in this country—viz., grouse, partridges, and pheasants. Let us for one moment consider whether hares and rabbits have increased in the same ratio during the past hundred years as have the game birds above mentioned. And here we are confronted by the fact that the Hares and Rabbits Bill naturally made a considerable difference in the numbers of those animals killed just before and after this measure became law.

Much abuse has been levelled against the Bill in

question by persons interested in British sport ; but it would seem that, intentionally or unintentionally, it really has done more to render secure the position of shooting in this country than any measure passed for many a long day.

It did away with what was undoubtedly a serious grievance to tenant farmers—viz., an undue quantity of ground game on their farms ; and in consequence the animus which was created in the minds of many a tenant against not only the harmless—to a farmer—kinds of winged game, but also against his landlord, was dispelled.

It is interesting to notice now on estates where good feeling and consideration on both sides exist, how the number of hares has increased during the past few years, in comparison to what there were on the same lands for a few years immediately after the Bill had passed and the tenants had exercised their newly acquired rights. This, of course, is not so everywhere, but it certainly is in many instances, as personal observation has proved. To a certain extent this is the case with rabbits also, but not as much as in that of hares : for land-owners are beginning to realise a little more than they did that some value attaches to their woods, and rabbits and trees cannot live together in harmony any more than can rabbits and farmers. But, undoubtedly, taking the matter as a whole, the Hares and Rabbits Bill has in the long run proved a blessing to English shooting, whatever may have been the intention of its original framers.

With regard, however, to a few of the totals, it is stated that in 1804, 170 hares at Cheveley and

40 at Belvoir were the quantity killed during that season. In 1809, 286 hares were shot at Cheveley and 65 at Belvoir. Passing over some years, in 1829, 268 hares were killed at Cheveley and 361—a noticeable increase—at Belvoir. In 1847, at Belvoir, about 230 were shot and 531 at Cheveley. As in the case of pheasants and partridges, after this date the number of hares which were shot grew steadily larger.

As regards rabbits there does not seem to have been any great number shot at either Cheveley or Belvoir till the “’forties” of last century: 412 killed at Cheveley during the season of 1842 being one of the largest totals recorded. But while on this branch of our subject it would appear almost necessary, in dealing with the contents of these game-books, to refer very shortly to some bags obtained in Derby, at Staunton Woodhouse; and for this reason: that whereas at both Belvoir and Cheveley the soil is a fairly favourable one for game, in Derbyshire, though the woods are admirably adapted for rearing and holding pheasants, the amount of cultivated land is very small. By far the greater part is grass land; yet it will be seen that the sport obtained at the Woodhouse far exceeded in most respects anything Cheveley or Belvoir could produce sixty or seventy years ago. In 1826 three guns killed, on December 5, 25 hares, 66 pheasants, and 109 rabbits; while a decade later, in ten days’ cover shooting, with an average of four guns, 1152 hares and 676 rabbits, to say nothing of 62 grouse, 50 partridges, and 410 pheasants were killed; 229 hares were shot one day, 219 and 194 on two others.

Again, at the Woodhouse, in 1846, during ten full days' cover shooting, plus five or six days when only one gun went out, no fewer than 1629 hares were killed, the most being shot on December 15, by four guns, namely, 268, while on December 26, the Duke of Rutland and the Hon. — Cavendish shot 236 hares between them, besides 56 other head of game. As the ground over which they shot is by no means easy walking, and as the Duke was getting well on for seventy years of age, this cannot be accounted as anything but a good performance.

Without gravely exceeding the amount of space available for this chapter, it is impossible to do more than touch in the lightest manner on some of the more salient points suggested in the game-books which we have been examining with respect to the gradual rise in the amount of game on certain estates, and the reasons for such increase.

Furthermore, apologies are due to readers for the subject of shooting being treated in this fashion, instead of by the more usual manner of an article on modern methods and practices. But this latter plan has been adopted so often, and with such skill by other writers, that possibly these sketchy investigations into old-time records may prove of some interest to those who are curious with regard to the history of game rearing and shooting.

RACING

BY THE EARL OF ELLESMERE

IT has been suggested to me that I might utilise my experience, such as it is, of racing, by putting on paper some remarks, in the form of advice to an imaginary person who had expressed an intention of taking up the Turf as a pursuit.

There are no doubt many excellent people who would declare without the smallest hesitation that on such a subject there is only one word of advice that ought to be given ; and that word would be the often-quoted one addressed by Mr. Punch to those who contemplate matrimony : *Don't* ; but there are at least two reasons why I shall not follow this familiar counsel. First, because, if I did, this essay would now come to an abrupt and impotent conclusion ; and, secondly, because I do not believe that if followed it would have any greater effect upon my imaginary friend than it has had, judging from the Registrar-General's reports, upon those for whose advantage it was originally intended.

I will begin, therefore, by saying that there are several lines which may be taken by a man who has determined to go in for racing. One may

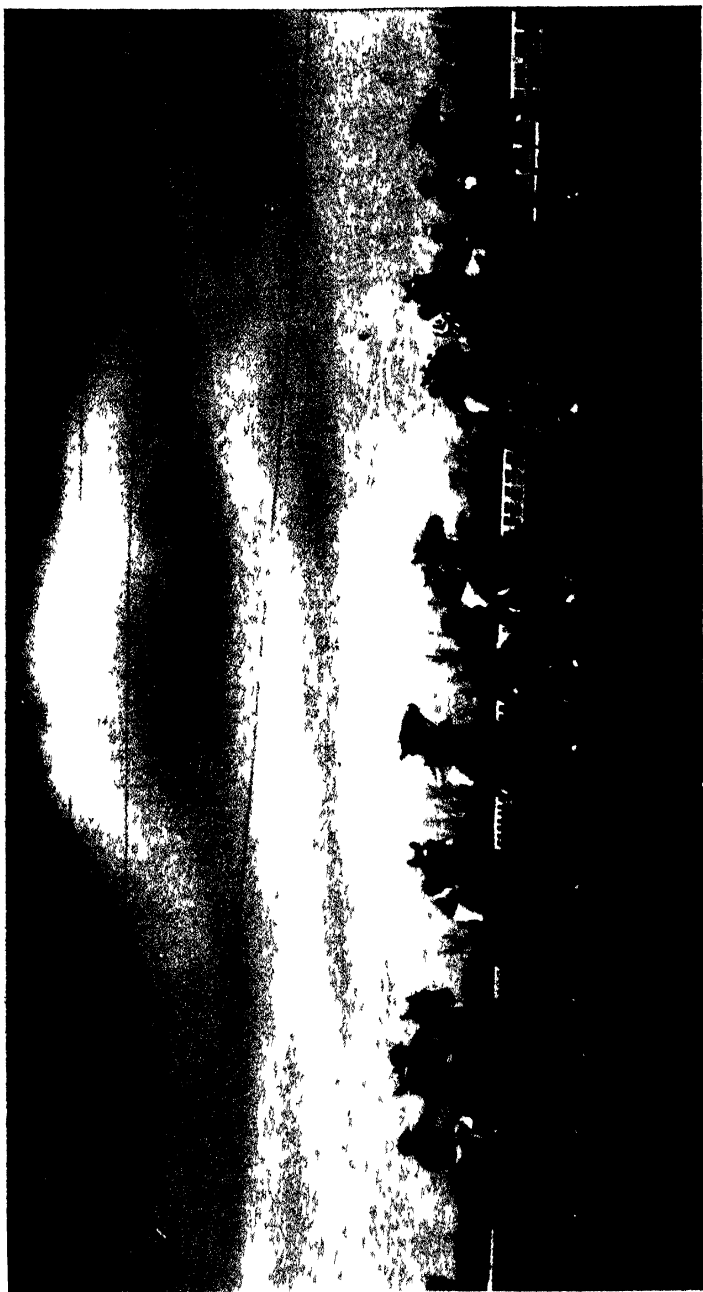


Photo Rouch

A START.

adopt the profession of a bookmaker, but him I am not prepared to advise. Another may be satisfied to figure only as a backer of horses, and to this man I will only say that I do not believe any system yet invented is ever likely to be successful. Nor will I in the present chapter write anything for the special benefit of breeders for sale ; not that I have anything to say against them, but because it seems to me that breeding for sale is a business, a most fascinating and enjoyable business to many no doubt, and must be carried on upon business principles. To proffer advice on such matters is quite beyond me.

I will therefore take it for granted that the ambition of my imaginary pupil is to become an owner of race-horses, of a Derby winner if possible, in my eyes a most laudable ambition. How then is he to set about it? Let us suppose him to be, not a millionaire, but possessed of a sufficient capital to justify his investing a considerable sum in what must be a more or less hazardous speculation. I do not believe in doing anything, certainly not racing, on the cheap.

Now there is more than one course open to the man who desires to figure as an owner. He may rely solely on animals bred by himself ; he may go in for buying yearlings ; or he may prefer to purchase his stud ready made, that is, to look out for some good winners which may be for sale—there are always some to be had, if you will give enough money. Many people would say that the third method was the most certain way of getting some return for your expenditure, but even that may fail.

The case of Princess Melton occurs to me.

This filly started nine times as a two-year-old, and won seven races, six for her breeder, and one after she was sold for a very large sum. As a three-year-old she ran but twice, and unsuccessfully, nor did she in the course of her subsequent career do anything towards recouping her purchaser for his original outlay. Innumerable other instances could readily be furnished of similar features.

What then is our aspirant for Turf honours to do? I should say, try, in moderation, all the three courses I have named. For myself I incline towards the first as the most interesting, and, I believe, in the long run, the least expensive, always supposing you are not too ambitious, and not in too great a hurry. Here I would strongly impress it on my pupil that I am not going to tell him how to make a rapid fortune on the Turf—that way madness lies. I will begin by pointing out that in order to breed your own horses in the most satisfactory way, you must possess paddocks in which they can be reared under favourable conditions, and I believe that there are few parts of England where these cannot be found. It won't be the same thing if you merely rent a stud-farm, and visit it occasionally. That will cost more, and much of the interest will be gone.

Having now settled that our man is possessed of suitable accommodation for the future winners to pass the first two years of their lives in, the next thing will be for him to secure the services of a stud-groom well versed in the management of thoroughbred stock, and then it would seem to most people that there is nothing more for him to

do but to buy brood-mares. Of course that is so if he be content to wait for some time before he can blossom forth as an owner. For instance, if a mare in foal is bought at the December sales at Newmarket, where many a bargain has been picked up, in 1903, her off-spring will not be ready to run till the racing season of 1906. That will hardly suit the man who is anxious to make an immediate appearance on the Turf. I would suggest therefore that, if he have accommodation for some half-dozen mares, he should begin by the purchase of not more than two or three, and expend a portion of the sum he is prepared to invest in buying a couple of yearling fillies, with a view to their retiring to the home paddocks when they have done racing.

This brings me to the question of buying yearlings by no means an easy subject on which to give advice. One man would say, "Never mind the price, buy the best, *i.e.*, the most fashionably bred animal in the market, send it to the best trainer, and—there you are!" But as I am not trying to pose as a mentor to millionaires, that won't do for me. Besides, if we go by the statistical tables that are annually published, it is not always the highest-priced yearlings that prove the most successful.

Another man would take the opposite view, and say: "No; the only way to make money over buying yearlings is to keep your eyes open, and whenever you see a fairly well-grown beast going for a mere song, buy it. If you can pick up a whole lot for £50 apiece or less, one is sure to turn up trumps, and pay for the rest." But I do not think

that sort of speculation would quite suit our friend, and I would therefore recommend him to adopt a middle course. And here, as his purchases are intended quite as much for breeding as for racing, I should like to say a few words about strains of blood.

I do not mean by this that I am going to lay down the law as to which equine family is the best. He will not get from me any expression of opinion whether it is more advisable to buy Hampton mares than daughters of St. Simon, Orme, or Isinglass. Breeding race-horses is not, in my judgment, an exact science, to be worked out by figures as some think, nor is it merely a happy-go-lucky chance as to whether the result be satisfactory or not. I would, however, strongly urge a beginner to start with some definite principle in his mind (such as, that the cross of Newminster on Stockwell is the right thing); but he must be always ready to modify it, for this reason, if for no other, that he will find it almost impossible to obtain animals bred exactly in accordance with his ideal. It is hardly going too far to say that breeding is neither more nor less than a puzzle, so numerous are the anomalies that occur.

How very rare it is to find all the produce of a mare of equal, or nearly of equal, merit! There are, of course, exceptions, the most notable that I can call to mind being the dam of Florizel II., Persimmon, and Diamond Jubilee, though in the case of the former horse it is perhaps his success as a sire that alone puts him on an equality with his more brilliant brothers. Take again the produce of two own sisters both sent to the same horse. The

produce of one may be first-class, that of the other not worth the covering fee. How are you to account for that? And to use an expression borrowed from the language of the Ring, "What price the theory of breeding?" I possess a mare who has had a numerous progeny, all by the same sire. The colts were well-grown and remarkably good-looking animals, who, if not quite at the top of the tree, were very useful as race-horses and won valuable stakes. The fillies, on the other hand, though they were in the majority, were no good at all on the race-course, too small, to begin with, and invariably deficient in speed. However, in that case I did not give a high price for the mare, and I consider that she has well repaid my outlay.

It was quite otherwise with another of my purchases. I was induced to give a large sum for a yearling, an own sister to a winner of the Oaks and many other races. She proved as valueless on the course as she has hitherto done at the stud. She has had five foals now of an age to have run, and is still a "maiden mare." I will also give the stud record of another mare, such a one as I hope our beginner on the Turf may chance to get hold of. She was bought for less than £100, never having run. Her first foal was born when she was seven years old, and she had fourteen others. Eight of these were winners of races, among which may be noted the Park Hill and Champagne (a dead heat) Stakes at Doncaster, the Ascot Stakes and Windsor Castle Stakes at Ascot, and the Newmarket Oaks. Her two eldest daughters (most of her foals were colts) have produced nine winners between them, and another who was sold out of

my stud is also a successful matron. This result is not, of course, the height of one's ambition, but to my mind is far from being unsatisfactory ; and if a man does not find it enjoyable to own horses that can win and pay their way, I am afraid I must put him down in the category of those who race not so much for sport as for the purpose of making money. And to such persons this chapter is not addressed.

But I may be asked, very properly, how can a mare be selected ? What sort would you recommend to produce (1) Several winners of minor races, (2) One or two first-class animals ? Ought pedigree to be the first and only consideration, or should greater stress be laid upon colour, make, and shape, or performances on the race-course ? I am afraid I must answer that I do not know ; that no definite rule can be enunciated. Race-horses have never been bred with any very great regard for colour and shape, especially the former, and I for one doubt whether making these the only consideration would have a happy result. With other animals it is different ; cattle, sheep, and pigs, not to mention poultry and pigeons, can be bred to the point of perfection in appearance, but this is accomplished mainly by in-and-in breeding, and the ruthless sacrifice of all who do not come up to the standard. Now I do not think that any one will disagree with me when I say that in-breeding carried too far is the ruin of the horse, and the numerous importations of sires from abroad during the last few years proves that the general opinion of breeders is with me on that point.

Yet, on the other hand, though breeding solely

for appearance would be a mistake, I am not at all certain that to rely entirely on the pedigrees of the sire and dam is not equally an error, because, as I have already written, breeding is not an exact science. I would therefore suggest to our friend to go beyond the book in deciding how to mate his mares. Let him see if possible the sire he proposes to use, and take care that the same defects do not exist in both parents. For instance, it may be very little detriment to a mare to be a bit long in the back, but if the horse be also inclined that way, the effect upon the progeny may be disastrous. One does not want a race-horse of the dachshund type. But after all the only real advice I can give is that a man must exercise his judgment, and in proportion as he is gifted by nature with an eye for a horse, and uses his common sense, so most probably will be the ratio of his success.

There is, however, one thing I should like, with a considerable amount of diffidence, to warn him against, and that is, not to be too easily attracted by a wave of popularity in favour of a particular sire, or even of a particular strain of blood. Let him not be afraid to pay a reasonably high fee, nor need he look askance at a horse because his services can be obtained at a low one. He is not breeding for sale.

I am afraid that, on the subject of breeding, my pen has rather run away with me. Our friend may say: "I like to see my foals and yearlings running in the paddock, but what I want to know is what to do with them later on in their career. How am I to make them pay their way? This question brings me to one of the most difficult

problems of all, a problem which must be faced while the young things are still in the paddock, or even earlier. If they are to do their owner much good on the Turf they must be entered, in certain races at all events, as yearlings. Conceive the disappointment it must be to an owner to find he has the best colt of the year, and to know that the animal is not in any of the great three-year-old races ! I can fancy few more miserable sensations than to watch the Derby or the St. Leger being won by a horse you know to be inferior to one that is eating his head off in your own stable. But there is another side to this picture. How often does one see, in the Index to the Book Calendar, a lengthy list of engagements after a horse's name, and a few years later if the name be remembered at all, it is only as that of a perfectly useless beast !

Here again it is well-nigh impossible to lay down any rule ; experience is almost the only guide. The most infallible judge of a horse will often fail if he attempt to prophesy how a yearling will turn out. It has struck me that judgment on this point comes to some people by instinct ; they are often right when quite unable to give any tangible reason for their opinion. Let us hope that Nature will have provided our friend with this invaluable talent.

But more must be done for the young horse than merely entering him in races. So now I suppose my advice is called for on the subject of choosing a trainer. No one, of course, will expect me to recommend any particular stable, or to express my preference for one system of training

over another, but I will mention one plan which I do not suggest to our friend for adoption. Some men think how nice it would be to follow the custom, which more or less prevailed in former days, of having their horses prepared under their own eye by a training-groom. For a man with a large stud and plenty of experience it may be more satisfactory to employ a private trainer, but, if only from the point of view of expense, it will not suit the case with which I am dealing.

My advice is simply this. That our beginner, if he be not personally acquainted with any public trainer, should consult a friend (he must have one or more among the numerous owners of race-horses), and if possible send his two or three yearlings to some stable whose patrons he already knows. Let him only bear in mind that a trainer, with a very long string of horses and several influential employers, will have less time to devote to the care of his little lot than a man in a smaller way of business. Also let him remember that, as he is not a betting owner, a stable notorious for heavy speculation is to be avoided. These are of necessity merely a few hints for a first start on the Turf, and if our friend cannot, after a year or two, decide such matters for himself, I cannot help him. A good deal, in the choice of a trainer, must also, I think, depend upon how much supervision the owner intends to exercise himself, whether he or the trainer should be the person to decide when and where the horses are to run, for instance.

Then as to trying horses. I am myself of opinion that the more satisfactory way is for horses in the same stable, though in different ownerships,

to be tried together as may be convenient. Others, I know, do not agree in this, and it is too much a matter of detail for me to go into here. The whole question of trials is rather a controversial one. Some owners and trainers are perpetually trying and retrying their horses, while others rarely try except for some definite purpose. I do not presume to say which are right. Some horses never do as well at home as they do on the course ; with some it is precisely the opposite ; while others seem always to run exactly up to their home form. Happy is the man who possesses such as these : he always knows what to expect !

I have now, I hope, dealt, however inadequately, with the whole of my original subject, and I am painfully aware that the amount of definite advice I have been able to impart is very small indeed. I have, it is true, left out altogether one important item which may give no small amount of trouble to my pupil, and that is, the choice of a jockey. I have done so deliberately, because in this direction general observations would be useless, and to compare, as I should have to do, one rider or one style of riding with another is a step I have no intention of taking.

It remains therefore for me to try and sum up, and I think the conclusion that most of my readers will come to is that I hold that experience, coupled with common sense, is what is chiefly needed for success on the Turf. I would like to add one more precept, "Moderation in all things" ; reckless extravagance will not ensure success, nor is it likely to be attained by rigid parsimony. Failure may dog the steps of the man who races on a

large scale, another with but few horses may gain the highest honours of the Turf. I believe implicitly that there is such a thing as luck, and that luck may always turn in one's favour. Otherwise I should often have been tempted to give it up as a bad job.

The other day it occurred to me to make a rough list of the important races for which I have run second, but never won, during the five and twenty years I have been racing. They are, of the so-called classic races : the Derby, the Oaks, and the One Thousand (I have never got nearer than third for the St. Leger), the Goodwood and Doncaster Cups, the Prince of Wales' Stakes and Coronation Stakes at Ascot, the Jockey Club Stakes at Newmarket, the City and Suburban (twice), and the Great Metropolitan at Epsom. Of two-year-old races I will only mention the Middle Park Plate and the Woodcote.

If this be not a record of ill-fortune I do not know what else to call it. Some may well ask why I, of all people, should undertake to give advice to others. A certain amount of experience, though it may have been adverse, must be my excuse.

I must now wind up by expressing a sincere wish that the unknown neophyte, for whose benefit alone I have written, may be more successful than I have been, and will ask permission to add a more or less confident hope that brighter fortunes may yet be in store for my humble self.

FISHING

BY THE MARQUESS OF GRANBY

“THE longer one lives the more one learns” is a trite saying which at any rate holds good in the case of the fisherman ; and if there be any of the confraternity of anglers who do not benefit by experience and observation, then I fear those unprogressive persons must be classed among the failures of the craft. There would appear to be no branch of sport of which it is so impossible to feel that one has attained to a really competent knowledge, sufficient to make almost certain of a fair amount of success, as trout fishing. Salmon fishing is conducted, as is, perhaps, natural, on broader and larger general principles ; and it is far easier to prophesy as to the probable chances of a day’s salmon fishing than it is to do so when one goes in pursuit of *salmo fario*.

In either case, however, it is a most unwise proceeding to attempt to vaticinate ; as it is equally foolish to be depressed by any atmospheric conditions. The only almost absolute certainties that can be named with regard to a day’s fishing being hopeless are, when a salmon river is in spate and “drumlie,” when it is “waxing” or “waning,”

or when there is a thick fog. I have even known stray fish killed after a river has begun to rise or fall, but this is, I fancy, very unusual. With respect to mist or fog, I personally have rarely known either salmon or trout caught when these conditions obtained, but others may have been more fortunate.

It certainly seems somewhat of a counsel of perfection to insist that one should not be depressed or "put out," when starting on a day's fishing, by what may appear to be a thoroughly unpromising weather outlook ; and yet I have found some of the nastiest, coldest, most down-stream-wind kind of days prove in the end productive of sport. (I am now writing of trout fishing only.) Undoubtedly half a gale of bitter N.E. wind, blowing straight down the stream, is a disheartening element with which to battle, but success often attends an angler on such a day. There are generally *some* bends, twists, and turns in a river which enable one to fish up-stream a little ; and should the sun break through the grey clouds for even a few short intervals, it is more than probable that, if it be in early spring time at any rate, a sudden hatching out and rise of either dark olive duns, March browns, or iron blues may occur ; the trout then seize both their opportunity and the flies with determination and avidity, and the fisherman is, indeed, well repaid for cold hands, cold nose, and general discomfort. A strong down-stream wind matters less in the earlier months of the fishing year than it does later on in the season ; for more liberties can be taken with trout when there is plenty of water in the river, and when consequently

less absolute accuracy in placing a fly is essential to success. It is obviously easier to "force" a fly up against a strong wind when there is plenty of water to cover a trout than it is to do so when hardly any space exists between the fish's back and the top of the stream. Moreover, ample water and a fresh breeze create between them a considerable amount of disturbance on the river's surface ; and the most wary of trout are then comparatively indifferent to a fly's falling with a small splash, or to a large loop of casting line striking the water ; whereas in June and July, when the rivers have fallen to their summer level, and are daily diminishing in volume, extreme accuracy and correctness of casting is necessary, if fish are to be killed.

The phrase "daily diminishing," as above used, applies merely to the ordinary influence of summer on streams. But in truth the water question as regards England as a whole, whether in respect of fishing interests, farming interests, mill interests, or any other of the numerous considerations affecting country life with which water is necessarily connected, has become a grave matter. It is certain that within the last few years nearly all the rivers in the Home Counties have, owing to the heavy calls made on them by the various water companies, in addition to the more perfected system of drainage, become permanently lower by several inches. In other parts of the country, where deep coal shafts have been sunk and the underground water tapped, large areas have been gradually deprived of the water absolutely essential for supplying houses, farms, cottages, and for carrying on the business of

mills, as well as farming operations ; while in some cases where water companies have sunk deep borings, in addition to the amount in their reservoirs collected from the gathering-grounds, considerable tracts of country quite outside the limits legally controlled by those companies—as far as water goes—have become almost entirely deprived of the water absolutely essential for the health and well-being of those living in such districts. These authorities are nearly all local bodies such as municipalities or rural district councils, and no human being can with any appearance of saneness suggest that the great towns or thickly populated districts should not have a proper and full supply of water ; but in view of the steady decrease of that supply throughout the country districts, owing in part to the present system of drainage, whereby the rain-water is run off the land so quickly as to prevent any but the smallest amount being absorbed, as well as to the immense and, as I would venture to think, often somewhat carelessly legalised drain, made by the great cities and towns, upon water-supplying districts, it is to be hoped that private bill committees, both in the House of Commons and in the House of Lords, will in the future, whenever water bills may come before them, take into their most careful consideration the case of country districts from which it is proposed to draw water, and will see that clauses are inserted in those bills which will protect such areas from being entirely deprived of that essential element to benefit people living possibly a hundred miles away. Of course, as matters stand now, whenever a new water bill is introduced, clauses

are drawn by which so many gallons a day are sent down the river which is the one principally dealt with under the bill, and a regular and constant flow is insisted on. But this provision does not affect the smaller streams, ponds, or springs, in the catchment area—often an immense size—and it is on behalf of those living within hail of these latter water supplies that I would urge consideration and attention by all those who give any thought to that most pressing question, the water supply of this country.

The only apology which can be offered for such a lengthy digression is that fishing and water are so inseparable that any matter of importance affecting the latter must of necessity be of moment to those interested in the former. But let us now for a short time return to that most interesting subject—to an angler at least—of the weather.

I have ventured to advise fishermen not to be too much depressed by atmospheric conditions, but it must be confessed that it *is* disheartening to find a cold unseasonable northerly wind blowing straight in one's face as one drives towards the river on a glary day in May or early June, and realises what heavy work this means for the wrists and forearm if up-stream fishing is to be attempted. As one of my friends, who has fished a particular trout river with me for years, says on such occasions, "Here's the same old wind and the same old dust we left here last year."

But it can't be helped, and the only thing to be done is to follow the example of the British army in South Africa—namely, to "stick it out," as Tommy Atkins calls it, and see the job through.

In most cases it turns out a deal better than seems probable at starting. This same problem of what wind and weather are favourable for fishing, and what are not, presents many curious aspects.

One is this. It has frequently been noticed by one of the best practical fly-fishermen of my acquaintance that trout seem to rise more freely and boldly, at any rate when the May-fly is "on," when a *light* down-stream wind is blowing, than on occasions when the breeze comes from the usually more favoured up-stream direction.

It is difficult to account for this, unless perhaps it may be that the wind, blowing the same way as is the flow of the river, renders the position of the artificial fly on the water more attractive to the trout. Possibly the action of the down-stream breeze makes the appearance of the fly approach more nearly to that of a real insect than does the up-stream one. The slight jerking motion imparted to flies by a wind blowing against the flow of the stream may implant some feeling of disinclination to rise in the minds of the trout: and yet this would apply equally to live as well as to artificial flies. So the matter remains something of a mystery, as do many things connected with fish and fishing. But the fact remains that, during May-fly time at least, there are those who hail with satisfaction rather than dismay a slight wind of a down-stream tendency.

There are times, of course, when the fisherman is grateful to Providence for sending no wind at all. A really calm day is no doubt a delightful one on which to fish. It is then comparatively easy to put the fly anywhere one chooses; consequently

one becomes puffed up, and fancies that a really skilful fisherman has suddenly been evolved: but the fall which we are told usually attends undue^{ly} pride is under circumstances such as these pretty certain to arrive during some part of the day. When in the middle of executing an elaborate cast, intended to captivate the fancy and capture the body of some big trout basking near the top of the clear water, the confident angler will be greeted with a sudden slight draught of wind straight in his face, which will render not only useless, but harmful, the efforts by which he had fondly hoped greatly to enrich his basket. Instead of the fine gut touching the water delicately and straightly, the fly falls with a splash—probably just on the trout's back—while the casting line is in serpentine and coils in a greater or less degree. Consequently, instead of success and triumph, the upshot is hurried flight on the part of the trout, and feelings and expressions on that of the angler which are quite out of character with the peaceful charm of the day. It is not, however, an unfavourable wind which alone brings dismay to the heart of the fisherman. Many seem to take umbrage at the authorities who select and serve out the weather when a very hot and potent sun is shining.

It is true that when this is the case not only does gut glitter more (unless care has been taken to dull it by some method of staining) than on a cloudy grey day, but varnished rods and one's own shadow become painfully evident. Trout are obviously far more easily frightened and "put down" on a bright than on a cloudy day, but the former brings compensations in its train. A warm sun hatches out

many flies well-beloved of the trout. Instead of lying low down in the stream, the chances are that fish will be seen either rising or "standing" near the top of the water, on the watch for the aforementioned flies.

This being so, the artful fisherman has a fair chance of getting *some* fish, even if the difficulties of catching them are considerably enhanced. While on this subject of sun-brightened days, it is curious to mark that, even amongst some of those whose business it is to observe trout and their habits, there seems still to remain an idea that trout are hardly to be killed by the fly after the May-fly season is over. (This, of course, relates only to rivers whereon this admirable insect exists.) As the May-fly season ends, roughly speaking, about the end of the second week in June, the "hopeless" time alluded to may be considered to be about July—a month when we are usually blessed with some of the hottest weather of the year.

So far, however, from July being an impossible sort of month for the trout fisherman, it often proves quite the reverse, even on May-fly-producing rivers. It is perhaps unnecessary to add that a reasonable supply of water in the river is essential if fish are to be killed. At seasons such as the one now under consideration not *much* water can be expected, but the fisherman needs a little.

Last July was a period wherein were numbered some of the hottest days of the year; and yet it was during that very time that very excellent sport fell to my share. Absolutely still days, a fierce and at times almost unbearable sun, combined with a midsummer height or lowness of water, together

form a combination which would not, as a rule, be regarded as one favourable for fishing purposes. Nevertheless, it was under such conditions that on several occasions trout rose steadily, and, what is still stranger, continuously, in certain rivers running through what are called the "Home Counties."

I confess that on two of these days, at any rate, I began fishing with anticipations and feelings quite contrary to those whose value I have been advocating. But to my wonderment and joy I found that by the exercise of the best art at one's command trout could here and there be induced to look at and, what was more to the point, take that king of midsummer flies, the alder. So matters progressed during the hours of those sweltering days. Trout *were* to be killed, as the state of my friend's basket and my own showed when we had struggled home, limp, weary, moist outside beyond all description, a condition only equalled by a phenomenal dryness inside, making one appreciate to the full the admirable chapter in the ever-to-be-lamented Mr. Steevens' book on the Atbara and Khartoum campaign on the ethics of a desert thirst.

On another occasion, a year or two ago, a day in July very similar in character to those to which allusion has just been made, found me by the side of a well-known Hertfordshire river. While I was putting together my rod, the keeper, whom I had known for some years, came up. Quoth he: "I'm afraid you'll do little to-day; for these trout scarcely ever take a fly after the May-fly is over."

At that moment I saw a nice fish of about a

pound and a half lying close to the top of the water some fifteen yards below me, obviously, from the position he had taken up, and the gentle agitation of his tail—a most significant indication of a fish's intentions—willing and anxious to consider the charms of any fly which might float over him. Therefore, it seemed to me the wisest course to say nothing, but to endeavour, by a practical example, to upset the keeper's theories as quickly as possible.

All things being ready, recourse was made to a wide circuit, so as to get well below the trout, and, sure enough, as soon as ever the fly—an alder, as usual—came over the fish, up he came and was hooked the very first time of asking. The keeper was rather put out, and explained that my trout must have been the exception amongst trout in that river which proved the rule; but by the end of the day the worthy man had it fairly brought home to him that trout were to be killed after the May-fly had disappeared, and in tropically hot weather as well. Now, *why* did this river-keeper so insist that after a certain period of the year it would be of little or no use to attempt to catch fish with the fly! He had been for some years looking after this particular stretch of water, and must have noticed the habits of the fish in July and August. It would seem, because trout do not in those warm months rise with the eagerness and dash that they display earlier in the season and during the May-fly time, that therefore the tiny, dimpling, hardly visible displacements or breaks in the water made by them when taking flies in the later summer months often escape notice, are mistaken for some

action of the water itself, or for the movements of some wee dancing insect. As a matter of fact, during July and August—which latter seems to be usually the worst of all the months for fly-fishing, September being generally much better—it is not so much rising fish which must be looked out for, but ones which are “standing”; by which latter phrase is meant fish that are lying near the top of the water apparently in wait for any floating articles of diet the river may bring to them on its surface.

The mention of September reminds one that at that season grayling begin to get into proper condition, and consequently on some rivers the fisherman has a double chance. He may secure both trout and grayling, should he care to keep the latter fish when caught. For some people appear to esteem the grayling but lightly; thus following in the footsteps of some of the older masters of the piscatorial art. This fish, however, would not appear to be as unworthy as many seem to consider it. Grayling are not bad eating if properly cooked—that is, split open and grilled—and they come into season when trout begin to go out of condition. Consequently, if the fisherman happens to live in the neighbourhood of a grayling river he can prolong the enjoyment of his favourite sport into the late autumn months, going out when the sun has dispelled the mists and the effect of early frosts, and returning home as soon as the warmth of Dan Phœbus has commenced to fail. As regard the amount of sport grayling afford as compared with that yielded by trout, doubtless the palm should be awarded to the latter fish. But

grayling are persevering and unfrightened risers, continuing to rise under circumstances which would have driven an ordinary trout half out of its mind, and have sent it flying to shelter after the first minute.

Grayling are to the angler distinctly encouraging fish, and, may I add, most deceptive ones. He—the fisherman I mean, not the fish—often has his hopes raised high by the persistent manner in which grayling are rising, and yet, try he never so warily and skilfully, not a fish can he hook.

The elusive grayling goes on “coming up” apparently *at*, but in reality just *under*, the fly, and strike he quickly, strike he slowly, or not at all, the result is still the same, which result is *nil*! Under such circumstances I am not at all certain whether the wet fly is not the best method of attacking grayling.

Of one thing I am sure, which is, that to cope successfully with these fish, at any rate when the water is low and clear, the finest possible gut must be used, the fly must be very thoroughly dried before it is thrown, and the whole cast be delivered *most* accurately and straightly, without a kink or loop of the smallest kind. Unless this is done grayling fishing in any river which is much frequented would seem to be fully as difficult as south country trout fishing, if, indeed, it is not more so.

There are, of course, days when grayling seem to forget their usual caution and are easily taken, but I am now alluding to the average condition of affairs in connection with the pursuit of this fish. Given, however, a brisk, fresh, bright September

or early October morning, a fisherman may find himself in many worse places than by the side of some grayling-producing stream.

Before turning for a very short space to the subject of salmon fishing, let us see what Dame Juliana Berners, some 450 years ago, said she considered was the most suitable weather in which to go a-fishing. She recommends that "Ye schall angle as y seyde be for in darke louryng wedur when the wynde blowethe softely and yn somer seasen when hyt ys brennyng¹ hote. It is from September vn to Apryl and yn a feyr sonne day ys good to angle in. And yf the wynde that sesan have any parte of the oriente northe the wetur then ys good and wen hyt is a greyt wynde when hyt ys snowyt reynet or haylyth thonderyt or lightneth or also miuynge² hoyt that ys not to angle." Thus Dame Juliana. And though she has been quoted many and many a time before, it is interesting to note how her observations on this point, as on other fishing matters, are in consonance with those of present-day fishermen. "Darke louryng wedur when the wynde blowethe softely" must stir in the angler's heart memories of many a pleasant day's fishing in spring-time, when a soft westerly or southerly breeze and quiet grey clouds induced the big trout to forsake their winter quarters under the stones in the river or 'neath the banks, and to take a deep and serious interest in the newly hatched olive duns or red quill gnats. (In passing, I am bound to remark that "softe wyndes" in spring have been conspicuous by their absence during the past few years.) As to the

¹ Burning.

² Close ; stifling.

“somer seasen when hyt ys brennyng hote,” I have already ventured to say something.

The only portion of Dame Juliana's statements with regard to weather which seems a little doubtful, is that in which she says the “oriente northe” wind is one conducive to success in angling. With all due respect to the lady, a north-east wind does not as a rule (I *have* known exceptions) assist in filling a fisherman's basket ; though it is, I think, preferable to a due north or north-west wind. But most fishermen will thoroughly agree with her that when it is “miuynge hoyt”—that is, stiflingly hot—sport cannot be expected. Close heat, without any “life” in the atmosphere, is generally fatal to the angler's hopes. So it would seem that, notwithstanding the great gap which separates this age from that wherein the dame lived, trout, grayling, and other fish are to be fished for nowadays much as they used to be then, and that weather conditions affect fish in 1902 much as they did in 1450. Trout may be more highly educated in these days, by reason of their being so constantly fished over, than they were in the fifteenth century, but in other respects they cannot be said to have been greatly affected by “the old order changing.”

Not much space remains to touch even ever so lightly on the habits and peculiarities of the king of all fish caught in the rivers of these islands ; I need hardly say I mean the salmon.

Of late years it is commonly reported that, with the exception of some few favoured rivers, salmon are gradually becoming scarcer. Whether this is the case, and if it is whether such diminution in

numbers arises from natural causes—increase of poaching, especially the spawning grounds ; over-netting, nets being allowed on the rivers for an undue length of time per week ; or any other reason, it is very difficult to say. Possibly one might feel inclined to hazard an opinion that this unfortunate state of affairs is the result of a combination of all the above-named conditions.

It is to be feared, however, that salmon fishing in many rivers in England, Scotland, and Ireland is nothing like what it used to be. While rents of salmon rivers have increased, the number of fish killed, both by rod-fishing and by nets, has considerably decreased. This is an unsatisfactory state of things, and one which is naturally receiving attention at the hands of fishermen and owners of salmon fisheries. Private fish hatcheries are being formed in many rivers ; while Mr. Moreton Frewen has been urging, both privately and through the medium of the Press, that the admirable example of the Government of the United States should be copied by the English Government, and that salmon hatcheries should be constructed wherever necessary, at the expense and under the control of a Government department. Space does not permit of any consideration of this difficult and complex question ; but undoubtedly the subject is one which calls for further careful investigation, even though Salmon Fishery Commissions may have sat and recently reported.

But, although salmon may have become less numerous, many are still killed in the course of the year by rod and line in the rivers of Great Britain and Ireland.

If the wonderful bags of thirty and forty years ago are not to be rivalled in these days, nevertheless good results are sometimes obtained on rivers such as the Spey, the Tay, or the Tweed—during the past few seasons the last-named river has been in worse plight than most others. Numbers of the smaller Scotch rivers still afford excellent sport. But what seems to be the main difference between the salmon fishing of the 'sixties and 'seventies, in the earlier days of last century, and at the present time, is that when rivers were in good fishing "ply," and the weather favourable, then sport was much more a certainty (as far as anything connected with that most uncertain of all sports can be so considered) than it now is ; and, furthermore, that it continued for a longer period than is now the case.

Given the water in good order and climatic influences favourable, several consecutive days of good sport could be fairly counted on in former times ; whereas such an occurrence is now considered worthy of much notice and probably many newspaper paragraphs.

I fancy that Ireland is in much the same state in this respect as is Scotland ; while England and Wales do not show any advance on their earlier records.

Undoubtedly public opinion has been of late moved on the subject of the unsatisfactory condition of salmon fishing in the United Kingdom ; and it is to be hoped that those who take a real interest in this subject will not relax their efforts, but will continue them till the proper remedies for the existing evils are found and applied.

However, be they scarce or not, salmon in these latter days are, it is certain, affected by weather influences much as their ancestors used to be in the good old times. As has been mentioned in a preceding page, fog, a rising or falling river, utterly defeats the fisherman's hopes. The much argued and, it would seem, still undecided point, as to whether or no salmon feed in fresh water, cannot here be discussed at any length. Personally I cannot help leaning towards the belief that they *do*—at any rate, occasionally—take some kinds of water insects and flies when in a river. For otherwise, why should salmon be seen rising at, and to all appearances taking greedily, the March browns, which in spring-time appear in multitudes on rivers such as the Tweed? or why should they rise at an artificial fly at all? I grant that such an article in no way resembles any known live insect. But it cannot be curiosity alone which prompts a salmon to take an artificial fly. If it be that feeling only, what an appalling amount of that characteristic must exist amongst those fish! and they are not all of the female sex either!

Surely salmon must take artificial flies for different kinds of water beetles or similar creatures?—the play of the strands of the feathers and hackles simulating in some degree the movement of the legs and tentacles of certain of the curious insects or shrimp-like inhabitants of the deep rivers. And this brings us to the much debated question as to whether it is the size or colour of flies which has most to do with attracting salmon.

Here, again, it would seem probable that a

judicious blend of the proper size of hook and choice of colour is the goal to be attained. I cannot help fancying that, as a rule, salmon flies are dressed in too patch-worky a fashion. By this I mean that instead of the body, for instance, being composed of two or three different coloured substances, and then bound round with perhaps both gold and silver tinsel, a perfectly plain body, made of material of the best fancied colour, would have been every bit as efficacious. So with the wings. Often these are surrounded by strands of fancy feathers which are in all probability quite unnecessary.

It must be admitted, however, that a fly which has a strong patch of some particular colour somewhere about it—generally on the cheek—is often found to be the only successful fly throughout a whole day. For example: the vivid blue of the kingfisher, blue macaw, or jay, which is found on the “Jock Scott,” is, I am certain, a potent factor in the destruction of many a salmon. In fact, a good strong touch of blue would seem very effective in the colour-scheme of any *brightly* dressed fly. It is, however, impossible at this moment, owing to lack of space, to do more than just touch on this colour question. Reams might be filled on the subject. So I will only briefly add that it seems to me salmon flies are, speaking generally, dressed with far too great elaboration of colour. Putting together, in the construction of a salmon fly, an aggregation of rare and expensive feathers and silver and gold twist is probably a very desirable proceeding in the eyes of a fly-maker; but it seems very doubtful whether a far more simply

composed fly would not prove an equally or even more killing lure.

On the question of the *size* of hooks, however, there cannot be two opinions. If a fisherman has a fair notion what general colour of fly is most likely to attract the fish, the only consideration left for his careful attention is what sized fly he should use. And here he may be easily guided by the height and colour of the river. But if he by chance be unfortunate in his selection in the size of his fly, he is not likely to do much till he has found out and remedied his mistake. I am a firm believer in the "size" theory, both as regards trout and salmon fishing.

Nevertheless, whether the fisherman be one of the most skilled, or one of the most unskilled, whether he be fishing with fly or bait, with the wet fly or the dry fly—for bleak or dace, salmon or trout—piscatorial good fortune lies on the knees of the gods ; and of all the sports and recreations—herein lies one of its chief charms—that of fishing still remains the most uncertain.

CRICKET

BY LORD HAWKE

THE attempt to impart to others some account of what has been done in a certain department of the game of cricket for a good many years past naturally makes one introspective. There can be no question that the captaincy of a team involves a great deal of responsibility. The compliment and the honour come from those who repose the care of a side to one man. But that one man has so much to think of, so much dependent upon his judgment, that the importance of what is expected from him thrusts aside all false sentiment of vanity. He can feel proud that he is thought fit for his post, but beyond that is created a sense of humility at the limitations of individual capacity rather than arrogance. The last person to enjoy a match—though I would be far from suggesting that he never does so—might well be the captain. The happiest man is the bowler who has a pitch to suit him and a fielding side who can hold catches. Still, is not the pavilion critic happier still—the man who can coach everybody, yet who is never called upon to display his own practical ineptitude? True criticism is helpful, nay, is invaluable—certain

writers in the Press, for example, are of great assistance in modern cricket—but the consequential, dictatorial type, who is a plague to all his neighbours, is a spectator “who never would be missed,” as Mr. W. S. Gilbert writes.

In response to the Editor's invitation to write on this topic, I am bound to begin with myself. This is not out of egotism, but simply because it has been my good fortune to enjoy a wide experience as a captain on many fields and in many climes ; indeed it would savour of affectation if I did not yield to the special request which has been made to me that my article should be personal. I feel very gratified at having been able to lead Yorkshire to so many victories, and I also keenly appreciate the way in which I have been treated. My county committee have reposed in me a degree of confidence which it is impossible sufficiently to acknowledge. They have in a great measure left the selection of the county side to me, a point on which I wish to lay great stress, because other captains have not been so fortunate. I know of cases—I trust all may be truthfully spoken of in the past tense—in which captains have been severely hampered by the selection committee. Instances could be given where the captain actually had not a seat on the committee—that is to say, he had no voice in choosing the men he was to lead into the field. Examples could also be quoted of captains who, though certainly on the selection committee, were not allowed to modify their teams whilst touring in out-matches without telegraphing for instructions from a hastily collected quorum in the county pavilion. Such anomalies are absurd.

If a captain be capable of directing a side during the match, he must also be capable of choosing the men most suitable for that match. If he be not, he is not fit to be captain at all. If he be, he should be entrusted with large powers from his county committee.

The captain of a county team can adopt either of two courses with his men. He can be autocratic, or he can take counsel with one or two of his side—of course, assuming responsibility for the final decisions. I am not going to inveigh against the former course. Captains have found it successful, and have led elevens to victory ; but I am not ashamed to own that I have derived valuable assistance from members of my team. I do not speak only of the amateurs, but also of the professionals. If I am to allude to my captaincy of Yorkshire, I should like to say that I have taken counsel in former days with Tom Emmett and George Ulyett, whilst for years I have found John Tunnicliffe a right-hand man. In the multitude of counsellors there may be confusion, but on the sensible shrewd words of an acute judge much sound reliance can be placed. I also believe in a captain knowing all about his men. Let him feel interest in their home-life, and let them become aware that in him they have a sincere friend. The way in which he will come into touch with them by this means would surprise some captains who could not tell you the trades by which their professionals earn their winter wage. Cricketers are human, and when you play together for three or four months, bonds of mutual attachment and respect ought to have been formed. I consider

that a captain is responsible to his committee and to the public for the *morale* of his team. The man who is a pernicious example ought to be sacked, no matter how skilled he may be as a cricketer. A black-leg in a side will work moral mischief, and tend to loosen the bonds of mutual co-operation in a way far more detrimental than is counter-balanced by his own performances. The trite old adage about *mens sana* is a golden text in cricket.

The action of a captain in the field should not be too arrogant. Whenever the bowler has sufficient experience, he ought to be allowed to place his field. Thus, could anyone in England set men for George Hirst's bowling half as well as George Hirst himself? When Wilfred Rhodes first came out, he had not the knowledge of the idiosyncrasies of opposing batsmen to enable him accurately to modify the position of his fieldsmen; therefore, it was the captain's duty to support him. So also is it the duty of the captain to shift the field according to the obvious play of the batsman if this be unnoticed by the bowler.

About the changing of bowling it is impossible to speak with authority. It depends not only on the judgment of the captain, but on his intuition. It is often advisable to ask a bowler about to be taken off if he feels he would like one more over or not. Sometimes the man will be glad of a rest. Or again he may feel encouraged to the brief extra effort and obtain the desired separation. If the bowler likes it by all means let him have the over. It is to some extent a matter of temperament. And whilst alluding to temperament, it may be suggested that this is of exceptional importance in

choosing the twelfth man. The cricketer who feels hurt because he is not included in the regular side, the man who loses heart and the man of a despondent disposition, will never make a valuable twelfth man. The ideal for this rather thankless post is a superb field who will turn out cheerily at any moment. He should be a man who does not care where he is put in, but will do his best not only to make runs but to back up—a thing in which many cricketers on the verge of a county team are apt to be callous about after their first few trials.

Another duty of a county captain is to give judicious trial to eligible colts. He ought to be able to see which men are of no use whatever, and which will train on if carefully fostered. It takes three seasons of county cricket to bring out all the ability in a man. It must be borne in mind that nervousness often prevents a colt from doing himself full justice at his early appearances. If Hayward, Hirst, and Rhodes all made remarkably successful *débuts*, Braund, Brockwell, Briggs, Gunn, and Rawlin all ripened after protracted trials. But when in doubt as to the preference to be given to one of a batch of colts whose ability seems to be pretty well on a level, the choice ought to fall on the lad who is smartest in the field. To attain a high standard of efficiency in fielding should be another aim with a county captain; matches are thus won and lost. I believe some anonymous calculator declared that out of 187,000 runs scored last year, 78,000 would have been saved had all reasonable catches been held: a startling commentary.

I am emphatically of opinion that an amateur should be captain of a county team. Not only will the side work better together, but it entirely does away with any suspicion of personal interest in the matter of allotting talent money. On many sides the old-fashioned plan of giving a fixed sum for six wickets, fifty runs, and so forth has been abolished. In its place has been set up a system of marks given by the captain who estimates the value of the work done, not by its actual appearance on the score sheet, but by the help it afforded towards winning the match. This delicate task can be better entrusted in the long-run to an amateur than to a professional—who would not appreciate the job at all in his heart—or to a committee-man watching from the pavilion.¹

It is the task of the captain to write the order of going in. One thing experience points out is the advantage of sticking to the same order. This is a golden rule and ought only to be modified in the last quarter of an hour in the day. Of course this is a step more than advocating the desirability of the same pair going in first on all ordinary occasions. Look at the names inseparably associated in the minds of cricketers. In days gone by E. M. Grace and W. G. Grace for Gloucestershire, A. N. Hornby and Barlow for Lancashire, I. D. Walker and A. J. Webbe for Middlesex, had

¹ To be more precise, there are two systems of remuneration by marks. The one is for the county committee to set aside a fixed sum (in one case it is £120) to be divided among the professionals according to the marks given by the captain; the other system, employed by Yorkshire, is to allow me to give each man as many marks as I think he deserves, each mark being worth five shillings.

become "household words." A captain should not be afraid to insist on his bowlers getting out cheaply when batting. On occasions they may be allowed to amuse themselves by making a few runs. But as a rule their stay at the wicket should be brief. This may seem hard lines; but it is in the best interests of the man himself and his side that the bowler should get as much repose as possible whilst his side is batting. Another golden rule may be noted. Have a fearless man placed half way down your order to stop a possible rot. Men like Blackham, S. M. J. Woods, and Wainwright have worked marvels in this way. When a man has a fancy for a particular place it is a good thing if feasible to gratify his desire. If a man has had a run of bad luck it is advisable to put him in first so that he will not grow nervous whilst waiting in the pavilion. On the other hand, if the man out of form sincerely desires to be put in late, it is judicious to humour him, as a couple of "not outs" may help him to regain confidence.

These seem to me the chief suggestions arising from experience of county captaincy, and the majority will of course apply to all sorts and conditions of cricket. But on certain points some further observations must be made.

In a touring team I am almost tempted to say that half the duties of a captain are finished before he steps into the field. In any foreign trips, whether to America, Canada, India, West Indies, South Africa, or Australia, a vast deal depends on the control a captain has over his man when the matches are not in progress. To show colonials

and our kinsmen across the Atlantic the best type of Englishmen must be the laudable desire of a captain. To do this he must ensure discipline, and his personal example amply suffices to set a good standard of conduct among his men. I have many happy reminiscences on tour of staunch friends, of generous hospitality, and untold kindness received in distant parts of the globe. Of the tours that are ended the memories will live as long as life lasts. Finally, in a touring team, the captain has to make a succession of speeches. It is his duty not only to say "thank you" from the bottom of his heart, but to do his share in promoting the unity of hands across the ocean, and he may often find opportunities to suggest how local cricket may be improved. All this does not require oratory, only sincerity.

The captain of a university eleven has one of the most difficult positions. His main business is to win the university match, and the selection of his side has to be based on that assumption; therefore he, more than any other captain, is forced to rely on contemporary form. But against that has to be set the fact that a young cricketer may be rendered nervous by the crowd at Lord's. All things else being on the whole equal, preference can be fairly given to the man who has played for Eton or Harrow, rather than for one who has seldom had a gallery. The delicate task of telling an Old Blue he is not good enough to play is one from which no captain should shrink when the interests of the side are at stake. Again, other things being much on a level, I would rather play a senior than a fresher, owing

to the great steadiness a couple of additional years' experience usually affords. Yet, better than all, a couple of county matches is worth a whole term of college or even university matches. Regret has been expressed that university sides are so entirely recruited from sundry colleges, but the theories suggested above will in practice generally restrict the candidates to those drawn from a few colleges.

Finally, the captain of a public school can rely on older and wiser heads than his own. I am no advocate for the gratuitous and ubiquitous interference of the master who has charge of the cricket ; but in the majority of cases he is an Old Blue and often a valued county cricketer, and his experience and advice will be of much service to the lad who holds the reins of office. The captain who will win matches for his school is the one who can see that there are good cricketers outside his own house, and who has regular fielding practice, not only for his eleven, but for those who at some schools are termed "choices." He must resist the temptation of over-working his best bowlers. Lads collapse rapidly in ability so soon as they feel over-strained. It is also a matter for delicate discrimination when the school-colours should be given. If apportioned too long before the principal match, one or two of the eleven may be slack. On the other hand, a lad of high-strung temperament, with an obvious aptitude for the game, may not be able to do himself justice until his place is assured. It is all a matter for the personal judgment of the captain, part of the splendid education provided by British sport.

In the preceding observations I have endeavoured to provide some serviceable suggestions ; but my own belief is that there is intuitive disposition towards good captaincy in some cricketers, and a hopeless inability among others who have attained fame at the wickets. The importance of sympathetic captaincy cannot be exaggerated, and individuals have sometimes pulled a team together by sheer personal energy and power over their comrades. There are leaders in cricket just as there are leaders of men in other branches of activity. But the ideal captain should possess all I have hinted at and something more—the enthusiasm for the game, the quiet self-confidence which is not mere vanity, and, a most important point, ever ready self-sacrifice for the benefit of his side.

I am asked to add a few words of advice to young players, and I do so with the more pleasure because I have had an exceptional amount of experience in watching the development of cricket talent. From all districts of Yorkshire I receive reports as to the abilities of youngsters, and anyone showing ability is brought to Leeds for a thorough trial. If he be a bowler he is pitted against a prominent run-getter, if he be a bat he can show his capabilities against some of the county bowlers, as I watch him from behind the net. Allowing for a little preliminary nervousness, it is astonishing how quickly it is possible to estimate the capacity of a colt. Certainly, with reference to county cricket, the text is true that many are called but few chosen. I ought to add that energy and goodwill in the field

are regarded as an elemental essential for any aspirant to the Yorkshire eleven; and the lad gets a good example, for at the end of a county practice we all take the field to have catches hit up to us. You will see J. T. Brown and Denton striving as hard in this department as any novice who wishes to gain our suffrage, and it will be readily understood how much he benefits by working beside them. It takes two or three years to convert the most promising colt into a regular trustworthy member of the county team, and, contrary to the successful experience of Lancashire with Robinson, Cuttell, and others, we in Yorkshire are not disposed to give much trial to any novice over five-and-twenty.

The first advice I would offer to a keen youngster is to study good cricketers. Most lads can get an occasional afternoon at a county match, or at all events see some notable players in club cricket. The number of capable Old Blues and of amateurs debarred by professional duties from playing first-class cricket is countless. These, scattered over England, furnish an excellent standard for the emulation of an eager lad. Moreover, they are always willing to give a few hints, and in nearly every village is some old "pro" who can coach quite as well as he ever played. Personally, I do not believe any cricketer was ever *made* by coaching, though of course there are many things he can learn.

The earliest thing a lad needs is to be taught how to use his eyes. Half the boys who come to a Yorkshire match want to see Hirst, Rhodes, or Tunncliffe, which is very natural. But if, instead

of gaping at these giants of the game and bothering them for autographs, the lads watched *how* they played, their keenness in the field, the way in which the bowlers modified their tactics to entrap their opponents, the strokes with which the batsmen scored off those wily balls, beginners would obtain a great object lesson which they might strive to turn to account on their own local grounds.

The next hint of mine is never to play carelessly. Of course, great cricketers have many a time done so—and paid the penalty. The batsman in two minds over a ball, or indifferently addressing a bowler whom he believes to be easy, has often had to return to the pavilion a sadder and it may be hoped a wiser man. The bowler reckless of pitch gets punished severely. The fieldsman who “goes to sleep” misses a catch which may cost his side the match. Remember, if all the catches were held there would be no drawn games in county cricket, and therefore no necessity to amend the laws. Each catch missed simply adds another batsman to the opposing side, and a run saved is more than a run gained, for it is also a run that need not be obtained. Smart fielding encourages bowlers. Slackness in the field is the chief abomination of cricket. The early success of the Australians was almost entirely due to their co-operative and keen fielding.

Now a word as to bowlers, for which there is an inexhaustible demand in no matter what class of cricket you may participate. Here the supply always falls short. One reason is that half the lads when they have had their knock at the nets put on

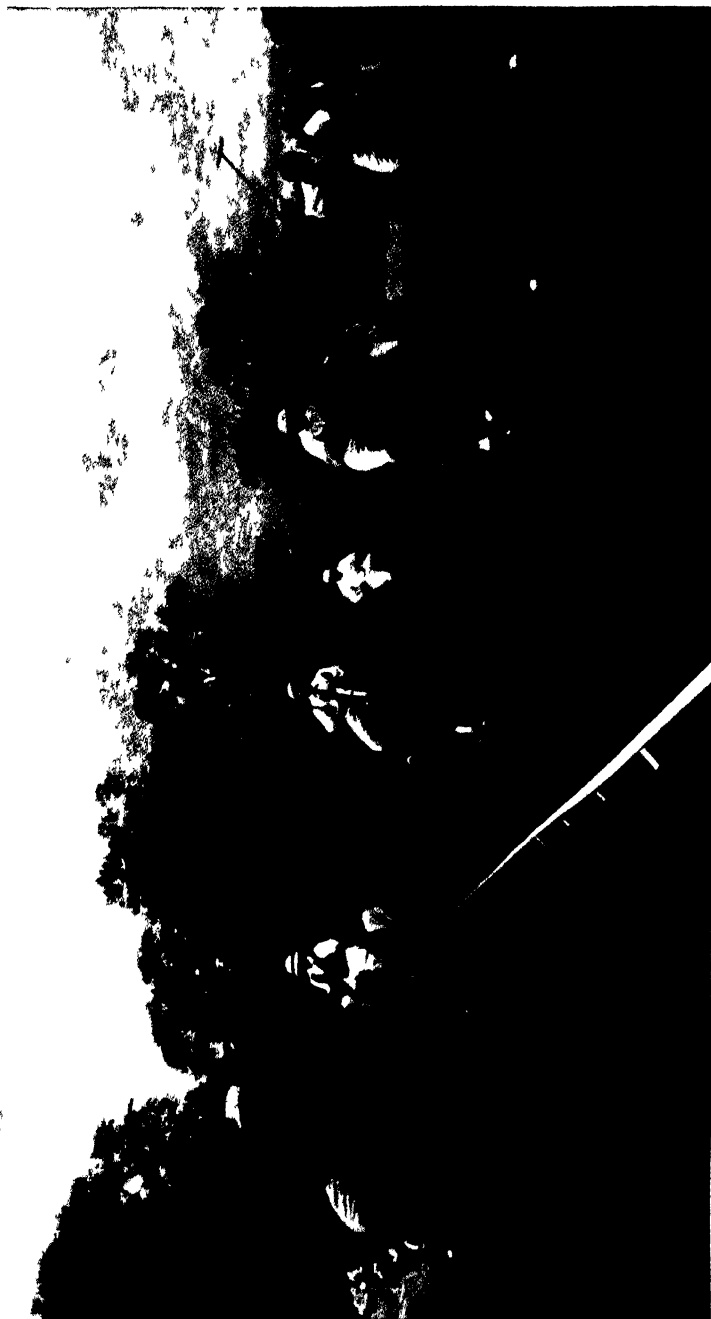
their coats and join their friends instead of taking their turn with the ball ; and another reason is that ninety-five per cent. of all boys try to bowl too fast. A boy up to fifteen should never bowl anything except slows with a full-sized ball, or if he does attempt to bowl fast should do so on wickets pitched at only twenty yards. A boy bowling slows must not mind being hit, though I see no reason why he should be hit as much as one who delivers a ball over which he has no command at a somewhat higher velocity. The lad who bowls within himself will be able to acquire pitch, break, precision, and variability. He will learn to bowl with his head, and that is the type of bowler who is wanted. I would rather have a bowler on my side who was always trying to do something to get the batsman out, pitching first a yorker, then a perfect length slow ball, then a very fast one just outside the off-stump, or a ball that swerves in the air, or again which deceives in its flight, than I would have a tearaway erratic bowler, who will smash the wicket when his ball hits it, but more often sees that ball sailing away to the boundary or cut hard by point. Though every boy has a decided inclination to be a fast bowler, nature does not encourage that aspiration. A slow bowler is also effective on wickets where a fast one cannot effect a footing. Above all a bowler—like a cricketer in all departments, for the matter of that—must be good-tempered and unselfish. If not, he is a mere source of demoralisation, and all his skill becomes discounted.

The golfing maxim “Keep your eye on the ball” is quite as essential in cricket, and a boy

when batting has to learn to watch the ball from the time it leaves the bowler's hand until he himself confronts it. "Always meet every ball in the middle of the bat," is the maxim of W. G., and moreover he always plays at the ball, and never lets it hit the bat. A hint to a lad that may be of service is to use a bat the right size for him ; one too big cramps his style, one too light makes him careless. *Play straight* is the golden rule. This need not affect legitimate hitting powers, but it affords a sure defence in support of punishing propensities. The impulse of a novice is to draw back from a ball. Not only is this fatal, but it easily degenerates into a habit. Also, while forward play is generally practised, I think back play is too often neglected, though on a slow wicket it is essential. To make a "century" in a county match is an ideal towards which any lad watching such a fixture may aspire. If he ever succeeds it will be by patience, perseverance, and practice. But in whatever class of game he plays let him be careful to foster the sportsmanlike spirit, and remember that of all games cricket is the grandest and purest, and as such it must be handed down to those who come after us.

Photo Rouch

POLO.



POLO

BY THE HON. LIONEL LAMBART

FOR some time past it has been abundantly evident that polo in England has "come to stay." It is now so easy to get "a lot" of polo as compared with "a lot" of hunting, that although fox-hunting being a *sport* will for ever take precedence of any *game*, yet the fascinations of polo will always in future claim a mighty following. The County Polo Association is doing most valuable work in organising the country clubs; but the greatest obstacle in the way of those delightful matches between neighbouring clubs in the country which are productive of such immense benefit to the clubs themselves as well as to polo generally, is the exorbitant rates insisted upon by the railway companies for boxing polo ponies. These high charges utterly prevent any but the richest members from representing their club when it is a case of playing on another ground. Nothing that I know of interferes so much with the prosperity of country polo as the necessity which is thus imposed upon secretaries and managers of confining their selection of the team to those only who can afford these very heavy expenses.

As secretary of a provincial polo club I am continually on the look-out for recruits to become playing members, and the first question I am met with is always, "Where are we to get ponies?" As the recruits in question are not always men of means, in fact often the reverse, the question is not a very easy one to answer. In London the best polo ponies in the world are to be seen, and it need scarcely be said that they are by no means all of one stamp, that they are, in fact, of many shapes and sizes, and one is not surprised to learn that they spring from a variety of origins.

I venture to think that "home-made" ponies are by far the most satisfactory to play. Any one who has played a pony "made" by himself will agree that the game is far more enjoyable than when mounted on an animal "made" by somebody else. The man who is able to make his own ponies knows precisely what they will do in certain circumstances in the game; he has persuaded them to pass exactly the distance from the ball which he finds the most suitable for his reach, &c.; the pony, having had only one rider, understands intimately and instantly any movement of his rider's loins or legs, the same movement very likely meaning something quite different to the pony which was schooled by some one else.

Not only are even the best ponies of widely different stamps, but they are also of all ages from five to fifteen, and even younger and older. It is by no means necessary that they should be taught young; on the contrary one finds, as a rule, far less difficulty in "making" a temperate pony seven or eight years old than a young one of four off. So,

broadly speaking, one may say there is a fairly large field to choose from, and consequently no real reason why sound good polo ponies should cost as much as they do.

Those who are determined to play polo in England, and who are not able to wander into Tattersall's somewhere about May 1 and "pick up a couple of good ponies," may say it is all very well to tell us that "home-made" ponies are the best, but how is it done?

Well, it is not so very difficult if time and attention be bestowed. Two ponies are better than one; therefore, if possible, buy two. They must have good mouths and manners, must not exceed 14 hands 2 ins. in height, and it is better that they should not be much under 14 hands 1 in.; anything between six and nine years is a good age. Let them, if possible, be good-tempered and temperate little beasts, and the more breeding they show the better, but get them with substance, and avoid anything weedy, harnessy or nervous. Such ponies can be obtained for £30 to £45 each. I have bought them for this sum, and I am convinced that, with a little trouble and discrimination, it can be done.

Having secured the ponies and got them home, two or three afternoons are well spent in riding them about quietly in turn, without any stick or ball or violent gesticulation of a hunting-crop to indicate the great wonders which are hereafter to be achieved with a polo stick. Take the ponies for an ordinary quiet ride and find out their dispositions and idiosyncrasies, and, most important of all, the bit which suits them best for ordinary

riding. Having made their acquaintances, we must get to work schooling, as the time is short.

Although there is most decidedly no royal road to success in "making" polo ponies, there are certain golden rules which have been confided to me by real experts, and for which I have been profoundly grateful. They are : First, never run before you can walk. Secondly, never begin any schooling until the pony has been settled down by ordinary exercise and lost its first freshness and boisterous spirits. Thirdly, never attempt schooling when it is raining or blowing hard. Fourthly, never hit the pony with a polo stick, nor, indeed, with any other stick. Fifthly, interfere with his mouth as little as possible. Sixthly, never make sudden or unexpected movements with the stick, hands, or legs. And seventhly, don't sicken the pony by keeping him at it too long ; at the same time try to end up the lesson by some little success or advance on the previous one.

A course of bending is the best beginning ; without any stick or ball zigzag the pony in and out of about six long thin sticks stuck in the ground in a line about eight yards apart. Do this, first at a walk, then trotting, then cantering. There is no such word as galloping in the "making" of polo ponies ; it belongs only to the game. The pony must turn to the right by the pressure of the reins on the near side of its neck and by the feeling of the rider's right leg pressed against its off side, not by being pulled to the right by the right rein. Reverse the process and he must turn to the left. When he will canter in and out of the sticks, the rider holding the reins

only in the left hand and gently pressing his legs alternately, the first lesson has been accomplished. It generally takes two or three days. Next, to accustom him to the swing of the stick, go out for an ordinary ride and take a polo stick, being careful at first to have it quietly handed to you by a groom when you are in the saddle. Walk off with the pony, gently swinging the stick in the right hand to and fro, and if all goes well, presently swing it slowly round and round, still walking and being careful not to make any sudden or swishing strokes, which are certain to upset the animal at once. The thing is to swing the stick slowly so that the pony may see it clearly all the time. Repeat the process with the stick in the other hand, only be careful in changing it over not to do so hurriedly or suddenly and not to interfere with the pony's mouth.

This breaking to the stick varies considerably in different ponies ; some take not the slightest notice of it, others are a long time before they grow quite used to it. You may gradually swing the stick trotting and then cantering, but on no account swing it faster and faster as the pace increases. Up to this point any fair horseman carrying out these directions can do so without the least fear of spoiling a pony, quite irrespective of his achievements as a polo-player.

But now we come to the fifth proposition, the "Pons Asinorum" of the whole business ; that is to say, breaking the pony to the ball. For this lesson a fairly smooth piece of ground is requisite ; rough ground is heartbreaking alike to pony and rider, involving as it does endless risk of spoiling

the pony by the ball taking sudden and unexpected directions, bumping up and getting into holes from which it has to be "chopped out." So the teacher should select a common or some place where sheep have kept a nice smooth surface on which the ball will travel truly. Walk the pony up to the ball and tap it gently, if possible in a direction *away* from the pony at first and not across his path; never mind if you miss the ball, walk straight on, and on no account pull the pony back over the ball, for this is the surest way of upsetting him. Try hard to leave the reins loose on his neck when making the stroke. If the ball be missed, walk on as if nothing had happened, following the invaluable hint which Mr. Drybrough gives in his excellent book, to hum or whistle a little tune. I attach the greatest importance to this little tune, not only because it undoubtedly reassures the pony, but also because it removes at once all temptation of calling him bad names in guttural and alarming tones when he is more than usually exasperating. If the pony is first sobered by judicious exercise, and not introduced to the ball when "mad fresh" and just out of his stable, you should find before long no difficulty in making progress at a walk, and may presently give up the tapping and swing the stick round to make the stroke, always remembering to sit as still as possible and to interfere as little as you can with the animal's mouth.

When perfectly satisfied that the pony is quite steady at a walk, and does not attempt to break into a trot or canter because you happen to hit the ball a little harder or make the stroke a little

quicker, the pace can gradually be increased ; but no matter if it be weeks before you get him steady at a walk, still persevere, because it must be done before we begin cantering. It is when first cantering that ponies are most liable to begin jumping away from the ball, or "shying off" as it is called. This tiresome habit is most annoying and requires more patience to overcome than almost any other trick. Mr. Miller recommends drawing back the *left* leg just before, or as we make, the stroke ; and although from the experience gained when bending the pony in and out of his sticks, this plan would seem to turn the animal away from the ball instead of coaxing him up to it, yet in actual practice I have found the hint more than useful, as it brings the pony's quarters over into line and you can thus make the stroke in the right direction. Avoid climbing up the pony's neck to reach the ball: if it cannot be hit properly don't hit it, or hit at it at all ; simply leave it and try again.

Having got so far, the advantage of possessing *two* ponies becomes obvious, as you can accustom them to canter together without racing, and to pass each other without one trying to bite a bit out of the other's neck or out of his rider's leg. You must also teach them to "ride off" which is a most important accomplishment, as no matter how good with stick and ball, a pony is by no means educated until he will *shove* well.

A man should think what he is going to do with his ponies when the summer is over and he is looking for hunters instead. The polo season is not very long, and ponies have a certain time to

fill up before their legitimate work begins again. So some are "put in the cart" and succeed in taking their owners twelve miles to covert in fifty minutes, some are turned away to grass, and some are sold as "good boys' hunters"—whether they are "hunters" for a "good boy" or "good hunters" for a "boy" is not always explained. I venture to think it is not a desirable thing for all polo ponies to go in harness. There are certain animals that will pull a dog-cart out to the polo ground, then play three or four "tens," and drag the cart home again triumphantly. Such ponies are not infrequently the "useful drudges" of an establishment, but very few first-class performers at the game agree to be used in this way. One comes across ponies already a little "harnessy," but from a polo point of view it is not advisable to encourage them in this direction.

For complete rest there is nothing like turning them out, sheltered from the wind, with plenty of grass, and one feed of corn a day : it is practically unknown for them to catch cold, or do anything but derive considerable benefit from the change.

But when it comes to disposing of ponies that do not particularly require rest, I would much rather lend them to a lady to hack or hunt than mount school-boys on them. Ladies, as a rule, are very careful, they are generally far better riders than the average school-boy, moreover, so far as appearance is concerned, they seldom fail to do considerable justice to a neat pony in the hunting-field.

As yet only a few dealers understand the stamp of pony required for polo; I have received many

letters from dealers describing an animal as "sure to make a first-rate polo *cob*." This is bad, but it is equalled by the secretary of a well-known polo club who is often heard to sing out: "Bring along your polo horses." After all perhaps certain of the ponies are a liberal 14.2. Little has been said about the "abuses" of polo ponies, but it is unquestionable that many good ones are spoilt every year by bad and injudicious riding. There are hundreds of good polo ponies, nearly perfection, but many of them are by no means beginners' ponies. There is no more a royal road for the rider than is there for the pony; for both, the game is learnt by practice, patience, and perseverance, but it is well worth it, the reward is very great, and we must neither allow ourselves to be disheartened because of our own failures to hit the ball accurately, nor because the pony fails instantly to understand that which seems to *us* so simple and so little to ask of him, but which must in reality be to him more than perplexing. All the tiresome days of schooling will be forgotten when the summer comes and when we are at play, racing off with the ball with a clear lead, the reins loose on the pony's neck, the pony himself at the height of his enjoyment, repaying us in that glorious minute a thousandfold for the time and trouble we have spent on him.

MOTORING

BY ALFRED C. HARMSWORTH

WHAT is the charm of motor-cars? It is not to be wondered at that those who are unacquainted with them detest them. Until some six or seven years ago I was among the number of horse-owners who regard the new method of transit as a noisy nuisance, but although I am still alive to the drawbacks attending the introduction of something entirely new in so old-fashioned a country as ours, the continued use of many types of motor-cars has quite revolutionised my feelings on the matter.

It is difficult to realise to-day that seventy years ago the locomotive was regarded as the enemy of horses. The fact that railways did, to a certain extent, reduce the number of horses used for some kinds of transport, confirmed the belief that the progress of the iron road would lead to the extermination of the friend of man. When the automobile was introduced into France some ten years ago, similar notions were rife in that country, but it will be within the knowledge of a great many readers of this chapter that carriage-horses to-day command a higher price in Paris than

in any other place in the world, and that the French carriage-building industry was never so prosperous.

Curiously enough, too, the introduction of lighter work in carriage-building that has been brought about by the French motor-car races is having effect in the production of broughams, victorias, and phaetons which, while equally strong and graceful, weigh considerably less than those made by English firms.

Much of our British opposition to mechanical traction, our objection to electric tramways, light railroads and the like, arises from our natural affection for the horse. But some of it is a little unthinking. That owners and breeders of horses should be anxious as to the future value of their stock is perhaps not unnatural, but their apprehensions are in my judgment unnecessary. I do not believe that the employment of motor-cars will have any effect upon the number of horses in use, though it will doubtless displace some of them. The heavy road-wagons, the thousands of commercial travellers' gigs, the post chaises, the coaches that covered the high-roads of England seventy years ago have disappeared ; yet there are now said to be five times as many horses in use in the United Kingdom as there were at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The motor-car will fill its own place, just as the railway did.

Let me endeavour to explain what are the charms of a method of travel that, to the surprise of the uninitiated, has already captured the imagination of almost all the Royalties of Europe and the millionaires of the United States. Why does King

Edward VII. use a motor-car on many occasions when he has at his command at any time a special train? Why is it that the Automobile Club in London is the most rapidly growing club in the United Kingdom? Why is it that the leading French, German, American, and British motor-car manufacturers are working night and day, and are many months in arrear with their orders? All those who have been seized with the craze cannot be mere enthusiasts. Many of them are practical men of affairs, not a few are among the leading horse-owners of the world.

The movement and the industry in England owe their practical extension to the interest of the Royal family in the matter. Prior to the King's purchase of a motor-car, the British public regarded self-propelled carriages with a still smouldering dislike. They were foreign, they were noisy, they frightened horses and old women, they would ruin horse-breeders, they were a mere passing craze of people with more money than brains. Up till 1896, by which time the foreigners had captured nearly all the patents, they could not be used on the English roads unless preceded by a man walking with a red flag in his hand. These matters were not unobserved by the Germans, and the Americans, and the French, and more particularly by the last. The burst of enthusiasm with which the legalisation of the motor-car in England on November 14, 1896, was welcomed, was regarded with positive dread by French manufacturers. They had witnessed the introduction of the bicycle in France in 1867 and its subsequent capture by the manufacturers of Coventry and Birmingham. They

feared a similar result with their remarkable new industry. By the British public the altering of a ridiculous law was celebrated by the assembling of enormous crowds to witness the departure of the first legal run of motor-cars from London to Brighton. I remember the occasion well; the crowds in the neighbourhood of Westminster Bridge reminded one of the Jubilee, and all along the fifty miles of road people assembled to welcome the vehicles of the future. Company promoters seized the opportunity to float numbers of rotten concerns by which some millions of money were lost to the public. But the apprehensions of the French and the enthusiasm of the British were all groundless. France, Germany and the United States continue to monopolise the industry, and while it is quite possible to buy a good motor-car of English manufacture, the majority of those in use are the result of handsome cheques and high wages paid to foreign manufacturers and work-people.

One curious result, I may mention in passing is the fact that the builders of the carriage part of motor-cars, as apart from the engine, have secured much English custom for foreign horse carriages. At Messrs. Kellners, in Paris, the other day, I noticed several broughams and victorias about to be despatched to customers in England who had been struck by the lightness and finish of the work of the bodies of the automobiles of this firm.

Our King was preceded in use of the motor-car in England by a number of well-known public men, of whom I may instance Lords Carnarvon, Cairns, Shrewsbury, Iveagh, and Suffield, Sir David

Salomons, Mr. Evelyn Ellis, Mr. Arthur Balfour, Mr. Rudyard Kipling, Mr. Chaplin, Mr. John Scott Montagu, and Mr. Charles Rolls. One of the most enthusiastic owners of motor-cars in England is Mr. R. H. Hudson, whose record as a breeder of Shire horses will be known to many readers.

In the motor-car matter experience has taught me that it is useless to attempt to combat prejudice by instancing the utility of the machine, or the common sense of its users. What is needed is a short ride in a good automobile. It is safe to say that ninety-nine out of a hundred of those who make a motor-car trip return amazed and convinced. The celerity with which the machine can be started, the extraordinary power of the brakes, the absence of vibration, the newness of the motion, and the exhilaration produced by a rapid spin through the air instantly convert prejudice into enthusiasm. As to the English law which limits the speed to twelve miles an hour, it is tolerably well known that it is more honoured in the breach than in the observance, by Royalty downwards. Nor is it to be wondered at. The ridiculous regulation in question was made by men of whom only one, I believe, had ever been in a motor-car, and very few of the magistrates throughout the country, who are making themselves ridiculous in the eyes of posterity by inflicting fines for technical transgressions of this act, have any acquaintance with self-propelled carriages.

As a magistrate I am well aware of the valuable nature of the work done by our British unpaid judges ; but it would be better, I suggest, for the

commercial prosperity of England, threatened as it is on every side, if some of them evinced a little more patriotism by studying the motor-car question before attempting to drive another trade permanently into the hands of the foreigners. I admit that it is not by any means pleasant when driving a young and spirited horse to come suddenly face to face with a noisy engine filled with people dressed in the costume of submarine divers. It is equally unpleasant to be approached from behind by one of these infernal machines, whose advent is heralded by a raucous and most annoying horn. It is an experience with which I am well acquainted, and as a result I have gone to the very slight trouble of breaking my horses to several sizes and shapes of motor-cars. As a rule, half an hour's careful work, accompanied by kindness and by carrots, will accustom any horse to the noisiest motor in existence, more especially if the people in the motor-car speak to the horse. Unfortunately, many drivers of horses will not take the trouble. I know fond and charming mothers who send out their little ones in a pony cart drawn by a spirited cob and driven by a governess, who, as often as not, throws down the reins at the approach of a motor. It would be well, I think, if the County Councils of England, instead of ruining British motor-car manufacturers, would provide their road surveyors and others with good cars which could be used, among other purposes, for the training of horses in localities, for a small payment.

Inasmuch as there are already 300 kinds of motor-cars, it is not easy to deal with the subject in the few pages that are here at my disposal.

Roughly they may be divided into three types. The most generally used is a small carriage or *voiturette*, as it is called in France, capable of carrying two or three people at a speed of fifteen to twenty-five miles an hour, and costing from £200 to £500 with horse-power of 3 h.-p. to 7 h.-p. Then comes the larger type of carriage of from 8 to 40 h.-p., costing from £600 to £2500, with speed from anything up to sixty miles an hour. Beyond these are the heavy steam carriages for the haulage of goods.

Let me take the possibility of the King's carriage as an example of what can be done with one so useful, fast and comfortable. It is a 12 horse-power Daimler car, with a canopy, able to travel at a maximum speed of between twenty-five or thirty-five miles an hour. As is well known, his Majesty, like a great many other automobilists, takes it about with him wherever he goes, at home or abroad. With a carriage of the same horse-power as the King's I have made the following delightful journeys : London to Cannes, *viâ* Newhaven, Dieppe, Paris, St. Etienne, and Aix-en-Provence. While at Cannes I ran the machine some three thousand miles and returned *viâ* Toulon, Marseilles, and Paris. Many Americans, Russians, French, and a few English now travel to the Riviera in the winter by the same means. The splendid roads and excellent hotels of rural France tend to the increase of the enjoyment of a method of travel that is after all merely a revival of the Continental journeys of our great-great-grandfathers.

The run to Newhaven occupies but a few hours ;

there the motor-car is put on board the steamer and at a cost of a few pounds conveyed with its owners to Dieppe. Arriving at Dieppe in the early morning, one travels through Normandy to Paris, reaching it in time for dinner. From Paris to Cannes occupies three delicious days.

This use of the automobile, which I would call land-yachting, has many developments in the future. Already new hotels are being opened and old ones are being enlarged, and it is advisable for motor-car tourists to telegraph on ahead for rooms, lest they find that other parties on similar pleasure bent have monopolised the accommodation. France knows nothing of the decay of its rural inns with which we at home have become so familiar. During the present year I have made three tours *en automobile*, twice through Touraine and once in North Eastern France, and at some of the more popular halting-places forty or fifty people have arrived by road each day.

A moderate-sized motor-car is a very useful addition to any steam yacht and enables one to land at one's pleasure and tour the surrounding country. One can land almost anywhere in the Mediterranean and travel with comfort.

As a rule most countries have fairly good roads nowadays. I can speak from personal acquaintance of the roads in India, Syria, Egypt, Spain, Italy, France, Ireland, England, and Scotland, small portions of the United States, Switzerland, Cyprus; and in all these places the motor-car can be used with advantage. Of the adaptability of the motor-car some notion can be gained when I say that the 12 h.-p. carriage to which I have

referred is used daily in England to convey me to and from London, a distance of fifty-two miles each day. It very often takes me to London in the morning, goes straight back and does much other useful work, and comes to fetch me from a neighbouring railway-station at night. It has been used every day in three hotly contested elections, has crossed the Channel some twenty times for my use as an ordinary carriage in Paris, can climb any hill in the United Kingdom, and is in every respect as good as it was the day I bought it some two years ago. It has never had any kind of breakdown on the road other than a punctured tyre. During the hot weather it does excellent service in relieving our horses of all station work, and, indeed, on this latter head I cannot speak too strongly in favour of motor-cars. Those who are, like myself, lovers of horses, can derive no pleasure whatever from the use of them as mere beasts of burden, toiling to and from country stations with long waits in heat, cold, or wet. It is quite possible to get a 12 h.-p. motor with a removable top for wet weather, that, while acting as a special train—so to speak—of every household, and ready at any moment of night or day to travel uphill and down dale as fast as the law will permit, can also be used for short journeys, for paying calls, for carrying luggage, for the conveyance of shooting parties, or for the mere pleasure and health to be derived from the driving of it.

Yet the introduction of a motor-car into an establishment requires much judgment, and should not be done without careful inquiry and study.

My experience teaches me that for all-round

work in an average county a twelve horse-power car is necessary. It should have a top that can be taken off in fine weather, it need not have pneumatic tyres, it should be driven by a petroleum engine having both lamp and electric ignition, and be made by a leading English, French, or German maker. Its brakes should hold both backward and forward, its wheel base should be long, the wheels small and of equal size. There should be no attempt at lightness about the wheels or axles, though the body should be of aluminium. I have in my eye such a car, which I lately saw leaving the Place Vendôme for Nice. It carried six persons, including the driver. From the point of view of modern requirements it would be too slow, but I am anticipating a reaction against the very fast cars now in use.

Such a carriage should never be entrusted to any one except an expert driver. Personally, I regard a twelve horse-power automobile as almost as dangerous as a four-in-hand. I object to driving behind a spirited team unless in proper hands. I refuse to drive in a motor-car unless I know the abilities of the driver. The automobile is free from the dangers that follow shying, bolting, rearing, and running away, but it has an equally dangerous enemy in side-slip. Nearly every motor accident one reads of is an exaggerated account of a side-slip ; but nearly every side-slip is avoidable. Side-slip amounts to this, that one cannot rapidly apply the brakes on greasy wood, asphalte, oolite, macadam, or stone blocks. The result of such application is invariably unpleasant, sometimes dangerous. There are patent tyres which minimise

the danger, but let every person who purchases a motor-car recognise that it *is* a danger, and one that cannot be avoided by the most skilful driver unless he proceeds slowly on dangerous road material.

Driving an automobile properly and safely is more easily done than riding a bicycle when once the fact is recognised that a powerful engine is not a thing to be played with. One should learn with a careful teacher, such as Mr. Stanton, of the Daimler Company, who has had the honour of driving the King, and one should learn on a car of small power.

To do the thing fairly well is much easier than it looks. But to drive as skilfully as Mr. Rolls, Lord Shrewsbury, or Mr. Montagu, requires much knowledge and practice. I would much prefer to be driven by an expert at fifty miles an hour on a difficult road than at ten miles by a duffer.



FINISH FOR THE GRAND CHALLENGE CUP, HENLEY.

ROWING

BY W. H. GRENFELL, M.P.

AMATEUR rowing is still flourishing and popular. The Oxford and Cambridge University Boat-race, the early harbinger of the rowing season, maintains if it has not even increased the popularity which it has deservedly won in bygone years. Henley Regatta draws larger crowds than ever, and it is only the fact of the course being boomed for a considerable portion of its length, that enables those who are responsible for keeping it clear for the races to look forward with anything but apprehension to their day's work, especially when non-indigenous crews are concerned. The metropolitan regattas prosper as of old, and the number of up-river fixtures seems to increase year by year. Amateur rowing would thererore appear to be in a sound and healthy condition, the only matter for regret, perhaps, being that the metropolis does not now send out crews of the excellence that used to be found in those that rowed in the colours of London, Thames, or Kingston. Whatever may be the reason for this change, which is to a greater extent year by year compelling the metropolitan clubs to seek for profitable recruits

from the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, whether it be owing to the fact that London business now makes more demand upon the time of young men who are engaged in it, or that there are now other pastimes more attractive than the long and laborious initiation which is required for the making of a good oar, it is most devoutly to be hoped that this deterioration in metropolitan oarsmanship will prove to be only of a temporary character, and that English amateur rowing will not be represented solely by the style which is cultivated at the Universities. In 1888 and 1889 the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley was won by the Thames Rowing Club, and in 1890 by the London Rowing Club ; but since then it has been carried off by crews drawn from the Universities, and it is a matter for regret among rowing men that the healthy and effective rivalry between the metropolitan clubs and crews belonging to the Universities has for the time being to so great an extent ceased to exist. A victory in the race for the Grand Challenge Cup would be a needed stimulus to metropolitan rowing. But rowing is a plant of slow growth ; it takes at the least three years' constant practice to make a polished oar, and the plant cannot be forced to a precocious maturity by the most lavish encouragement, even though backed up by the enthusiasm of a sporting race.

While, however, amateur rowing has grown and flourished and steadily increased in popular favour since the memorable year of 1829, which saw the first boat-race between Oxford and Cam-

bridge Universities, as well as that between the schools of Eton and Westminster, the same cannot unfortunately be said of professional rowing and sculling. In the dark ages, or rather in the dawn of amateur rowing, three years after the foundation of Henley Regatta in 1839, we find that a crew of eight watermen, after rowing up and down the course in the rear of the competing boats, were so little exhausted by their efforts that, amid the plaudits of the spectators on the bank, they gave an *obligato* performance by racing the Oxford Aquatic Club and Cambridge University who were fighting out the third heat for the Grand Challenge Cup. *Bell's Life* records that this action on the part of Mr. Bishop's admirable crew of watermen rendered the interest taken in the race, if possible, more intense ; but I am afraid that the time has long gone by when a crew of watermen could add much to the interest of a race for the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley, even if they were encouraged to take part in it.

To the uninitiated rowing and sculling may appear so similar that proficiency in one branch of the sport would seem to imply proficiency in the other ; but such is not in reality the case, and although there have been examples of very fine oars being very fine scullers as well, there is no doubt that if an oarsman wishes to do the fullest justice to his rowing powers he should give up sculling for the time being, just as if he wishes to scull at his best he should give up rowing. The inducements to professionals to devote the necessary time to turning out good rowing crews have for many years past

been so few that at the present time professional rowing is at the lowest possible ebb. In sculling, however, it is different, and the best professional sculler is probably as much superior to the best amateur sculler as the best amateur eight-oar would be to the best eight composed of professionals.

Recent times have seen an attempt to revive both professional rowing and professional sculling by the establishment of a regatta on the metropolitan waters which was designed to bring out and foster latent professional talent, an enterprise that has unfortunately not been crowned with success. England has been the pioneer in sculling as in most other forms of racing sport, and for many years carried all before her ; but the long-continued successes of scullers from America, and especially from our own colonies, has had a most depressing effect upon our local talent, notwithstanding the earnest and sustained effort that has been made to resuscitate it. The lack of prominent native scullers has no doubt caused public interest in the sport to decline, while the lack of public interest also in its turn reacts on the profession. Perhaps in the future we may be able to look forward to better things, but the position of professional sculling at the present time leaves much to be desired ; for although it may be maintained that the Professional Sculling Championship of the World has been brought back to England, for the first time since 1875, by George Towns, by his defeat of Jake Gaudaur at Rat Portage, Wisconsin, in September, 1901, the national transports of joy at whatever merit there was in the performance must be seriously

discounted by the fact that Towns is an Australian and not an "Islander" by birth, while at the same time it cannot be overlooked that more recent sculling performances on the Thames have not tended to elevate the pastime in popular estimation.

The first year of the new century was ushered in, as far as rowing is concerned, by a remarkable race between Oxford and Cambridge Universities, which took place under conditions of wind that prevented two eight-oared boats rowing abreast in Corney Reach; and it was only the bold expedient of dropping behind during a large part of the race, so as to take advantage of the shelter of the bank, which enabled Oxford in the end to gain a narrow but well-deserved victory. The race was also noticeable for the fact that Oxford used a boat designed by Dr. Warre, the Headmaster of Eton, on somewhat novel lines, its length being but 56 ft., as compared with the length of 60 ft. and more to which we have of late been accustomed in racing eights, and the 63 ft. to which the Cambridge University boat attained in 1899. The rowing space was practically about the same as that in the longer boats, the saving in length being made by shortening the distance from the stem to the back of bow's seat, and that from the stern to the back of the cox's seat. The boat in which Oxford rowed in 1901 was no less than 4 ft. 3 in. shorter from the stern to the back of bow's seat than the Cambridge University boat of 1899. The difference in length between the two boats is compensated for by an increase in the beam of the Oxford boat which is 2 ft. 3 in., as compared with 1 ft. 11 in.

What will be the outcome of this experiment in boatbuilding and reversion to the models of 1867 and 1869 (in both of which years the Oxford boat was exactly the same length as Dr. Warre's, namely, 56 ft.) it is too early to judge, but, at all events, we can agree with Dr. Warre when he says, "What is most to be desired, is that some first-class oarsman, with a practical knowledge of boat-building and adequate scientific training, should apply himself to the problem, and tell us the truth about length and beam and their relations to speed ; about camber and non-camber ; about the proper curve of the master section ; about the proper position of this in the length of the boat ; about the proper shape of the entry ; and about many other things upon which at present we can only turn to account the fitful gleams of empirical knowledge. Until this hope is fulfilled we must be content to do the best we can with the light which we have got at our disposal."

It would not be possible to write an article, however brief, on the subject of rowing at the present time without referring to the question of the entry of qualification at Henley Regatta, which was so much debated through the summer of 1901 in the public Press, and was the subject of a motion which was brought forward by myself before the Henley stewards. The gradual conversion of Henley Regatta into an annual International meeting cannot but have a serious effect upon English amateur rowing ; and it is well to consider carefully and without bias what this effect is likely to be, and whether it will work for good or for evil.

Amateur rowing has up to the present remained amateur, it has escaped the professional spirit which is invading cricket, and which has to so great an extent driven the amateur from the football field. Long may it remain so, and long may the crews which represent the clubs at Henley be truly and genuinely representative of those clubs and not hirelings, as is the case in football, secured by lavish payment to uphold the fortunes of the combination which has enlisted their services. Henley Regatta, up to the present, as far, certainly, as English crews have been concerned, has been a genuinely amateur regatta ; but the fear may reasonably be entertained that this will not continue to be the case if it is to be recognised and stamped as an annual International meeting. Sport becomes more specialised every year, and as it becomes more specialised it tends also to become more of a profession and less of a sport. The policy of keeping a permanent annual regatta open to international competition must in time produce a marked effect on the regatta itself, and through the regatta on English rowing generally. Much may be said in favour of international races and other contests from the point of view of promoting international good feeling, and much may be said against them ; but one thing is, I think, pretty certain, and that is that it is quite possible to have them too often, and I do not suppose that the most enthusiastic yachtsman or the most leisured cricketer would care to have an America Cup race every year, or a yearly visit from even such welcome guests as an Australian cricket eleven.

Yachting contests of this character are fortunately limited by the enormous expense which they entail, and the disturbance to county and other cricket fixtures would be too great to allow the idea to be entertained.

Another proposition may also be laid down with regard to international contests : and that is that they should take place, when they do take place, under specially framed conditions and on a proper course. In the first international boat-races these conditions were fulfilled. In 1869 Oxford, which had won the University Boat-race of that year, was challenged by Harvard, U.S., and this was the first amateur international boat-race—international, that is to say, in the sense that the presumably best English University four was challenged by the presumably best University four from the United States. In 1872 the London Rowing Club, then holders of the Stewards' Cup, was challenged by the Atalanta Club of New York to a four-oared race, which like the previous one, was held over the Putney course and won by England, as also was another race in 1876 between the London Rowing Club and the German Frankfort Club.

There is not a word to be said against these international rowing matches. They were carried out under the conditions which should govern international rowing ; but unfortunately since this time, instead of issuing definite challenges, foreign crews have preferred to compete at Henley Regatta. It was not long before these entries gave rise to awkward questions with respect to their

amateur status, of which, naturally perhaps, different views were taken in different countries, and at all the events the definitions, where indeed definitions existed at all, were not identical. For the Diamond Sculls there have been at least four entries much open to suspicion—namely, those of Lee, who, after sculling at Henley, came out openly as a professional in America; of the French sculler Lein, who competed unsuccessfully in 1881; of Ooms, the Dutchman, who won in 1892; and of Ten Eyck, who won in 1897—entries from the two latter being declined in subsequent regattas. So long as Henley Regatta is kept open to foreign entries it is probable that these questions, the discussion of which invariably leads to friction and unpleasantness, will continually occur. It is not, however, so much from any technical question of amateur status that I think the danger to the future prospects of English rowing arises as from the probable effect that these so-called international races, if they take place every year, will produce upon Henley Regatta and upon rowing in England, regarded as a sport. The greater the competition, especially if international rivalry be added, the greater the danger of sport becoming professionalised. Amateur rowing in England has hitherto been remarkably free from this spirit; it has been pursued as a sport and a recreation, and valued as an end itself by those who love hard physical exercise, healthy emulation, and generous good fellowship. At the Universities, although inter-collegiate rivalry runs high, it is not unusual to see a member of one crew coaching another

crew of possibly dangerous competitors, with every confidence that his advice will be taken in the same spirit as it is offered ; and Oxford men have coached Cambridge crews and Cambridge men have coached Oxford crews with the full consent of their respective boat clubs. Abroad, however, and especially in the United States, a different spirit seems to prevail, the professional spirit as distinguished from the sporting spirit, and the one and only object is to win. The difference between the two standpoints is so well brought out in an article written with reference to the recent athletic contests between the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge and Harvard and Yale that I think it is worthy of quotation.

“ An American college coach sends his men out on the track with their legs done up in corks and bandages. He sees that they have proper pacing, and that they run far enough, but not too far. He brings them in at the proper minute, gives them a shower bath and a rub down, massages their legs and arms, steams them out, applies hot water lotions to their wrenched muscles, inspects them carefully from top to toe, and then sends them home with instructions not to smoke and not to stay up after ten.

“ The Englishmen, on the contrary, have no professional trainer, and—a thing which strikes the American collegian with horror—no rubber. How an athlete can exercise without being rubbed down is a mystery that the American attempts in vain to understand. The Englishmen, however, seem to think that rubbing down is altogether un-

necessary. Their method of training is simply to go out and take exercise in the afternoon. They have no scientific apparatus and no scientific theories. Each man apparently trains himself, and if he can win, well and good : if not, he has still had his exercise.

“Now, so far as winning is concerned, there can be little doubt that the American method is preferable. The American has trained like a professional, the Englishman like an amateur, and as long as this is true the odds will be in our favour. But when one looks below the fact of outward success into the principles that underlie the system, one feels a little less satisfied. In American colleges to-day, athletics is dominated by one idea and that is : whatever happens, win. It is not the exercise so much, nor the development of pluck, nor the control of the temper : it is the winning of the championship. That this is true is proved by the undeniable fact that it is only a small proportion of the men who play in the teams, while the rest of the college stands and looks on. Toward the end of the football season there will be at the most twenty-two men in each college who play the game, while there will be four or five hundred or more who stamp the cold out of their feet on the side lines. And the twenty-two men who compose the first and second teams are meanwhile subjected to a treatment which is as severe as the human system can endure, and much severer than a man's health requires.

“At the English Universities, on the contrary,

the participants in athletics by far outnumber the spectators. Almost every man in the University tumbles out in the afternoon to take his exercise and the exercise is for the sake of sport and health, and never becomes a business. Consequently the English Universities have no trouble as we have with men who are brought to college only for the sake of ball. Professionalism is a problem that never confronts them, and that the team wins or loses is a matter of smaller concern than that everybody should take outdoor exercise, and that nobody should overdo it."

In this article the two different aspects of sport as obtaining in the two countries are plainly brought out: in the one case the only idea is to win, even if it is to be accomplished by the means of professional representatives and professional methods; in the other case the sport is pursued as a sport and recreation for the love of the thing itself. The introduction of the former spirit into Henley Regatta, intensified by an international rivalry which gives to athletics generally an undue importance, is harmful to the best interest of sport, and must in due course produce an effect—and to my mind a bad effect—on English rowing. The professional method will beat the amateur method. That is, I think, a proposition which experience will lead us to admit. The supporters of foreign entries say that if foreign methods are better we must imitate them. That they are better in the sense of being more likely to produce a crew capable of winning the Grand Challenge Cup or the Stewards'

Cup I should at once allow ; but that they are better either for Henley Regatta or for the future of English rowing I very much doubt. The Leander Club, judging from the experiences of the last ten years, would at the present time be the club capable of putting on the best crews at Henley for the Grand Challenge Cup and the Stewards' Cup. Indeed, in the interests of general rowing it has perhaps been only too continuously successful in the more important race ; but I do not think it can be said that it has made efforts to put on the best crew it could raise from among its members, as it has always allowed the claims of College crews which intended to row at Henley to be preferred to its own, and, in fact, a Leander crew has been a scratch crew of good individual oars got together at short notice and only put through a very limited amount of training. But if Leander is to put on a crew at all to meet these foreign aspirants to the Grand Challenge Cup, some of whom begin their preparation the Christmas before Henley, I suppose it would be its duty, as time goes on and these foreign aspirants become more dangerous, to put on the best crew it could muster, and train at least as seriously as for an International University Boat-race.

But what then will be certain to happen to the metropolitan and college crews which enter for the Grand Challenge Cup ? The competition of Leander at the present time, though not so severe as it might be made, and under these circumstances should be made, is already complained of as

injurious to the wider interests of English rowing, and this competition will be indefinitely intensified by the annual menace from abroad. If the Leander Club is to be driven into putting on its best crew, and to undergoing a special preparation in order to compete with specially prepared foreign crews, Henley Regatta, instead of encouraging home rowing, will see public interest wholly concentrated on the struggle between the best home crew and its foreign rivals ; whilst other crews who under the old conditions might have had a fair chance of success in the Grand Challenge Cup will be working off their enthusiasm on the bank. Those who have visited the regatta of late years cannot fail to have been struck by the lack of public interest which is shown in the racing when once the principal so-called international race is disposed of, and international it will always be considered both by the Press and the public, however reluctant rowing experts may be to concede the title.

The regatta will suffer also in other ways. Although it is well known that an individual oarsman can do himself and the crew he rows in more justice if he confines himself to one race, it has not hitherto been unusual for some of the best oars to take part in eight-oared, four-oared, pair-oared, and even sculling races at the same regatta. If we are to imitate the specialising tactics of some of our opponents from abroad, this practice, it seems to me, will have to be discontinued ; as not only is the rowing of many heats at a regatta an exhausting performance in itself, but the change from one boat to another is prejudicial to the

absolute harmony and minute precision which are necessary to the making of a first-class crew.

Independently of the bad effects which in my opinion international racing at Henley will produce on English rowing, there is another reason why it should not be encouraged—the course itself is not suited for it. In the first place it is too short ; in the second place it is too crowded with pleasure-boats, and, if I may use the word, is too picnicky ; and in the third place there is too great an inequality in the stations. The Putney to Mortlake course is 4 miles 2 furlongs in length, and the Henley Regatta course is 1 mile 550 yards, suitable enough for a home regatta but not for an international race. Owing to the great crowd of boats on the course, admirably managed though they are now since the booms have been brought into use, the danger is always present of some unintentional interference with a racing-boat, which in an international event might lead to international unpleasantness ; but the chief objection as regards the course lies in the inequality of the stations. In the old course the bend at the finish gave the Berks (or inside) station a distinct advantage, unless there was a wind off the Bucks shore which more than neutralised it. When the course was altered, and most carefully measured and set out so that the distances traversed by the two competing boats should be exactly the same, the advantage, judging from the results of the races, which was formerly possessed by the Berks station seems to have been transferred to the Bucks. I have been furnished with the figures which seem

to bear out this statement by one whose authority to speak on matters connected with Henley Regatta is second to none. On the old course, from 1839 to 1886, there were some 220 eight-oared races, of which

The Berks boat won	.	.	130 odd
The Bucks boat won	.	.	90 odd

The proportion of wins for the Berks boat was thus about three to two.

On the new course from 1886 to 1901 there have been some 250 eight-oared races of which

The Berks boat won	.	.	100 odd
The Bucks boat won	.	.	150 odd

the proportion of wins for the Berks boat being about two to three.

From these figures it would appear that the shelter of the Bucks shore in the new course is just as valuable to the Bucks boat as the bend in the old course used to be to the Berks boat, and also that the luck of the draw is too great an advantage for the course to be a satisfactory one from the point of view of international racing.

Henley Regatta, while admirably suited in many ways for the encouragement of home rowing and even British Empire rowing, if our fellow subjects beyond our shores are content to take Henley Regatta as they find it, and desire to take a most welcome part in the principal home regatta, is not

adapted, as it was never meant, for an international championship meeting. International rowing matches should take place, preferably by challenge at sufficient intervals of time, over a recognised championship course and under specially framed conditions.

THE UNIVERSITY BOAT RACE

BY SIR JOHN EDWARDS-MOSS, BART.

BEFORE the first snowdrop of the year come tidings of the doings of the University crews beginning practice for a race still nearly three months off. As the days lengthen the interest in the coming struggle increases. It may be worth while to look back in memory, to consult records, disinter tradition, and see what manner of men these are and have been who thus scorn delights and live laborious days, for the sake of an extra half-inch of blue ribbon on their straw hat, and, if they win, a medal; what their mode of life during the long period of preparation, and how their surrounding circumstances and conditions have changed since the two Universities first met in aquatic rivalry in 1829—seventy-four years ago.

This first race was rowed, as is well known, on June 10th, 1829, from Hambledon Lock to Henley Bridge. There still survive, I believe, some few who saw the race, but none, I fear, of those protagonists who took part in it. Upon all of them surely must ere now have fallen the *æternum exilium cymbæ*. Cambridge were the favourites, but Oxford it seems were full of better-founded

confidence in themselves. My father, who was present, used to tell me how, as the Oxford crew shot Henley Bridge in victory, Staniforth, stroke and President, produced from under his seat a dark blue flag, duly stored there for the purpose, and waved it in triumph over his head. From old drawings we can form a good idea of the sort of boats then used, but of the style of oarsmanship we can gather little. I fancy that a very long swing right back must have been a prominent characteristic. I have been told that one of the chief features of my father's rowing when Captain of the Boats at Eton in 1828, was that he could swing with a straight back almost on to the knees of the man behind him. Staniforth, the first Oxford stroke, was a great friend of my father, and was himself Captain of the Boats at Eton in 1826. It is likely that my father founded his style on Staniforth's, and that the latter set that style to his crew of 1829. By the way, Mr. C. M. Pitman, a recent Oxford stroke and President, tells me that wandering one day on the shores of Loch Rannoch he entered a boat-house, wherein, suspended near the rafters, he espied a venerable barge fitted for eight oars. He enquired what it was and whence it came. Local tradition affirmed that it had been used in some great race upon a river in the far south, and had been brought to Loch Rannoch by Sir Robert Menzies (himself No. 2 of the mighty "seven oars" in 1843). Sir Robert had once manned it locally, and had it out on Loch Rannoch; but a great wind arose and the crew had to beach their boat, escaping narrowly with their lives, and in beaching her they broke her back.

And so she hangs under the roof, *Septem subjecta Trioni* in the land of hill and heather. Yet Mr. Pitman gathered, at least to his own satisfaction (and professionally he has a legal mind capable of weighing evidence), that she was the very boat in which Oxford rowed this first race. Certainly we know the history of the boat in which the "seven oars" won. She was bought by Alderman Randall, of Oxford, who had a chair made, with her midship section as the back, which he presented in 1867 to the O.U.B.C., in whose barge *sedet æternumque sedebit*.

In the 'thirties and 'forties there were University races on tidal water, sometimes from Westminster to Putney (five and a half miles), sometimes over the present course; and besides these races the Universities met occasionally in the Grand Challenge Cup at Henley Regatta (established in 1839); but it may be said that the annual race, as it now exists, was started on March 15th, 1856. In that year and in 1863 it was rowed on the ebb from Mortlake to Putney; in all the other forty-five years it has been rowed on the flood from Putney to Mortlake.

In 1846 the rivalry of boat builders was at work, and the outrigger introduced. In 1857 the present keelless boats were used for the first time. In 1873 both crews took to sliding-seats, and though there have been, and still are, moot points as to style, build of boats, length of slides and oars, etc., etc., there have been no further revolutions in what one may call the machinery of oarsmanship. But if the boats and their paraphernalia remain the same, the training and, since fixed-seat days,

the style of rowing have changed in detail if not in principle. It is curious to notice the difference in weights between the crews of (say) '60 to '70 and '90 to 1900—two decades divided by a period of twenty years. During the former decade the winning crews averaged 94 st. and the losing crews 93 st. 1 lb., or 11 st. 9 $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. per man. During the latter the winners averaged 98 st. 8 lb. and the losers 97 st., or 12 st. 3 $\frac{1}{8}$ lb. per man, taking both together. On the whole, then, a 'Varsity oar from 1890 to 1900 was, roughly speaking, 7 lb. heavier than one who rowed between 1860 and 1870. This is an immense difference, and is significant.

It will be observed that the former period was before sliding seats had been introduced, the latter after the long slide was in common use. On fixed seats the pace of stroke averaged some four or five a minute faster than it does on modern slides. Yet the pace nowadays is manifestly better. The "times" go to prove it—average '60-'70, 22 min. 34 secs. ; '90-1900, 20 min. 22 secs.—but they are hardly a real test owing to the varying tides, and the building of embankment walls, which, by preventing overflow on to the low-lying meadows, accelerate the force of the flood. One may safely, however, conclude that unless slides did improve the pace they would not be used, and certainly over the Henley course they have lowered the fixed-seat record of 7 min. 17 secs. to 6 min. 51 secs. Yet slides are not favourable to the "shoot" of a boat. During every stroke some 98 stones of crew are moved 15 to 18 inches forward and back again. The forward movement must depress the

stern, the backward slide depress the bows, and *vice versa*. Hardly ever can the boat be absolutely level as she runs between the strokes. In order then to give the same shoot (*i.e.*, pace between the strokes) when the oars are coming forward for the next stroke, there must be greatly increased power put into each stroke. But, in addition to this, we see that though the rate of stroke is very much diminished, some ten or eleven per cent., the pace of the boat itself is greatly increased. The power then which is now put on the oar at each stroke must be very much greater than it was on fixed seats. And so it is, for two reasons—(1) the arc described by the oar blade in the water is greater, and (2) the slide gives better opportunity for the full use of the big thigh muscles, which are of course the strongest in the body. Skill and sharpness are still required, but in my opinion the slide brings the powerful but clumsy man much nearer the lighter but more skilled oarsman than he was in the days of fixed seats.

The diminished rate of stroke and the extra muscular effort combined have had their effects upon the principles of training. Length of stroke was as important on the fixed seat as it is now. The old crews got all the length they could derive from the forcing down of the body between the thighs in the reach forward, but obviously this must be less than that which can be obtained when the pivot or hinge upon which the body swings is itself moved mechanically some 15 to 18 inches forward during each stroke. The stroke then being necessarily shorter could be rowed through faster ; therefore a quicker stroke was possible, and

consequently had, of course, to be rowed. But with the sliding seat the knees, as the slide goes forward, must bend and rise, thus to a certain degree obstructing the full forward swing of the body. On fixed seats the body had to *swing* further forward, and do it so many more times in a minute. But this swing forward of the body produces breathlessness much more rapidly than does the piston work of the legs. Therefore in old days what is called "good wind" was more important than it is now, and possibly it may be that its diminished importance is in part the cause of the modification in the strict rules of training which recent years have effected, though no doubt common sense has also been a factor.

Owing doubtless to the lack of the *vates sacer*, the ubiquitous reporter, the beginnings of professional oarsmanship seem hidden in black night, nor are things regarding early amateurs very clear in those prehistoric days. I have an idea that Eton was the birthplace of amateur rowing, but in that I may possibly be quite wrong. One thing, however, seems clear, viz., that the first challenge from Cambridge to Oxford was penned by one old Etonian to another. At Eton, in 1828, a waterman always stroked the Lower boats, and I believe that in earlier years all the boats were stroked by watermen. The emancipation from professional stroking was, I think, gradual. Naturally, then, the waterman was regarded as a "Mentor," and from him ideas of training would be derived. Whether the waterman ever trained himself or not, I do not know; there were then only two classes of persons who were in the habit of strict

training—prize fighters and jockeys ; and it is not unreasonable to suppose that the early *régime* of raw, or nearly raw, beefsteak, and a very great amount of running exercise, may be traceable to them. These absurdities lingered long. Even in the late 'fifties I am told that a run to the top of Remenham (or White) Hill and back was the ordinary thing before breakfast for a crew in Henley training. When the day began thus, when bread was eschewed in favour of less fattening toast, and vegetables and fruit were discouraged if not forbidden, what wonder that men rowed light, being trained to fiddle strings, and probably, as we should imagine, over-trained and stale ?

To Dr. Warre, I believe, is due the credit of introducing more reasonable ideas. He has preached the necessity, especially in summer, of vegetables and cooked fruit. But for long the law of training was as Draconian as it was unreasonable and unreasoning. I can remember, as late as 1871, that one of the Oxford crew, feeling thirsty after dinner, asked if he might suck the juice of two oranges instead of eating one—the normal allowance. Our President, who coached and did not row that year, replied that he might eat one, pulp, pips, rind, and all, but he must not suck two ! When such was the attitude of those in authority, when no allowance was ever made for individual constitution or predilection, but all were subjected to the same Procrustean treatment, what wonder that training was not invariably successful ! Thirty years ago we had chops and steak for breakfast, one egg when at Putney ; cold meat, lettuce, and watercress, with one glass of the strongest ale, for

lunch ; a haunch of mutton and a sirloin of beef, both roasted, *every* day, except one, during the whole of training, for dinner, till roast butcher's-meat became positively distasteful. Our drink at dinner was an imperial pint of the strongest ale or stout, or half-and-half if we preferred it, and for dessert one orange and two glasses of port. After a hard row an extra glass was occasionally allowed, either of port or ale. The one exception to this monotonous menu was *the* night when we were given some plain fish, and, after the inevitable and invariable roast meat, some chickens, all washed down by one pint of champagne. Nowadays, I think I could best describe training meals as a diet which, if Society would adopt it, would cause a procession of unemployed doctors to the Court of Bankruptcy.

Contrast present-day methods with those of only thirty years ago. Before the morning walk or short run a cup of milk and a biscuit are taken. After it, at breakfast, to the old fare are added fish, eggs, chicken. Lunch remains as it was, but good sound beer for those who take it is substituted for strong ale. Cambridge have a cup of tea after the afternoon row, and dine at 7.30. Oxford omit the tea and dine at 6.30. Dinner is now a civilised meal. In fact, both Universities have what one might call a mess uniform. And the fare is plentiful and varied, but still plain—fish, a plain entrée, such as cutlets or sweetbreads, joints as before, chickens or guinea-fowl or quails—Oxford allow roast pigeon, Cambridge do not—and cooked fruit, such as apples or rhubarb, with a plain pudding. Before going to bed we were given a

cup of gruel. To this modern ideas have added the option of barley-water or milk. But perhaps in liquor is to be found the greatest change. The amount is still limited, but not unreasonably: if a man were thirsty and appealed for a little more he would probably be told he might have it if he really wanted it. Subject to that, it appears to me that each man may drink what he pleases. A teetotaler is strongly, and from experience I should say rightly, disapproved. Champagne is reserved as a pick-me-up, but given not infrequently, and, when it is given, liberally. The measured half-pint glasses are discarded, and men drink what they want, and practically are, so far as my experience goes, wisely trusted to avail themselves of this latitude with moderation. Among the crews, Oxford and Cambridge, who have honoured my house as guests, I have found men drinking beer, claret, burgundy, hock, and moselle still. Nor do they stick to one beverage throughout training. I once had a bin of very good still moselle. One of the crew staying with me at the time drank moselle, and sampled the bin. He approved of it, and apparently discussed it with his colleagues. He made converts, and when their departure left my house to me desolate, the bin was in the same condition. Nowadays the allowance of port after dinner is one glass instead of two, and I believe that in the case of those who choose wine instead of beer during dinner it is entirely prohibited.

There was once a teetotaler who was showing signs of staleness. For him a "fizz-night" (*i.e.*, champagne) was prescribed by the coach, but our friend had conscientious scruples about alcohol

except as a medicine. A doctor was therefore called in, the state of things explained to him, and the champagne prescribed by the faculty, and on grounds purely medical. The "patient" had to pay the doctor's fee. When I came down to Putney next morning sundry of the crew privately assured me that "Old So-and-so never had such a time in his life or enjoyed himself so much." Certainly his rowing next day showed marked improvement.

Comments have recently been made in the Press as to the expenses to either University of the race. No doubt they are heavy. In old days we went straight from Oxford to Putney, and our stay on tidal water was limited to ten days or a fortnight. While there we were put up at a local public-house: prior to 1871 the discomforts were really very great indeed. We had one tumbledown room to sit, write, read, and eat in, and three of us had to sleep out in neighbouring cottages. Now the crews (though Cambridge this year is to be an exception) take a private house in which they have every comfort, as indeed men who are rowing as hard as they do have a right to expect. But the stay at Putney has of late years been unduly prolonged. Cambridge are at a distinct disadvantage in regard to their home water. I believe it to be impossible to learn "the beginning," and the sharpness at either end of the stroke, necessary to good rowing, on the home water there. The Oxford reach is not good, though far better than the Cam, but below Nuneham the water is as good as anywhere on the Thames. Cambridge therefore must leave their home water as soon as they can.

They began to increase the time spent at Putney. Oxford, fearing that their rivals might have some rough weather and become accustomed to it, while halcyon days characterised their own practice up to the race itself, when they would have been at a disadvantage in rough water, followed suit. The wise plan would be for both Universities to agree upon a fixed period at Putney—ten days or at most a fortnight is ample—and thus cut down the expenses of both clubs. Oars, too, have become much more costly since my time. The greater power applied necessitates stronger oars, and the use of none but the very best wood, thoroughly seasoned, for them ; brass plates (a patent) are used at the buttons, and for lightness the oars are grooved. I believe the cost of a set of oars has almost doubled in the last thirty years, and even now they do not last as long as they used to do.

Probably, then, in the changed system of training, in the extra development of leg muscle, may be found the explanation of much of the enormous increase of weight in modern crews. The men now row fit indeed, but on a big side. Coaches would far sooner bring their men to the post a trifle short of perfection than a little beyond it. An individual in training can only remain at the real top of his condition for a very few days. It may be imagined how difficult it is to bring eight individuals with their various constitutions all up to concert pitch on the self-same day. At the same time this may not be all. So far as I can see, the candidates for “blues” at either University are, as a rule, finer men physically now than they were in my own day. Very few of the old aristocracy

have rowed ; none, I believe, sprung from what is now called the "smart set." Essentially the vast majority of University oarsmen are and have been drawn from the great middle classes, who seem to thrive and improve with, and probably owing to, the great spread of athletic games and contests of all sorts.

It is frequently suggested that of recent years there have been many more men breaking down in training, or disqualified owing to weak or disordered heart, than used to be the case. I have no exact data by which to test the accuracy of this suggestion, but there can be no doubt that far more care is taken with crews nowadays. The medical examinations of those who are considered likely to row are much more searching and complete than they were. Messrs. Symonds, at Oxford, and Michell, at Cambridge, have for some years past made the hearts of young men engaged in athletics generally, and rowing in particular, their especial study. In this matter, indeed, they may be considered the leading specialists of the day, and I feel certain that to my statement as to the more searching character of these examinations they will without hesitation subscribe. I doubt whether there be an instance during the last ten or twelve years of any man injuring his heart either in the University Boat Race itself, or in the practice for it. But I do think that the sliding seat, especially the modern long slide, has elements of danger which require to be guarded against. The faster racing stroke of the fixed seat produced breathlessness, loss of what is called wind, at an earlier period. This lack of wind prevented the

oarsman from making full use of his muscles. On the sliding seat an oarsman can go on using his leg muscles much longer because the stroke is slower. But these muscles are all the time making large demands upon the heart for the blood necessary for their use. I believe that there is known to the medical profession what is termed a "cycling heart," where leg muscles are used beyond what the heart can stand because, owing to the comparatively stationary body or trunk, men don't feel "done." I think that in the long slide there may be something analogous to this, and therefore in my opinion men and boys should not be permitted to race on slides unless they are properly trained. When the heart, sound to start with, is by long practice prepared for the extra demand which is to be made upon it, no danger need be feared, however severe the race.

It is pleasant to think that the days when a 'Varsity oar was considered to be a "brutal athlete," until good reason to the contrary had been shown, have passed away. Too many "old blues" have taken prominent and worthy parts in Law, the Church, and Parliament for this old superstition to survive. More than this, many of these men, nearing the close of successful lives, have borne open and willing testimony to the lessons of self-denial, perseverance, and chivalry which they learnt in their University boat, and to the influence which these early lessons have exercised upon their after-lives. And even if it be argued that devotion to rowing is frequently paid at the expense of reading, an argument of which I think the exact contrary were easier of proof,

there is at least one point, though it be a negative one, worthy of consideration. The years of nineteen to twenty-three form perhaps the most critical period of a man's life. Then Satan is most active and successful in his attempts to find "more mischief still, for idle hands to do." But in some particular forms of mischief, and those perhaps the most alluring at that age of budding manhood, he is powerless against a member of a University crew. Of course there are exceptions to all rules. Now and then may occur men of exceptional physique who can do anything. But as a rule any man who represents his University at Putney is, and must necessarily be, a man of generally healthy and cleanly life. And this influence spreads beyond the actual members of the crews themselves. As they live who row at Putney and fill the foremost seats in Henley crews, so will those live who desire to take their places when age removes them into another sphere of life.

It may not be entirely good for a youth, with none but the ephemeral importance attaching to his participation in the annual Boat Race, to find his doings chronicled daily in the Press ; but the young choices are kept in pretty good order, and the coach is usually careful not to permit any to think of themselves more highly than they ought to think ; while for those who rise to positions of authority the sense of early responsibility, the liability to public and very frequently mistaken criticism, is decidedly good. After all, men go to the University not merely for the purpose of being crammed with such knowledge as may secure a degree, whether with or without honours, but to

be prepared for the battle of life in which they must so soon take their parts. And as a father who, having himself rowed, is proud to see his son following in his footsteps, I regard my boy's rowing at Cambridge and the lessons which it involves, coupled with due application to the ordinary curriculum of the University, as the best possible preparation, physical, intellectual, and moral, for his manhood.

FALCONRY

BY THE HON. GERALD LASCELLES

IF antiquity by itself constituted the chief claim for the popularity of any sport, falconry would at the present day rank among the principal amusements of the sportsmen of the twentieth century. The literature of sport, from Saxon times up to the seventeenth century, consists mainly of books on hawking combined with hunting ; nor are these works merely superficial sketches of the art on the other hand, the whole subject is gone into with a care and an attention to detail that leaves nothing to be desired by the modern students of this most difficult and technical branch of sport. But these treatises, ancient and musty as they are, deal after all with but a modern development of falconry after its transplantation to Europe from the East, its original home, where it has to this day retained its hold as the principal sport of the great landed proprietors. Far more ancient than any European books are the old Persian manuscripts and history, and so far as England is concerned there is abundant record of the sport in Saxon times. At the date of the Conquest it was the leading pursuit. Domesday book contains accounts of many grants to this

or to that "falconer" as well as notes which indicate what indispensable servants they were to Royal personages of that date. For several centuries the sport held its pride of place. To what circumstances then is its downfall as a popular amusement to be attributed?

In the first place the invention of the fowling-piece had a good deal to do with the matter. Before these weapons were devised and brought to some rude perfection, a falconer with hawks of some kind—whether long or short winged in species—was a necessary adjunct to the household in order to keep the larder well stocked with game. But with the advent of the fowling-piece, and still more with the invention of the "art of shooting flying," the necessity for the trained hawk and the falconer as one of the dependents of the household ceased to have its ancient force. It was only when the Lord of the Manor had a personal affection for the sport that the "news" retained its position.

Extracts from the famous "Hunstanton Hall" accounts which Mr. L'Estrange has kindly supplied show how important a part trained hawks played in a domestic establishment of the sixteenth century. Thus on November 19, 1519, we find the note of "a fesant killed w^t ye goshawke," and so on almost daily up to January, 1520. So also in 1527; throughout September is the recurring entry of "Two partriches killed w^t ye sparhawke," which seems to have been good for a brace a day. Later in the year we find five and six "partriches killed w^t ye hawkes," so that the little sparhawke must have had assistance from her larger congeners. But contemporarily with the use of the fowling-

piece came the reclamation and enclosure of land for improved agriculture. Farms were now set out where open heaths and downs previously existed. The increased breeding of stock led to the enclosure of fields to confine them. Planting was largely resorted to both for the better shelter of cultivated lands, and for the amenities of rural life and improvement of the demesne lands around the various stately country houses which were springing up all over England. Each of these things, excellent in itself was an additional nail in the coffin of falconry ; a sport which can only be followed in the most open of country and amongst the wildest surroundings. Thus many a country gentleman who might have taken great delight, had opportunity served, in the favourite sport of his ancestors, found that its pursuit was impossible under the altered conditions of his estate. Gradually one generation succeeded another to whom falconry was but a name. The sport was, as in the present day, only practicable in particular corners of England and Scotland—that is to say, upon the downs of the South of England, the wolds of Yorkshire (but that only up to a hundred years ago at which period they were enclosed and ploughed up), and the moors of Scotland and the North of England. Game was scarce on downs and wolds, and the Dutch falconers, with their passage hawks trained to the flight at the heron and the rook, were not imported till the days of Colonel Thornton and Lord Orford in the latter part of the eighteenth century. To such an extent had falconry in England died away that a hundred, or even seventy, years ago the practice of the art depended upon a

few Dutch falconers imported for the purpose and on a certain number of Scotch families. Many years after falconry had become rare in England a falconer was attached to Scotch households often enough. There were generally open moors—or at least mosses—where falconry could be practised and there was plenty of game to fly at ; and the Scotch falconers played a very important part in maintaining the sport from the days of the Stuarts till the middle of the nineteenth century.

But during all these years the art has never been lost, the sport has never been extinct. Confined to a comparatively small band of enthusiasts, it has not only been maintained but has advanced with the times. Modern exigencies have produced modern improvements. More facile communication with our Eastern possessions has introduced Eastern methods to be engrafted on the old Scotch and Dutch practice. Perhaps falconry, though never more difficult to practise, has never been better understood than now, in the twentieth century. The scarcity of the heron and of ground on which to fly him has led to the introduction of the sea-gull as a quarry in no respect second to the heron. Although the variety of quarry is limited, yet the skill learnt from our Indian falconers has enabled us to train the wild caught falcon, and to render her as tame as the hand-reared eyess, while her superior powers of flight greatly enlarge the purposes to which she can be put ; and in these and other ways falconry has adapted itself more or less to the altered conditions in which it is now placed.

In ancient times many varieties of hawks were used in falconry ; sacres, lanners, gerfalcons,

hobbies, even Kestrels were all employed, and in some old works even allotted to persons of different ranks. The list is greatly reduced now. Almost all practical hawking is done with the peregrine. Whether the objects of pursuit be game birds and wild fowl of any description, or birds of ringing flight, such as the rook, gull, or heron, the peregrine is the falconer's mainstay so far as European falconry is concerned ; and with the goshawk for killing ground game he may be considered fully equipped. In the East matters are different ; there is a far greater variety of quarry to be flown at than can be found in this country. Consequently hawks of different kinds, and of the second class in regard of merit, can be employed. Here the choice of quarry is limited to grouse and partridges for game, with occasional chances at wild ducks. For the quarry of the "high mountee" we have only rooks and gulls, and now and then a heron. It will be found in practice that only very good hawks can kill grouse, regularly, after September 10, or partridges (except in very open country), after October 10. Gulls can only be taken by hawks of the highest class, and, though rooks in the autumn or in moderate country are not a very difficult quarry to take, yet if flown as they should be on the open downs in the spring, and taken "on passage," that is to say on their flight from one place to another, they will be found to tax the powers of all but the very best of hawks. Hence, in England there is no room for any but hawks of the highest class. An occasional lanner or gerfalcon may be trained as a *tour de force*. Grouse and magpies have been

taken by the writer with an Indian shahin (*F. Babylonicus*), but though there is no doubt about the power of wing of these varieties, especially in their own countries, they have not been found sufficiently trustworthy to be used with success at British quarry and in the British climate, and whatever experiments may be made in the way of training what a famous professional once described as "menagerie hawks," it will always be found necessary to fall back on the peregrine as the mainstay.

A great deal of amusement can be obtained by training the smaller hawks, such as the merlin and the sparrow-hawk, to take in the one case larks, in the other blackbirds and thrushes or even smaller birds, though a good sparrow-hawk can take partridges well enough. The flight at the lark with merlins is often a very beautiful one, the hawks ringing, not infrequently, clean out of sight in the air. The little hawks are very tractable and their training is simple enough ; but they are very delicate and can seldom be kept to work for a second season. Sparrow-hawks are more difficult to train and require much more patience ; but a great deal can be done with them, and wonderful scores have been made by their aid. The use of these little hawks is rather like playing on a miniature billiard-table. It is capital fun—wonderful breaks can be made and strokes effected that would be quite outside the player's ability on a full-sized table—but though excellent amusement, it is hardly the genuine thing pretty as it is, and no greater mistake can be made than that of taking the management of these hawks and the successes obtained with them as a guide for the

more serious business of training the larger varieties of hawk.

Peregrines may be divided into two classes, each containing falcons and tiercels; that is to say, hand-reared hawks taken from the nest, termed eyesses, and wild caught hawks, taken after they have been preying for themselves at large for at the least several months—often for two or three years: these are termed passage hawks, and the older ones haggards.

The eyesses were the kind most frequently used by our ancestors in this country. Although the passage hawk was by no means unknown, yet she had generally to be imported from abroad, and communication was difficult and expensive compared to present times. On the other hand, peregrines bred on most of the sea cliffs of these islands, and on many an inland crag besides. There are many such eyries, some of them now historical. To this day the falcons breed on the Culver Cliff in the Isle of Wight, an eyrie which Queen Elizabeth reserved for her own particular use. Within the last twenty years the writer has trained a falcon of the highest class, taken from the same cliff that Elizabeth's hawks came from. In fact, the peregrine would be common enough if unmolested, and thanks to the general feeling in favour of Wild Birds' Preservation, and the action adopted by various local authorities, their chances of breeding are greatly increased. They would be infinitely better were it not for the dangers threatened by the proceedings of egg and skin collectors, so-called naturalists, who are the most dangerous and unscrupulous enemies that bird life

in England has to fear nowadays. At any rate, at the present time it is not very difficult to procure a nest of young peregrines. Rearing them is easy enough—good nourishing food such as tender beef and plenty of it is the first requisite, and the second is to so give the food in such a manner that the young eyesses see as little of the man bringing their meal as possible.

It is very often supposed by the inexperienced person that the education and reclaiming of hawks should be started when they are very young. This is a great mistake. The first and most necessary proceeding is to instil into these innocents as much as is possible of the wild hawk's nature, and secondly, all that can be taught of its power of flight. If the young hawks are always handled and fed by a man they will become entirely dependent on him for the means of existence. They will start the objectionable practice of screaming directly they catch sight of a human being, just as in the wild state they would answer the distant cry of their mother when she returned bearing their food to the eyrie. It is desirable to conceal from them as far as can possibly be done the fact that they owe their meals to human aid. For the second lesson to be learnt, that of gaining powers of flight akin to those of the wild hawk, a system called "the hack" is employed. It merely consists in allowing the young hawks complete liberty as soon as they can fly at all. So long as their food is placed in some open spot, well known to them, they will return to it morning and evening, and so long as they do this and take a full meal at each visit they will get into no serious

mischievous. Gradually they acquire strength of wing as they circle into the clouds, stooping at one another, and at anything else that they see, racing and chasing like so many puppies at play. Obviously an open, rather wild, country is necessary for this, and one, too, where no person who has the right to use a gun will molest them within a range of several miles. Presently one or two of the most forward begin to be somewhat irregular at meal-times. It is a symptom that the wild nature is beginning to develop, and that the truant has learned the art of killing some wild quarry or other for itself.

It is then time to begin the serious business of training, and an instrument called the bow-net is brought into play. This is the same device as that by which the wild "passage hawks" are caught, and is nothing more than a circular net, one half of which is attached to a bow of hazel in such a manner that a pull from a long string, led to a point some fifty yards away, will pull the net entirely over a piece of food securely pegged down just in its centre, and consequently over any hawk that may be feeding upon it. The hawks are carefully watched as they come in to feed, and the moment that the suspected individual is engaged on his dinner, one pull of the net renders him a captive. Jesses have been on his legs all the time he was flying at hack. A hood is clapped on to his head, a leash and swivel attached to the jesses, and he is at once put into training.

Merlins and hobbies if flown at hack are such gentle tame little things that much of this work is unnecessary with them. They are more or less

trained from the first, and if hungry will at any time take perch on the head and arms of any person they recognise as their feeder. They may just as well be fed from the first on the lure to which they are about to be used, and they can be kept out much longer at hack than peregrines. But a similar method of training will rarely answer well with the peregrine, and the wilder he can be made by long flying and efforts at wild quarry, the better he is likely to be.

The training and reclaiming of any hand-reared eyess is a mere bagatelle to any man who is capable of reclaiming the wild caught falcon, and no man can lay claim to the title of falconer who cannot do this. The training in question consists of constant carrying on the hand, gently handling and stroking the hooded bird till she gets accustomed to human touch and sounds. Very soon, in the case of the eyess, she ceases to regard them, and instead of starting at every touch or strange voice will feed contentedly on the hand when hooded. And when once this stage is reached it is not long before she will do the same bare-headed, then in a few days more she will take her meal on her owner's glove in the open air surrounded by strange persons, dogs, and horses. She is now fairly reclaimed ; she will jump to the fist from a few yards and is eager to take her position there in order to be fed. The next step is to introduce her to the lure. This may either be a dead bird, or a piece of wood so covered with wings as to resemble one, and garnished with pieces of meat so attached that the hawk can feed on them. A meal or two on the lure will so accustom her

thereto that she will fly to it and seize it when thrown to a distance ; and when she will do this, she is fit to be trusted at large and “called off” from an assistant’s hand for a distance of two to three hundred yards. As soon as she will come readily to the lure, and will not leave it on her master’s approach, she is a trained hawk and can be entered to the quarry at which she is to be flown.

If that quarry is to be game, a little more training is required in order that she may learn to “wait on” as it is called. In order to achieve this, the lure is first swung so as to call the hawk from a distance ; but as she reaches the falconer it is picked up and temporarily concealed from the hawk. She will check her flight and rise in short circles round her master’s head, hovering over him till she can get the prey she expects. Gradually the time is prolonged till she will wait in the air over the falconer for such a space of time, say, as would be occupied while a brace of setters beat an average sized field. In addition to this she must, to be effective, rise to a great height in the air, a couple of gun shots high at least ; for without this she cannot gain the impetus required to overtake so swift a bird as a grouse. But patience and experience will overcome these difficulties, and a well-trained game hawk working with equally well-trained dogs is a beautiful example of man’s power over the animal creation.

A rather flat moor or sloping hill-side is the best for grouse hawking. Let the reader imagine a really first-class setter or pointer ranging on such a moor with all the speed and dash which such

dogs exhibit. Suddenly round he comes as he catches the wind of birds and stiffens into one of those beautiful attitudes which indicate a certain find. At once the hood is removed from the hawk's head, and she is cast into the air. Having killed many grouse before this day she loses no time in gaining her pitch, and in less than three minutes is "waiting on" in small circles at an elevation of three hundred feet over the pointing dog, whose business she understands just as well as any of the party. The falconer has spent these minutes in making a circle round the dog so as to head him and flush the grouse down wind over the dog when he deems the supreme moment has arrived. Dog and hawk watch him intently, ready to act at the moment he gives the signal. He gives it, and as he runs down to flush them, the dog dashes in, and the game rises. Now watch the hawk. With seeming deliberation she shuts her wings and shoots downwards like a large cricket ball from that great height at a speed which the eye can only just follow. Apparently falling just behind the rapidly fleeing grouse, she runs up to them as if they were motionless, with the impetus gained by her stoop, and in an instant has "bound to" or seized the hindmost bird. Quietly the falconer walks up to his hawk and finds her bestriding the dead body of her captive. A few mouthfuls from the head and neck are sufficient to reward her, and in half an hour she will be ready to repeat the performance, and to do so three or four times in the course of the day if opportunities be given to her.

Obviously such docility as this argues a high

pitch of education and a perfect familiarity with man and his surroundings. It is a work of time so to subdue the spirit of the wild caught hawk and to gain her confidence that she will conduct herself in the same manner as the hand-reared nestling. Yet if time and patience be allowed full play, the wild hawk, which has from her early bringing up acquired a greater stock of intelligence and experience, will in the long run prove more efficient than the eyess and equally obedient. Her power of wing is greater and her stoop more deadly by reason of the practice gained by years of wild flying. Nor is it by any means necessary to postpone the use of her services till such time as she has acquired the steadiness and docility needed for game hawking. There is many a flight to be obtained with her "out of the hood," that is to say, directly at the quarry as it rises, and to such flights as these she may be entered as soon as she will come well to the lure and is broken to the hood and handled so as to be thoroughly tame. Game birds, it is true, with their short and rapid flight, cannot be overtaken by a hawk flown in this manner before they reach some covert or shelter from which in some form or other they are never far distant; but the fine ringing flights of the *haute volée*, such as those at the heron, the rook, and the gull, are all open to the newly trained passage hawk; and these are the cream of falconry. Heron hawking is difficult of attainment in this country. It requires a well-stocked heronry surrounded on all sides by open plains, and such a thing no longer exists in England. Occasionally herons can be taken easily enough as they rise

from a brook or small pond ; but this is hardly good sport enough to make it worth while to reserve a trained hawk solely for it. Rook hawking as followed in the spring over the open downs is the modern substitute for heron hawking, and many a fine flight and lengthy gallop are enjoyed after this quarry. The line of flight is usually down wind to the nearest covert or to the rookery itself, and in the course thereof, much fine ringing in the air is often witnessed. Moreover, it is almost the only quarry that can be found in sufficient numbers to keep a good stud of falcons daily at work, and at the same time tax the powers of the very best passage falcons. Few eyesses are capable of showing first-rate sport at rooks, especially in the wild weather that forms so much of an English springtime. Still, a few have proved equal to the flight.

Gull hawking is quite a modern development of falconry, and though it is difficult to succeed in it is one of the finest flights that can be attempted ; so much so, that it seems a strange thing that our ancestors never trained their hawks to it. The first known record of successes in this line were those of the Rev. W. Willimott, in Cornwall, some thirty years ago. He had many fine flights at gulls with a passage falcon which his friend Major Fisher had failed to induce to enter to rooks, and with her he took herring-gulls. Subsequently the flight was taken up by that most able falconer Mr. St. Quintin, whose best sport was on the Yorkshire wolds, and with tiercels, mostly passage hawks, at the small black-headed and the common gull. The hawks of the Old Hawking

Club have followed on the same lines and shown excellent sport in very recent times. Flights are readily obtainable when the gulls come inland to follow the ploughs, and gull hawking has the great advantage that, unlike other flights of the higher class, it can be followed in a comparatively wooded and enclosed country ; for the gull will take to no convert except water, generally seeking to outfly his pursuers in the upper regions of the air, and very often he succeeds in doing so. From small ponds or pieces of water he can be driven after being "put in" to them ; but anything like a river or a canal is fatal to the success of the flight if the gull once reaches it.

There is no more graceful and beautiful quarry at which to fly a hawk than the sea-gull, and no quarry will give higher ringing flights extending to long distances. The flight is well worthy the attention of all falconers.

Much more might be written about this sport, so fascinating in itself and so prone to instil a love of its pursuit very deeply into the minds of those who once take it up. But space limits my account of other kinds of falconry. There is plenty to be said about the ringing flight at the skylark with the docile and even affectionate little merlin, or of the amusement which a country gentleman may obtain by making a well-trained goshawk the companion of his walks abroad, together with a handy spaniel. Any country will do for this variety of hawk ; she may even be flown in a wood through which she will thread her way just like a woodcock. Almost any quarry that rises close at hand may be taken with her, for these hawks

are not carried hooded, but bare-headed, and in readiness to dash off their master's hand the moment the game stirs. Rabbits and hares are most commonly flown at. A good goshawk will take twelve or fifteen rabbits easily in the course of a morning if the rabbits are sitting out in favourable places, such as rough old pasture fields. Hares are taken in the same manner, but only the more powerful and courageous female goshawks can hold an old hare. Pheasants both in and out of covert, wild fowl if they can be stalked and approached very nearly, anything in short that can be taken with one rapid dash, can be captured with a goshawk, and she will prove to be a delightful companion as well as a useful servant.

Even in this country there is considerable variety in the different phases of falconry. It is a sport that requires too much patience and watchfulness to be popular with the rank and file of modern sportsmen, and the amount of game that can be taken with hawks, however good they may be, is too small to appeal strongly to modern ideas; but those who derive pleasure from reclaiming and training birds of so wild and savage a disposition, and in whose eyes sport is inseparably combined with the study of natural history, find a peculiar fascination in falconry. Hence it is that the love of the pastime has endured for more generations than any other field sport in the world.



SKATING

SKATING

BY THE COUNTESS OF MINTO

SOME ten years ago any knowledge of scientific skating was entirely confined in England to a few privileged and enthusiastic members of the London and Wimbledon Skating Clubs, who, in spite of the uncertainty of the English climate and doubtful duration of frosts, managed to work out with mathematical precision many hitherto unheard of problems of figure skating. The introduction of artificial ice has now placed the study of this fascinating and health-giving pastime within the reach of everyone. The public have not been slow to avail themselves of the opportunities thus given, and the number of English men and women who have mastered the intricate mysteries of combined figure-skating undoubtedly surpasses that of any other nation.

It is true that the English school of skating erred on the side of stiffness ; the body was too upright, the turns were executed in too jerky a fashion to be pleasing, and we have to thank professors from all nations who have shown us that a freer, more graceful style, combined with absolute precision and trueness of edge, produces

a combination which may well be described as the poetry of motion.

Hand-in-hand skating is undoubtedly the most interesting to the onlooker, and skaters who would not trust themselves alone to execute turns which belong to the standard of a professional, can with the physical and moral support of a partner achieve the most difficult evolutions.

The limited space of an artificial rink has unfortunately the tendency to cramp the form of the skater whose figures cannot compare in boldness and power with those of a pupil of the St. Moritz school, who, having acres of virgin ice on which to practise, becomes a perfect master of his edges, and sweeps the ice with a proficiency rarely acquired in England. Moreover, the damp and chilly atmosphere of a covered rink is certainly a drawback to the spectator ; for although there is great fascination in following the graceful and bewildering turns, the easy flittings to and fro, of an adept in the art, those unable to participate in the exercise cannot feel the excitement of the skater struggling over some new feat, enjoying the accomplishment of a difficult figure, forgetting everything in the delight of rapid turns and curves leading ever to fresh possibilities.

For the true enjoyment of skating it must be practised in the open air, and for this no country furnishes better opportunities than Canada, where for weeks together clear frosty weather prevails, and the skater need feel no anxiety lest an untimely thaw should come and mar his pleasure. Nothing can surpass the beauty of a typical Canadian winter's day. The tall dark fir trees stand up

grandly against the intense blue of the sky, the sun turns the snowy landscape into myriads of sparkling diamonds, and the clear still atmosphere is almost awe-inspiring, so pure and spotless does nature seem. Surely no prettier scene can be imagined—the ice alive with skaters in their bright and picturesque costumes, swaying in perfect unison to the seductive music of the waltz, or with their partners following an intrepid couple who lead them round through the fantastic and bewildering mazes of a march, skated on much the same lines as a musical ride, while many shouts of merriment rend the air, and the falling away of the less experienced skaters betrays the difficulty of tracking the serpentine course of the leaders. Imagine the same scene, but instead of the brilliant rays of the sun the silvery light of the moon throwing dark mysterious shadows on all around, as the skaters, each holding a blazing torch, dash to and fro over the glassy surface, sending a weird fantastic glow as they flit through the dim uncertain light. With these surroundings who can help being an enthusiast ?

Government House, Ottawa, possesses two open-air rinks, although they are not general in Canada owing to the labour in clearing away the snow and keeping the ice in good condition ; but no city is considered complete without a covered rink, and even a mushroom town of three years' growth, such as Rossland in British Columbia, can boast of a splendid building where many may seek relaxation and exercise during the inevitable trials and excitement of a miner's existence.

It is to be regretted that hand-in-hand figure

skating is not indulged in more largely in Canada, where elaborate combinations appear as yet to be little known. The old Canadian valse still holds its own, skated in two large circles, one loop made by the ordinary 3 turn, the other by reversing. To those who have been accustomed to the more dashing mode of turning and twisting to suit the shape of the rink, or deftly steering in and out through the revolving crowd, the ordinary valse is decidedly monotonous. Ottawa, however, proves a brilliant exception to this rule, for here valseing is practised on the same lines one watches with so much pleasure at Niagara and Prince's, and there are many enthusiastic skaters, familiar with the rocking turn, swinging 3's, Mohawk, &c., &c., who can hold their own amongst really first-rate performers.

Sometimes at the beginning of the winter, before the snow has covered the earth with its pall of spotless white, a severe frost turns these mighty Canadian rivers and lakes into silent fields of crystal ice ; then the skaters can enjoy the supreme pleasure of gliding for miles on its clear surface, each bend of the river unfolding fresh scenes on which to feast their eyes, and as evening approaches the glow of the setting sun illuminates the whole landscape with a soft rosy hue, and the crimson ball of fire sinks behind the pale horizon, leaving the vast white expanse in soft grey twilight. A more enchanting spectacle is scarcely conceivable.

Should the wind be favourable the skater can indulge in a new sensation, for, with the assistance

of a small sail attached to a pole, and holding his feet firmly together, it is possible to sail before the wind at the rate of thirty miles an hour. No one who has not experienced this can realise the intoxicating delight of thus gliding through the air, but the uninitiated who has not absolute control over his skates will certainly have cause to regret having been tempted to commit himself to the mercy of the winds, for it is no easy task to hold the sail correctly, and requires great strength and skill to steer well enough to retain the proper course.

Skating is perhaps the only pastime in which ladies have an undeniable advantage over the sterner sex, for men cannot vie with the "elegance and ease" which is woman's right *par excellence*; nor can they wear the skirt which adds so much to the effect of the figure, intensifying the graceful curves as it sways with every movement of the body. The skirt also enables the mediocre skater to produce a far better effect than those who have nothing to conceal the frequent assistance given by the unemployed foot, and it enables a lady to skate a figure in a way that might easily deceive the uninitiated, who neither know nor care if a turn has been executed on a true edge; but although the skater may mislead the gallery, she cannot deceive herself, and anyone who is a lover of the art will persevere until the goal she has in view has been really reached. One cannot help wondering if professional men often work at their business with the same dogged determination and persistency that some amateurs display in mastering

turns which need so many hours of practice, and yet when accomplished are skated with the ease of a bird on the wing, dispelling any idea that such perfection has only been obtained by repeated trials and patient perseverance.

There is another branch of skating which exists in perfection in Canada, that of the hockey player. We have all attempted to play hockey in our day, but a game between champion teams is a revelation which leaves one breathless with excitement and wonder. The skates used are almost flat and prohibit any figure skating, but it is a beautiful sight to see what absolute mastery the players have over the blades, the lightning speed with which they stop, turn, jump, or resume their course, performing feats of skill and endurance with such easy assurance that the spectator cannot fail to follow each movement of the game with admiration and interest.

The reason of this wonderful proficiency is not far to seek. The Canadian boy can skate as soon as he can walk; it matters nothing to him if he skates on ice or snow on the frozen sidewalk or road; it becomes second nature; his balance is perfect and his confidence complete.

To be a really first-class skater it is necessary to acquire the art in childhood. As in the Kindergarten system, so it is in skating: the drudgery is overcome without effort, in fact almost unconsciously; what takes days of weary practice to the man, comes to the child as naturally as the air he breathes, and once learnt is never forgotten. Surely then, with all the facilities which we of

the twentieth century possess, it is wise to give our children the opportunity of enjoying this splendid pastime which must rank amongst the foremost of sports, combining as it does so much of science, strength, and skill.

STEEPLECHASING

BY A GENTLEMAN RIDER¹

LAMENTS about the alleged decadence of Steeple-chasing break out periodically, and have done so for a great many years past ; I have read in an old periodical of half a century back that the sport then was not what it had been, but such complaints are common to other things besides steeplechasing—to most things, in fact ; and yet, not only does the Grand National attract as much attention and occasion as much interest as at any previous period, but whenever it is known that the best horses are coming out to jump a country an enthusiastic crowd is certain to assemble. Instead of “the best horses,” I was about to write “really good horses” ; evading the phrase, however, in order not to give the pessimistic reader a chance of asking where good horses are to be discovered nowadays, and drawing comparisons—which very likely might not be well founded. We will come presently to the question of notable 'chasers of

¹ The writer specially wishes to remain anonymous. Of course I acquiesce, though regretfully. As regards his qualifications, I will only say that more than once he has headed the list of successful gentlemen riders. It has been impossible to exclude his name from the chapter, the more so as the omission of it would have gone far to identify him. The references to him which necessarily occur are, of course, by another hand.—ED.



Photo, Clarence Hailey, Newmarket.

HIS MAJESTY'S GRAND NATIONAL WINNER, AMBUSH II.

the present and of a former day, and it need only be remarked in passing that if of late years the greatest of steeplechasers has fallen to a Grudon, a Soarer, and a Wild Man from Borneo—the name ought to have stopped this one—it has also been carried off by a Manifesto and a Cloister. There are no doubt some weird animals running at minor meetings in Selling Handicaps ; but in my earlier days I well remember that a good many of the horses one came across were not remarkable for class, and suffered, unless appearances were deceptive, from all the ailments which beset their successors.

In one particular, however, there assuredly is a striking, and I think it may be said a lamentable, falling away, and that is in the matter of gentlemen riders—of men, soldiers for the most part, who rode constantly for the sole and simple reason that they loved the game. Look at a *Steeplechase Calendar* of, let us vaguely say, twenty or twenty-five years ago. Compare it with recent issues, and you will see what I mean. I am speaking, you understand, of men who had no pecuniary interest in 'chasing, except of course when they chose to have a bet, not of qualified riders, too often professionals in more or less thin disguise, or of men who trained or managed horses. Open the *Calendar* at random, and what does one find is the present state of affairs? Among gentlemen riders there is Mr. H. Nugent, who does good service for the Cranborne stable over which his father, Sir Charles, so ably presides. Mr. A. W. Wood, constantly to the fore, trains horses at Cheltenham. Mr. F. Hartigan is the nephew of Mr. Garrett Moore and of Mr. W. H. Moore, trainers both—I

am not in any way reflecting on the social position of these gentlemen, only observing that they have a direct business connection with the sport. Mr. Bletsoe, who rides, is a trainer ; so, I believe, is Mr. A. Gordon. Not to prolong the list, indeed, after searching the records of a number of recent meetings, actually the only gentleman rider I can find mentioned who has not this close and professional connection with the business of the sport is Captain Reginald Ward ; and nowadays he rides very seldom.

But look back to an earlier volume, and what names do we find continually cropping up ? There were then, as now, a number of what I hope I shall hurt no one's feeling by describing as semi-professional amateurs ; but there were also Mr. J. M. Richardson, Captain Brocklehurst, Mr. Arthur Coventry, Lord Marcus Beresford, the Hon. George Lambton, Captain Wentworth Hope-Johnstone, Captain W. B. Morris, Mr. Brockton, Captain Fisher, Captain Sandeman, Mr. C. J. Cunningham, Captain Lee Barber, Colonel Knox, the Hon. Luke White, Colonel Harford, Mr. " Merton "—otherwise Mr. W. H. P. Jenkins : there can be no harm in giving his real name at this time of day—Captain " Bay " Middleton, Captain " Doggy " Smith, Lord Manners, Captain L. H. Jones, Mr. Hugh Owen, Count Kinsky, Lord Queensberry, Mr. Peter Crawshaw, Captain " Driver " Browne—who used to distinguish himself on Charleville, belonging to Colonel Byrne, who subsequently owned Amphion ; Captain Dalbiac, the " Treasure " ; Mr. Abington, who rode jump races for some years before confining

himself to the flat ; Mr. F. G. Hobson, Lord Charles Kerr, Mr. Greville Nugent—"the Limb," who met with his much-lamented death at Sandown ; Captain Roddy Owen, Captain Percy Bewicke, and last, but assuredly not least—I am putting down the names as they occur to me, without regard to chronological order—Mr. Arthur Yates.

It might naturally have been supposed that the greater comfort, and luxury indeed, which marks steeplechasing at Sandown, Kempton, Hurst, Gatwick, Lingfield, etc., as contrasted with the rougher and readier methods of Croydon, Bromley, Streatham, Kingsbury, and such-like places, would specially have attracted gentleman riders ; but the *Calendar* tells altogether a different tale. Why this should be so is, I confess, puzzling. Perhaps the soldiers are kept harder at work than they used to be ; and also, I suspect, men as a rule are inclined to take life more easily than was formerly the case. If a man is asked to ride nowadays he desires to know everything about the horse on which he is invited to perform, whether it is a good jumper, what are its peculiarities, precisely how much is known about its chances, how the knowledge was gained, and a great deal more. I do not mean to say that the enquirers are not wise in their generation, but this was not the state of things when I was busy at the game. We used to ask no questions, though of course we were glad to listen to what we were told, and we saddled our horses ourselves, delighted to have the opportunity of doing so.

In the space at command I cannot dwell as I should like to do on the riding of the good men

and true who helped to keep the sport going. I am sometimes asked who is the best rider I ever saw, and I daresay the question is natural ; but it is difficult or impossible to answer. Different men had their own strong points and peculiarities. It would have been hard in many respects to improve on Colonel "Curley" Knox. And I particularly remember his successes with a horse called Stiff, a short-necked animal that took a long time to school and was always a hard horse to ride, but who went in perfect style with his usual jockey. Mr. J. M. Richardson was a model horseman, graceful and strong. He always seemed comfortable whatever he was riding, went the shortest way, made his horses go fast, and had a way of leaving them to make their own arrangements at the fences. Colonel Harford was a jockey all over. If he were riding in the midst of a field of professionals there was nothing in his style to distinguish him from the rest. He understood every phase of the game. Captain "Doggy" Smith was extraordinarily strong on a horse, and perhaps may be said to have stood out in his absolute devotion to the game from the keen men against whom he was continually competing. Captain L. H. "Wengy" Jones was another quite in the first class, with a notably pretty seat ; horses always went well with him, and he used to let them go. He and they were always on the best of terms as with a long rein he made his way over any sort of course. Captain Hope-Johnstone had a peculiar capacity for understanding his mounts and adapting himself to different animals ; easy and quiet on a free goer, resolute and determined



A MILITARY STEEPLECHASE.

From a Painting by G. D. Giles.

on one that wanted driving, no one sat better over his fences or better knew where the winning-post was and how to get there. Captain W. B. Morris, another of the very best, came out under Captain Hope-Johnstone's auspices—indeed, he used to be called that excellent horseman's head lad, and the legend went that his mentor set him a page of Ruff to learn every evening, or gave him other literary and sporting exercises of a similar character. Captain Morris was a wonderfully fine judge of pace ; he seemed to leave his horse alone, yet somehow it always did what he wanted it to do. He was also peculiarly cool-headed ; no one could say better after a race what had taken place, what his own mount and the others had been doing, and he was particularly popular for the reason that he was such a fair rider. Mr. C. J. Cunningham was an extraordinarily strong, vigorous jockey, and always made things interesting for his opponents. One afternoon there were six events on the card and he won them all, and it may be noted that on two occasions Captain Hope-Johnstone won five races in a day.

There was no end to the artfulness of Captain Brocklehurst. One never knew what he was going to do next, but it was sure to be something clever. Lord Marcus Beresford was always useful ; to say that he was the boldest of the bold is merely to say that he was a Beresford, and in all circumstances he was unflaggingly cheerful. Lord Queensberry also would not be denied. There was little elegance and not much style about him, judged by the standard of his contemporaries, but he would have gone at the side of a house if it had

come in his way. Mr. Luke White may be described as a nice, hunting horseman, lacking perhaps some of the delicacies of steeplechase riding, but a real good man ; and Captain Lee Barber was decidedly useful all round, though not always lucky. Jupiter Tonans so often came down with him that, the story went, in order to save the compositors trouble at the newspaper offices, they used to keep set up in type the statement that "Jupiter Tonans fell." Amongst his other achievements he would assuredly have carried off the big steeplechase at Auteuil on Prince Edward from the Danebury stable ; but this good horse fell, and the race was thus won by his stable companion Redpath, who had been tried some 21 lb. inferior to the hope of Hampshire. Mr. George Lambton was remarkable for his beautiful hands ; no horse appeared to pull with him. A professional jockey might be seen going to the post one day hauling at an animal's mouth, and having any amount of trouble with him in the race, but the same animal would carry Mr. Lambton, scarcely reaching at his bridle, and would do what was wanted of him without coercion. Mr. Arthur Coventry's reputation, securely based, fills a great space in the history of amateur jockeyship. No one rode oftener and in his own fashion better than Mr. Arthur Yates. He assuredly never loitered by the way ; would dash his horse along and stick resolutely to all he got. He was a charming fellow to ride with, and would talk about anything in the course of the struggle, except, indeed, about the race.

There was a great competition one year between Mr. Arthur Yates and Captain Hope-Johnstone for

the coveted first place in the list of gentlemen riders. It was, so to speak, anybody's race between them for the last few weeks of the season, and on the day when steeplechasing ended and the question had to be settled they were a dead heat. It seemed, however, to be good odds on Mr. Yates, for he was going down to Kingsbury to ride a "certainty," and his rival had not at the moment a mount in prospect. The latter went racing, equipped with boots and breeches, on the off-chance of finding someone who wanted a jockey. Mr. Yates' good thing was unexpectedly beaten ; but, determined to head the list if possible, he jumped into a hansom and set off as fast as the creature in the shafts would go for Streatham, where also there was racing that afternoon, and where he knew he was wanted to ride a horse that his friends thought could not be beaten. He arrived just in time to weigh and replace the jockey who had been secured in his absence ; but the good thing fell. Meantime Captain Hope-Johnstone had been asked to ride something that was believed to have a sort of a chance. He was invariably good enough if the horse was ; this one proved equal to the occasion, so the unexpected happened and the 7th Hussar pulled it off against Mr. Yates by a short head.

Mr. J. C. Dormer, to come to a later date, held his own with the best of the professionals, and, as everyone is aware, Captain Roddy Owen made an indelible mark in the history of steeplechasing. He used to be called the Headless Horseman, but there was a great deal of method in his madness, and in the biographical notices which

he had at Sandown could scarcely have been worse—he comes out again when mended, with unshaken nerve, and, if possible, enhanced keenness. When asked who was the best I ever knew amongst several that come into my mind none stands out before Mr. E. P. Wilson. He was never accused of being a graceful horseman, he lacked the length of leg which helps to ensure a firm grip, and indeed in no way took the eye of the casual observer ; but no one ever sat tighter, no one was more artfully alive to every move in the game, or more successful in getting the last ounce out of a horse.

At the professionals I can only glance very hastily. I remember Robert I'Anson astonishing a gentleman who had not seen him ride, and doubted whether he could do so on the ground that he "looked more like forking hay." There was no doubt about it, however, when he was in the saddle. No one understood the business better than Jack Jones, about whom, by the way, I remember a rather quaint circumstance. He had a bad fall one day, at Sandown if I recollect rightly, and the jar on the ground knocked out some of his teeth—his, because he had bought them from a dentist. He looked about when he got up and became conscious of the loss, but his search was in vain, and he returned to the weighing-room toothless. In the very next race his friend Jim Adams fell at the same fence. Whilst sprawling on the ground his hand came in contact with something hard, which on investigation he found to be the missing portion of his friend's eating apparatus. Dick Marsh was a particularly

neat and graceful horseman, and Joe Cannon may be described as a master of the game all round. Of course he was lucky to win the National on Regal, for Chandos, who fell with Jewitt—"the Gooser," as he used to be called, I never quite understood why—was much the better of the pair. But there was judgment as well as luck about Joe Cannon's performance, and the more credit is due to the successful jockey as he was in poor health at the time—and I remember that he rode in a respirator. Potter is another who comes into my head, a rough but most determined horseman, whose *métier* seemed to be getting second in Selling races. The way in which he would ram a beaten horse over the last fence was something to take one's breath away. Arthur Nightingall was esteemed by many good judges as second to none.

It is natural, inevitable indeed, to make comparisons between the jockeys of the present day and their predecessors. We are rather badly off just now, but I am inclined to think that the best of the few we have do not suffer by comparison. Mason would, I am convinced, have held his own against the best of a former day, and, by the way, I may take the opportunity of correcting the general idea that he is of Irish origin. This sound horseman hails originally from Lancashire, though he became proficient in his business on the other side of the Channel. If I had my choice between him and Piggott I should hesitate about making a selection, and should probably be guided by the horse I wanted ridden; for hands and judgment Piggott has no superior. Birch is

another first-rate all-round jockey ; and if Percy Woodland is on the best horse, it is only by very bad luck that he will be beaten. Dollery has done excellent service for Mr. Yates, whose dashing methods he is accustomed to reproduce, though his long-time companion, Sensier, who was so unfortunately killed at Plumpton, struck out a style of his own which was remarkable for its neatness and finish.

As regards courses, in former days, which as they recede a great many people are inclined to look on as "palmy," it was far from being an unknown thing to take a hurdle-race horse who had never jumped a country and start him in a steeplechase—which may have been "palmy," but was really not in the best interests of the sport either theoretically or practically. Something had to be done in order to give an advantage to a well-schooled horse, and so the "open ditch," as it is called for some mysterious reason, seeing that ditches are seldom anything else, has come into existence. Perhaps it may best be described as a necessary evil, and it may furthermore be added that a very great deal depends upon the way it is made. It must conform to regulation, of course ; but nevertheless it may be a lovely fence or a horrible one, according to the making. Most of the people who find fault with it are not those who have ever ridden over it or are ever in the least likely to do so. The criticisms of the modern water jump seem to me very much more to the purpose, but of late the National Hunt Committee, which are not so oblivious of the sport they govern as some of their critics are pleased to imagine,

have made an alteration here by allowing the fence in front of the water to be raised. Horses have to get up higher, and this takes them over. Courses used to vary considerably. Croydon was tolerably big, as was Kingsbury ; Streatham and some other places were small ; and it need scarcely be said that when there was no gate money, and anyone who chose could go and look on, some pretty rough customers used to be attracted. If you fell at a fence at some of these suburban meetings there were men in the crowd who would have the gold out of your teeth if they got half a chance.

I do not want to praise the past at the expense of the present, but I am rather inclined to think that a quarter of a century since the men who rode were a little keener, a trifle more energetic, and perhaps somewhat tougher. I well remember at a suburban meeting riding a horse that had jumped hurdles, and, as his owner hoped, might some day, if a variety of things went well, be induced to jump a country ; and it was over a country that I had undertaken to ride him. He did not at all seem to like the obstacles—they took too much out of him. He was one of those who landed with a grunt and stood still, and when we had gone about a mile we came to a fence, in approaching which it occurred to me that several things might happen, the most improbable being that we should arrive safely at the other side. Precisely what did occur I am not in a position to say ; the next thing I recollect was finding myself lying on a bench in the weighing room, whilst over me bent the owner to whom that day I was indebted for my ride. “Here, come on, look



Photo. Rouch.

THE WATER JUMP.

sharp !” he said, as I drowsily opened my eyes, “I’ve got another one for you !” Too dazed to expostulate I submitted to be led to the scale. He dumped the saddle into my lap and declared the weight. I followed him to the paddock and was introduced to the “other one,” who, it appeared, had to have his head wrapped up in a rug, so strongly rooted was his objection to races and race-courses and everything connected with them. Thus enveloped he was led to the post, but emphatically declined to have anything to say to the first fence, up to which he would slide but over which he resolutely refused to jump ; and when the rest were half a mile ahead I ingloriously rode the “other one” back to the paddock.

There was less supervision of the sport, it may be, but so far as one could ascertain the idea that ramps and robberies were continual is quite ill-founded, though of course “things did happen.” Once, it is said, I am afraid with some truth, a well-known qualified rider in Ireland was not anxious to win a steeplechase—was, in point of fact, anxious not to win it—and, following a Scotch jockey who seemed to have the race well in hand, was much mortified and disgusted when the north countryman half pulled up his horse and rolled off into a ditch. “Come out of that !” the Irishman bawled. “I’m no coming oot this half-hour !” was the reply ; and there was nothing for it but for the other to go on and win.

Courses, it may be observed, are what they are, and not always what they are said to be. I was once hesitating as to whether I would go and ride a couple of horses in Anglesea, or remain and

pursue the sport in more accustomed haunts, and asked a well-known gentleman rider, who had previously distinguished himself at the Welsh meeting, what sort of a course it was. He gave the most terrifying account of it. There were enormous banks, he declared, heavily faced with stone ; navigable arms of the sea had to be swum or got over somehow or other ; there were the most deadly drops over several of the fences, and altogether the impression he conveyed was that a bird rather than a horse was necessary to get round. I chose the neighbourhood of the metropolis for my rides ; but next year, feeling a little adventurous, and reflecting that if other men had got round this Welsh course and lived to tell the tale I might do so with luck, I made the journey ; and found that, so far from the description being warranted, it was one of the simplest and easiest little courses anyone could possibly find to ride over.

There is, however, nothing like Liverpool ; and with regard to it, though one hears that it is much smaller than it was, it seems to me very much the same as ever, except indeed that an improvement has been made in substituting fences for the two hurdles over which we used to finish. It was tolerably certain that a tired horse would knock these down, and if he did he was very likely to fall—a circumstance, indeed, fully proved by experience.

The demand for “natural fences” which breaks out at intervals comes usually from people who are not practically familiar with the sport of steeplechasing. It is all very charming in theory,

and can be picturesquely worded by an imaginative writer who does not well understand the subject he is discussing—the good man with an all-embracing eye for a country, on the clever hunter, picking his places and doing wonderful things, is well enough to read about ; but what actually happens ? In the natural fence a gap is sure to be very quickly made. The consequence is that three men ride for a weak place where there is room for one, cannons and hustling being the result. The man who thoroughly knows the course has an enormous advantage over rivals who have not had the opportunity of making themselves acquainted with it ; and if any jockeys should not be “out,” they can do tolerably well what they like, being beyond the observation of stewards and critical spectators ; for a natural country means that the incidents of a race cannot possibly be watched throughout.

The element of chance, again, comes in strongly when it may be said that all the horses do not really jump the same fences. Over an artificial course the obstacles are alike to each, and, except that the man on the inside has not so far to go as the man on the out, precisely the same task is set to every competitor. A course that would please everybody is not in the least likely ever to be made.

A great many lovers of steeplechasing swear by Auteuil, and here there are fences in great variety. The water-jump is really a formidable affair. Two pictures are given of it—one because it shows so well the size and nature of the jump, the other as affording an example of a rather

curious fall. It will be seen what a long way from the fence horse and jockey had got before the result of their becoming unbalanced ended in grief. Here, too, there is an open, unguarded water-jump; one also with some posts-and-rails before it, and a very large species of bank up which the horses gallop and down which they more or less slide.

The Editor asks me to say something about the best horses I have ever known. It is hard to discriminate between the good ones. From all I can gather, and from what I have seen, I should say that Congress must have been one of the very best, and it appears that he was also one of the most awkward to school and the slowest to learn jumping, the story going that he had actually to be pulled over his early jumps with cart ropes, it being impossible to persuade him to go at them. I am told that he was not broken till he was five years old, and from this one might suppose that such delay constitutes a good method of making 'chasers; but, on the other hand, Nationals have been won by Regal, Disturbance, Voluptuary, and others that did service on the flat before they took to jumping, and so one can only say that it all depends upon circumstances. I am nevertheless inclined to think that so many Irish horses do well because they have not been raced on the flat, and steeplechasing is made the real business of their lives. My conviction is that it is action and temperament, not size and shape, that carry weight in steeplechases and win them. I should not pick a long-striding horse, but should prefer an animal with

quick action, who bends his knees, as being more adapted to the purpose.

Seaman was no doubt an extraordinarily good animal. In the National Hunt Steeplechase—the year before he won the Grand National I think it was—he jumped off, speedily led the field by incalculable lengths, and was going so fast that Mr. Arthur Coventry, who was riding in the race, sarcastically observed, “That one will come back before long!” So far from coming back, the further he went the more he seemed to like it; and over the long four miles his followers never got any nearer to him. Cloister was no doubt a model Liverpool horse, and improved with years, as all the Ascetics do. He was a superb jumper, landing so lightly over his fences and being off again without the slightest pause. Manifesto, too, has proved himself to be the grand horse he looks, one of his best features being his hind legs; he stands like a deer with his hocks under him. I rather took objection, when I first saw him, to the fact that he had a mare’s head, but experience has shown how little that means in his case.

In the remaining space I will, very briefly, refer to the editorial request to say something about young steeplechase riders. A horse is put to the business because he “looks like jumping,” and appearances are often to some extent a guide. This is not so with riders, for some excellent ones have been short in the leg, stumpy in the body, and have not at all suggested that they could sit tight. Names will occur to men who go racing in what used to be called the “illegitimate season.” The chief essential may be described as aptitude.

To succeed as a steeplechase rider a man must possess certain natural gifts—nerve, of course, being one of them ; he must have a genuine love for riding over fences ; and thus equipped I can only add that the rest should come from observation, practice, experience, readiness to recognise and amend faults, and a resolute determination to get first past the post.

ASSOCIATION FOOTBALL

BY R. E. FOSTER

IT is not the intention of the writer to enter into a dissertation upon the merits or demerits of professionalism in football ; it is sufficiently obvious that there must be two sides to such a question, as there are to most questions ; but as the matter has been so thoroughly discussed and so carefully considered by eminent authorities during the past few years, it were best left severely alone. The legalisation of professionalism has brought with it many striking changes ; in fact, it has entirely altered the character and main conception of the game ; for from being viewed as it used to be as a game pure and simple to be played by those who could afford to pay for the privilege of taking part in it, football has now in a large number of cases come to be looked upon as a commercial undertaking in which the partakers receive remuneration for their services. This fact alone has been sufficient to undermine the early notions of the game ; the supersession of the “dribbling” game by the “passing” game ; the gate-money question and the introduction of national and local cup competitions have played their part for some years

past, and the consequence has been a complete remodelling of the aspect of our great winter pastime. Whether these changes have worked for good or evil is a matter about which there is bound to be a diversity of opinion, and the writer must not be taken to give his vote unreservedly to the one side or the other; but this he can say, that players of the old school sadly deplore the importation of professionalism into a game which could have held its own so well without it.

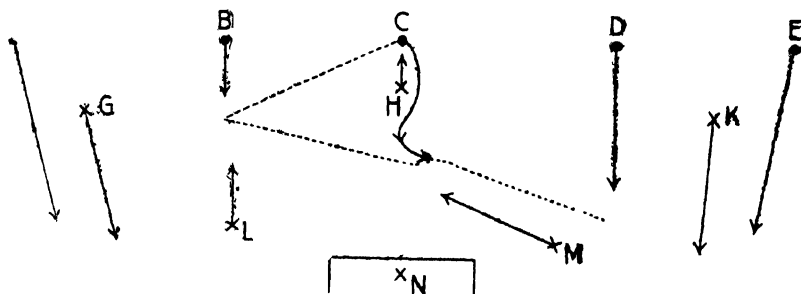
A few points, drawn from personal observation, on the difference of style exhibited by the amateur and the professional might not come amiss. That there is such a difference of style will be readily acknowledged by those who have watched the leading teams of the present day perform. The amateur notion of the game is quite at variance with that of the professional player; the teaching of the public school and that of the professional nursery are entirely opposed to each other; professionals differ in every way from amateurs, not merely in individual style but in tactics both of attack and defence. In watching the forwards of an amateur team perform—by this is meant a team of first-class amateurs—one is instantly imbued with the idea that their one aim and object is the goal, not merely to get there, but to get there as straight as possible. Now the professional is equally desirous to get to the goal, but he seems to evince no anxiety to get there straight; he will turn and twist about; he will, as often as not, go backwards; and although he may eventually arrive at the same conclusion, his evolutions will not so readily commend themselves to the eye of an

unbiased critic. To see a good line of Corinthian forwards playing at their best and executing a combined run through the opposing defence is as pretty a sight as can be witnessed anywhere on the football field, and, what is more, a sight which no one will ever see the best professional team in the world equal. The amateur idea of the forward game is to go down the field in line, the centre-forward acting as a pivot, the other forwards, to use a military term, "taking up their dressing on him," by the left or right as the case may be. The professional centre-forward, on the other hand, seems to say to himself, "I will make for the goal as quickly as I can and leave the others to follow"; his outside wings are well in advance of the rest of their companions, while the two inside forwards are doing their best, by dodging to and fro across the ground, to give their mates, who by this time are supposed to be in a favourable position, a good opening for a certain goal.

But what is the result? Spectators who have witnessed matches at the Queen's Club between the cream of amateur and professional talent cannot fail to have noticed how the Corinthian backs have at once grasped the situation and with little difficulty have placed more than one of the professional forwards "off-side." It may confidently be asserted that professionals more frequently infringe the "off-side" rules than do amateur players; and do not these forward tactics, as described, largely conduce to that result? It will readily be seen, by what has been said, that the amateur forward is a far more striking personality than his professional brother. The amateur centre-

forward keeps his line together as much as possible and his fellows act up to him ; the professional centre-forward acts for himself. In the former case the short passing game, so much in vogue among the leading amateur teams of the day, is made far more easy than in the latter ; in the former each forward knows where to find his leader ; in the latter each player has to trust more to the elements of chance. The amateur centre-forward receives the ball and draws the opposing centre-half-back on to himself ; he then turns the ball over to one of his inside forwards who is lying alongside of him ; this inside forward is then attacked by one of the backs, so he returns the ball to his centre-forward, who has evaded the embraces of the hostile centre-half, so that a brilliant run has thereby been executed, and this, too, without any disarrangement of the respective positions of the forwards. It will be objected that there yet remain the "two wing-halves" of the opposing side, to say nothing of one of the backs ; but it must be remembered that the other back should be "taking" the remaining inside forward, whilst the wing "halves" are watching the outside men, and to desert that position to attack the inside forwards leaves the wing players quite unmarked and ready at any time to co-operate in the combined movement. It is obvious that such tactics as these do not always result successfully ; if they did so, football as a game would indeed suffer ; but, when everything is going on well, the first-class amateur side will not find itself very much behind a professional eleven, and history has told us how often the amateurs have come out on top.

The movement, as above described, is not an easy subject for explanation; perhaps the accompanying diagram will serve to elucidate the main features of the attack more clearly.



A, B, C, D and E are the amateur forwards in line; C has the ball and draws H, the opposing centre-half, back on to himself; C transfers the ball to B, who draws L, the left-back; B gives the ball back to C, who has freed himself from H; M, the right-back, attacks C, who thereupon passes to D, and the movement is executed. The dotted line denotes the passage of the ball.

In this rather complicated illustration the writer wishes particularly to emphasise the "in and out" passing game which is to such an extent the feature of amateur forward play. Now professionals, taking them as a whole, never have adopted, and, so far as can be seen, never will adopt this style, although it proves itself to be so effective and needs so much less personal exertion. The professional method is briefly this: The centre-forward receives the ball and passes immediately to one of his forwards without drawing a single one of his opponents on to himself; he

then goes as hard as he can towards goal till he finds himself, it may be, twenty yards ahead of his fellows ; here he hopes to receive the ball. Sometimes one of his men manages to give him a good pass while in this position, though whether the ball will ever reach him is sure to be largely a matter of chance. Suppose he does gain possession of it ; is he favourably situated either for scoring a goal himself or for enabling one of his mates to do so ? If the backs know their business it may emphatically be said that his position is a hopeless one ; he has no friend near by to whom he can pass, he has two backs to deal with, and even if he has not he is not much better off, because the cunning back has at once risen to the situation, and by going well forward he will place his enemy " off-side " nine times out of ten. And what has been the result of all this ? The whole forward line is out of gear, the opposing backs can afford to neglect the centre-forward as being, or likely to be, " off-side," and each individual forward is marked.

The writer would not wish to convey that this is the universal method of professional attack ; he has frequently seen paid players indulging in the " short passing " game with such success as to make him believe that if they more frequently adopted this style they would oppose even a more formidable front to the enemy than they do by the present system. But that such a complicated method of forward play does exist is undoubted, and, in consequence of it, how strange has been the jumble of amateurs and professionals in the international matches of recent seasons !

To turn from attack to defence. For some reason which is not at first, perhaps, quite obvious, the professional half-back is immeasurably superior to the amateur half-back. The professional is more versatile; he is quicker on his feet, and seems to be more capable of taking in the situation at a glance. The interval between the moments when he is called upon to attack and to defend seem shorter than in the case of an amateur; he does not go in so hard, but he worries more, and has an overwhelming advantage in the use of his head; he keeps up closer to his forwards; often he adds to their complications by coming right into the front line, and he scores more goals off his own boot than does his amateur brother half-back. The easiest explanation of this undoubted fact is that it is pre-eminently in the position of half-back that condition and stamina will tell; it is probable that if a professional half-back came on to the field untrained he would suffer in comparison with the amateur who, by reason of his "going in" harder, would instil a feeling of reverence into the mind of the paid player. It can be nothing else but the assiduous training and constant practice that a professional can, and does, enjoy that gives him the marked superiority over the amateur in the half-back line.

At full-back there is little comparison between the play of amateurs and professionals. Training, again, must play an important part, especially if a player hopes to get through the season satisfactorily both to himself and to his club. There is a tendency on the part of the professional backs to go in for "big" kicking and—what is worse—

high-kicking, better known as "ballooning." This practice can only have two objects : first, to give the side which is in the position of holding the lead an opportunity of wasting time ; secondly, it is an outward sign of "gallery" play. Both are to be equally condemned as against the true essence of sport. Moreover, there are many practical disadvantages in "ballooning." The wind, if wind there be, has more than its fair share of the game ; the ball being constantly dead outside the limits of the field of play, the process of re-starting so frequently does not find favour with the onlookers, who give vent to their disapproval by shouting forth the name of a certain famous riverside town ; and last, but not least, those who indulge in it must remember that they are giving the least possible assistance to their own forwards. There are few greater difficulties to be met with in football than for a forward to gain possession of a ball which is coming down to him from a great height. Amateur backs never forget that there are nine other players in the field besides themselves ; they seem always to be more direct factors in leading up to a goal than do their brethren.

With regard to the goalkeeper there is not much to be said ; he is an extraordinary individual because he never seems to play well or even indifferently ; he always plays *very well* or *very badly*. The best goalkeepers vary very much, and at some times they are more noticeable than at others. There is little doubt that the standard of goalkeeping has risen during the past few years ; fifteen seasons ago there were very few really

brilliant keepers, but now their name is legion. At the present time professional goalkeepers are much to the fore, amateur talent having suffered a temporary decline. The constant practice in which the professional goalkeeper can indulge must account for this; practice is absolutely essential to the training of a good goalkeeper, and this is exemplified by the fact that so many of the crack amateur players of recent years hailed from the Universities, where frequent matches gave them all they desired in the matter of constant practice. Is it not possible, too, that the superiority of the paid goalkeepers is largely to be attributed to the introduction of the penalty kick? Amateurs do not so often have to undergo these penalties, and the professional talent are thereby enabled to steal a march on their unpaid brothers.

As a general rule it may be stated that while an amateur has only one way of scoring a goal the professional has two ways: the amateur must content himself with the aid of his foot, the professional can count on the assistance of the two extremities, his foot and his head. It is quite true that there are many brilliant amateur "headsmen," yet it cannot be gainsaid that the professional here holds the advantage. "Heading" at the present time plays a large and important part in the game; hundreds of goals are yearly scored by means of the cranium, and in the great struggles that take place between paid and unpaid players it is often the advantage that the former can claim to have in the matter of "heading" that decides the result against the amateur eleven. The writer cannot repress a sigh that it should be so; he has vivid

recollections of a wet day, a greasy, lead-like ball, a splitting headache, and an early bed—all occasioned by his attempting to do that which was neglected in his education! But it has all been in vain; such occasions can never be looked back upon with satisfaction. There appear, from personal—often distant—observation, to be two different species of “heading.” The amateur novice heads the ball because he cannot help it; he cannot put his foot where the ball is, else he would gladly do so, and for very shame he cannot turn his back and pretend he never saw it. The ball descends on a stiff and unwilling pate and bounces off in whatever direction caprice will take it, usually towards one of his opponents; he is heedless and even careless of its destination; he can only smooth his scattered locks and implore his fellow men to “keep the ball low.” The professional goes to work as if “heading” was the most pleasant part of the whole game; he watches the ball descend and prepares himself for a great effort; he jumps up to meet it, as if it were a welcome old friend, and, with a deft turn of the head, he steers it in the direction that he wishes, not, as in the case of an amateur, where the ball itself seems to wish. The amateur applies a rigid head to the ball. The professional’s head is a pliant head, and he uses the neck for a pivot, receiving the ball frequently on the side of his head and striking at it as if he were “driving-off” a golf ball. The science of heading is much neglected at our great public schools; there it is looked upon as a useless innovation which can have no direct bearing on the issues of a game. But

this is a mistaken idea. It is all-important that if amateurs are in future to hold their own with the paid players they should be taught not only how to "head," but how to "head" properly.

In drawing the distinctions which he has drawn between the styles of amateur and professional, the writer is well aware that there are many exceptions to the theories which he has propounded. For example, the professional forward will say, "How many times have we made rings round you and given you a sound thrashing?" The half-back will mutter, "We will show you that we can go in hard"; while the full-back will complain that he never indulges in gallery play. The amateur, on the other hand, will object to his so called want of stamina, and during the coming season will use his head in such a way as to belie the criticisms of his detractor. Certainly there are many professionals who do not indulge in gallery play, and many amateurs whose heads show a versatility that is little short of marvellous. But the writer is convinced of the truth of the general outline which he has sketched, acknowledging, at the same time, that an apology is due to many who should not come under the ban of his criticism. Taking the matter as a whole there seems, to use a hunting metaphor, to be more "drive" about a first-class amateur side when they are at the top of their form, more dash and more cohesion, than exists in the ranks of the professional eleven. In short, were it possible to pick the best amateur team which could be got together, put them into strict training, and keep them trained throughout the season, it is practically certain that they would beat the best eleven pro-

professionals that could be put into the field. It is want of training that prevents amateurs from occupying the position which they once held, and would continue to hold, were it possible for them always to be in the pink of condition. It is quite marvellous that they play so well against their highly trained professional opponents as they so frequently do.

During the past season the football world suffered a great loss indeed through the early death of Mr. A. T. B. Dunn. It was not only as a great player that Mr. Dunn was so famous; above all, he instilled into the minds of the young that keenness for true sport which he, their master, so dearly loved. Mr. Dunn represented his country against Scotland and Wales in 1892, and on three occasions was chosen to play against Ireland; he was one of those few players who have figured in the most important matches, both at full-back and at forward, and in both positions he was always conspicuous. His place will be difficult to fill, and his many friends will always remember him as one of the kindest and most congenial companions man could have—in short, as one of nature's gentlemen.

Two of the greatest exponents of the game—G. O. Smith and W. J. Oakley—will probably be seen no more figuring in important contests. The football community have of late come to look upon G. O. Smith as an evergreen; but there must be an end to everything, even to football, and "G. O." has earned a rest if any footballer ever did. The old Carthusian has indeed done wonders for the game, and no player has been more widely known or more deservedly popular than he; he has worn

the International cap on no fewer than twenty occasions, and on most of these occasions he has captained the English team with a skill which it would be difficult to over-estimate. What W. N. Cobbold was to the dribbling game, G. O. Smith was to the passing game ; in fact, it may be said that he was the pioneer of the present system, and certainly by far the ablest exponent of it. As a centre-forward he has never been equalled, and it will be long before his like will be seen again. As a captain, his unrivalled knowledge of the game, his capacity for keeping his men together, and his popularity with his fellow players, made him a born leader, and England, the Corinthians, and the Old Carthusians will have the greatest cause to regret his retirement from their ranks. He was a great tactician and a clever dribbler ; his lightning shots seldom failed to take effect, and some of the goals he scored have become historic ; he had the ball always under his complete control and was very quick at turning. One of his cleverest evolutions was his pass to his outside wings ; he would receive the ball and draw the field in pursuit of him towards the left wing, and when he saw an opening would send one of his long low passes to the extreme outside right, who knew his captain's methods well enough to be on the alert to steal a march from his opposing half-back ; many a goal was scored in this way, the scheme being all the more successful as it was unexpected by the enemy. The rising generation will do well to model their play on the lines of G. O. Smith, the greatest centre-forward the world has ever seen.

Sixteen International caps have fallen to the lot

of W. J. Oakley, and he, too, well deserves the repose which he now contemplates. As a full-back he has had few, if any, superiors. He was a splendid judge of the game, always cool and collected. His speed enabled him to give several yards to the fastest players, and it has often been noticed how quickly he overhauled redoubtable professional sprinters and gave them plenty to think about when he came up with them. But then Oakley was a splendid sprinter, too, and had usually a great advantage over his opponents in the matter of stride, and it was this stride that made him so noticeable to spectators, who cannot fail to recollect how often they have seen him tackle a player from a distance almost incredible ; by this means he was extremely skilful at intercepting the passes of his opponents, and the magnetic attractions of his foot were most bewildering to novices at the game. He always kept the ball low when kicking and played up to his forwards with consummate skill ; his cleverness in heading the ball, in which he shone above most amateurs, frequently pulled him through the hottest attacks on the goal which he was defending. He was a delightful man to play in front of, and his retirement will be a cause of genuine regret.

While on the subject of players who figure no longer in matches of importance, the writer cannot refrain from noticing two whose names were but a few years ago in the mouth of every lover of the game, and whom he remembers having seen performing so splendidly at the end of their careers as to make him wonder what they were like when at the height of their fame. At half-back and out-

side-right respectively, Reynolds of Aston Villa, and Bassett of West Bromwich Albion, can have had few superiors. Neither of them was a young man, but age undoubtedly brought with it cunning, and to these two players must be attributed a very great deal of the success which has attended the efforts of the two Birmingham clubs. Reynolds worked untiringly ; he was always " there or thereabouts." Above everything else he excelled in the use of his head, which was a conspicuous object to the many thousands whose favourite he was ; he never knew when he was beaten, and was in his element in a hard-fought cup tie. Bassett combined speed with cleverness in a wonderful way ; a stranger would have found him a difficult man to play with on the wing ; but it did not take him long to discover Bassett's methods, and when he did discover them he had a more or less simple task before him. A great many players who can lay claim to such speed as the West Bromwich man possessed always utilise that speed in trying to " make rings " round their opposing half-back, and on very many occasions with indifferent success. Not so Bassett ; if he thought that there was the least chance that he might come off second best in his attempt to circumvent the enemy, he got rid of the ball as quickly as possible, but not in the orthodox fashion of sending it to his inside companion lying in a line with him in the direction of mid-field. He did not care about this method, thinking that the centre-half of the adversary might interpose. On receiving the ball he darted down the field till he came close to the opposing " half " and then with extraordinary cleverness he would " back-hoof " to

his inside-right who was following him, not in a line with him, but directly behind him. The inside-right was thus unmarked and able to put quite a new complexion on the attack. It was not the practical utility of this trick so much as the skill with which it was executed that made it so remarkable, and it is only one feature out of the many in which Bassett excelled. He, too, was a great cup-tie player and a glutton for work.

And now to turn to present day players. There are so many great exponents of the game that it is not an easy task for the writer to discriminate between them all, and in confining himself to five—two amateurs and three professionals—he means no injustice to the many others who are in the very front rank. There can be no two opinions about Ernest Needham ; he is *facile princeps* among the wing-halves of the present day. It may well be wondered what Sheffield United would have done without their great International ; he has led them to victory in the English Cup, he has helped to place them at the top of the League, while his position has always been assured year by year in the representative English teams. He makes up for any deficiency in the matter of stature by a superabundance of cleverness ; he is full of pluck, full of resource ; he watches the ball more closely than do most half-backs, and is never slow in making up his mind as to how he will proceed. Playing against him, even the most experienced footballer begins to wonder whether Needham will ever leave him alone ; his energy is marvellous, and want of stamina can never be attributed to him. When his side are making an attack, he is always

to be found close behind his forwards ready to receive any pass they may wish to give him, and he scores many a goal, and that, too, with shots which give the goalkeeper little chance of saving. Many English clubs have a rich supply of half-backs, but Sheffield United is by far richer than them all.

Frank Forman, of Notts Forest, is first and foremost amongst centre half-backs of the day. This is to say a great deal with so many competitors in the field, but the writer is emphatic in his opinion, which is drawn not only from observation but also from experience. Forman is a splendid type of a footballer, being taller than the average professional, which enables him to use his head so advantageously, especially in clearing his own goal. He knows the game well and makes full use of his knowledge ; as a tackler he has few superiors, as a " trier " he has none.

Stephen Bloomer, of Derby County, is in many ways the most brilliant forward of the day and quite indispensable to the English International team. He is very quick in his movements, and has perfect control of the ball. He also excels in one very important direction, namely, his power of adapting himself to the various conditions of the ground ; if the surface is at all greasy, Bloomer is at his best, and he is always one of the most difficult players to tackle. Further, his style of play somewhat resembles that of the amateur brigade, and when he likes he can always play a beautiful short-passing game. But the difficulty with him is that he is not consistently on the same level of excellence, with the inevitable result that the attack

is much disorganised. It is a great pity that a player of such sterling ability should vary in energy and skill.

Amateurs have of recent years rarely been deemed worthy of international honours, but surely no player more richly deserved his cap, and yet was more unjustifiably passed over, than was C. B. Fry during the past season. In choosing his name for a few eulogistic remarks the writer does so solely because he considers Fry to be one of the finest footballers of the day ; it is not because he indulges in the faint hope that by saying a few words complimentary to this great athlete the latter will overlook the shortcomings of a poor and struggling literary competitor. Fry as a footballer is the Fry of every other form of athletics he chooses to take up ; he plays the game because it is a game and not because it is a business ; he plays as if he enjoyed it, and there is no doubt he does enjoy it. His excessive speed, his dauntless kicking, and his sturdy tackling have won for him a reputation second to none amongst the great full-backs of the day. He runs risks, but always with a successful termination ; he often wanders afield, but is always back again should any emergency arise ; nobody appears to evince any desire to run into him ; while the discreet forward on his approach gives up possession of the ball to a neighbouring friend as soon as may be. It is little short of extraordinary that Fry was not included in the English side last season ; he did all the work while his brother back got all the praise. The fact of his not being able to play on the left side seems but a poor excuse for the passing over of such a versatile and famous exponent.

The last name to be mentioned is that of H. Vickers. Like Fry he hails from Repton, which has been the nursery of so many well-known athletes. Vickers is probably the best amateur half-back before the public. And yet there may be many enthusiasts who have not even heard of him ; let them then pay a visit to London when the Corinthians are playing at the Queen's Club, and they will see how half-back play is taught at our great "socker" public schools. They will certainly not go away disappointed. Vickers does not get all the credit he deserves ; critics are apt to decry the ability of amateurs to play the half-back game, but they seem to forget that the life and habits of an amateur do not permit him to train the whole season through. An amateur plays for all he is worth so long as stamina will allow him, but his energy must necessarily be of shorter duration than that of the highly trained professional. So it is with Vickers ; it is delightful to see him before the strain of the game begins to tell upon him ; he is always to the fore, especially when there is a necessity for hard tackling ; untiringly he shadows his opponent, and never knows when he is done. The harder the game the more he likes it, and he is as cheery on the field as his many friends know him so well to be when off it. He is a player upon whom the Selection Committee might well keep an eye, for pluck and dogged determination are two of the main essentials for an International match.

We hear a great deal in these days about cup competitions and the important part which they play in football. But those who know what football

was some fifteen years ago are not loud in their praises of these competitions, nor optimistic as to the future of the game should challenge cups be so freely presented as they are nowadays. Many players, too, of the present time agree that cup competitions should be curtailed as much as possible, introducing, as they do, much of that which is worst in football. But the football enthusiast decries friendly matches; he can get no excitement from them; he likes to see the heroes of his sporting fancy come out "on top" in a struggle for superiority over the heroes of his neighbour; he knows that his favourites are trying their very hardest, and he does not mind any more than they by what means success is achieved, so long as success does eventually come. Can it be seriously put forward that a footballer who plays the game just for the love of it enjoys a cup-tie scramble as much as he enjoys a friendly match? The answer must surely be in the negative. And yet, year by year, cup competitions are on the increase, and friendly matches correspondingly decline. Whether this will always be so is a moot point, but it may be confidently asserted that so long as financial gain can be reaped from the attractions of a cup competition, and there is little such gain to be derived from a friendly match, the cup competition will hold sway. It were far better otherwise, and the writer wishes unhesitatingly to put in a plea in favour of friendly matches; he would like to suggest that amateur clubs should eliminate from their fixture card as many cup competitions as they conveniently can, entering

only for such as are run on the soundest basis of amateurism. They will enjoy their matches more and there should be nothing to mar that good feeling which should always exist between the players.

RUGBY FOOTBALL

BY F. H. B. CHAMPAIN AND E. G. N. NORTH

To obtain a clear idea of the recent changes and developments which have marked the onward march of Rugby football, it is really necessary to carry one's self back to the end of the 'eighties and the early 'nineties, when the four three-quarter system of play, having its origin in Wales, began to spread to England, Scotland, and Ireland.

This change from three to four three-quarters is the fundamental change which has had the effect of causing a revolution in the Rugby game, a revolution both sudden and effective in the land of its birth, but slow and with uneven results in the countries of its adoption : for dependent upon the main change have been the numerous small changes, which in Wales for the most part appeared simultaneously, yet in England, Scotland and Ireland have made exceedingly slow progress. We trust then that it will not be uninteresting to our readers if we note briefly the effect that the main change has had upon forward play, and half-back play ; why it has taken so long to become a successful form of attack in English football especially ; to inquire into its prospects of forming a permanent

feature in Rugby football ; and to conclude by offering some suggestions to young players.

We hold that it is impossible to judge accurately of the football of a country by international matches. The excitement and anxiety which affect players in these matches, as well as the fact that the teams have little or no chance of real uniformity so essential to a team playing a successful game, render these contests no criterion as to the true standard of the football in a country.

Of course there have been brilliant exceptions to this, for finer football has scarcely ever been witnessed than that played by the famous Scotch team of 1900-1901, and the Welsh teams of 1895 and 1899-1900 ; but these are exceptions, and we must turn to first-class club football to find the full effects produced by the change.

We are here encountered by an amazing fact. In the last eight years there have hardly been more successes over Welsh club teams than it is possible to count on the fingers of one's hands. This is perhaps a slight exaggeration, and we refer, of course, to the leading Welsh clubs only, where Rugby football is to be found in its most highly developed condition. Time after time splendid teams representing Blackheath, teams invincible in England, have gone down before the Cardiff and Newport fifteens ; the Universities have fared no better ; and it is only in the last year or two that the Gloucester, Bristol, and Devonport Albion teams have begun to meet with success against their Welsh neighbours—even now, indeed, they look upon a draw as equivalent to a victory.

May we dwell for a moment upon this point, and

ask the reasons for this extraordinary success of Welsh club football over English club football? The causes we believe to be : first, that Welshmen bring more headwork into their play than English men, Irishmen, or Scotchmen. The lessons they have had to learn from their own masters, like Arthur Gould, whom we still hold to be the finest exponent of the new game that the world has ever seen, and the lessons they have had to learn in forward work and tackling from Scotland, Ireland, and England, they have learnt quickly and adapted to their own game ; while in England the old traditions have lingered too long, the heavy “pondering,” if we may be allowed to call it so, forward game has outstayed itself, and the four three-quarter passing game has proved itself a truly difficult lesson to be acquired. In teams where it is much indulged in it is too automatic, too stereotyped, too slow, too innocent of headwork, to be effective. The second reason we would urge is that more time is devoted to the practice of the game in Wales than amongst club teams in England ; players give up their evenings to practising formations in scrimmaging, to passing at quaint angles, and to gymnastic exercises that shall keep their bodies in the right condition for the game.

We were talking quite recently to a player famed in football for scrimmaging, and he told us that whatever the advantages and improvements which the four three-quarter system had introduced might be, yet it certainly had not had the effect of making the packing of the scrimmage easier. The change from nine forwards to eight forwards gave rise, he said, even in the best teams, to some most

curious looking formations ; and there can be no doubt that as an effective wedge for shoving purposes it is very difficult to make eight forwards as symmetrical, and therefore as effective, in working as would be the case if there were either nine forwards or six. We do not know how far this feeling, that eight is not the right number to form a pack, is generally held by Rugby footballers, so that we cannot venture to predict a change in this respect, but we would be so bold as to say that should nine ever be the recognised number of scrummagers again, it will mean that a team consists of sixteen players and not fifteen, for we are of those that believe that four three-quarters have become essential to the game. True, for a long time experts thought that the old system was best ; that with nine good forwards overrunning the opposing eight it mattered little if the opposing side had an extra three-quarter, and no fault could be found with the theory if in practice nine forwards could be found completely to overwhelm eight for a whole game ; but if this superiority were not overwhelming, if the opposing eight being perhaps a little quicker with their feet were able to heel the ball out immediately to their three-quarters, in which case the ball was found in the hands of five opposing three-quarters, skilled in the art of passing and attack—for the four three-quarter system has always been equivalent to five in attack with one half to feed them—then this numerical superiority in the scrum became obviously inadequate.

The pioneers of the new game in Wales had carefully considered the matter, and the forward

evolved by the new style of play was one that heeled quickly back from the scrimmage. The authorities in England, for the reason cited above, after much careful consideration, deemed it advisable to make the alteration, and with this alteration came the modification of forward tactics. The change, now universally accepted, gave rise at the time to a prolonged and heated controversy.

The first change then we notice in the forward play is the introduction of heeling tactics, which were made in order to open up the game. What an effect this has had upon the pace of the game ! The old scrimmages were magnificent, and we regret their absence, but there is something more exhilarating in the short swift scrimmage of the present day ; the hard shoving has still to be part and parcel of a successful pack, but it is not of the long duration it used to be. The rules of the game to-day admit of no waiting. The scrimmage waits for no man. Now the man who is collared has to drop and play the ball at once ; the man who falls to save has to be up immediately, because there also is the scrimmage ; in fact, wherever the ball is for a moment neutral there is the scrimmage, but not the scrimmage of necessarily pack against pack, but only of those who happen to be well up.

Another very interesting dependent change has been the development, for the main part as a defensive measure, of the screwing or wheeling tactics adopted by forwards.

We remember feeling sadly dejected one afternoon about six years ago, and, accordingly, as is our custom in the winter months on such occa-

sions when it is possible, we wended our way to the nearest football match, where the London Scottish happened to be one of the contending sides. We shall never forget the effect that their splendid forward play had on us. They were not strong behind that day, their outsides were continually losing ground, and they were opposed by a strong team; but again and again that afternoon did their brilliant forwards save them by screwing from their own goal line, breaking up on the moment, and dashing down the field, dribbling and shouting the while, to be at length brought up by their opponents' fine defensive play, and to lose their ground again as soon as they endeavoured to complete their attack with the aid of their outsides. It was indeed exhilarating play.

The opening up of the game for the backs by the adoption of the four three-quarter system has led to the opening up of the game for forward play also, for these wheeling tactics count but little unless the pack loosens itself the moment that success has attended a screw. Smartness in heeling, smartness in screwing, smartness in breaking up on the turn of the screw, are nowadays the stamp of a fine forward team; and not these alone, but quickness in handling and passing the ball, quickness in opening out fan-shaped when the ball is once in the loose, are features of good football amongst forwards. Sometimes this conversion, as it were in a moment, of a whole team into a three-quarter line is spoken of as a feature entirely recent, but we well remember witnessing the famous English team of 1893 at Blackheath indulging in some brilliant passing, sometimes as

many as ten or eleven different players handling the ball in one bout, in a manner which must have been alarming to such masters of the art as Gould and Dauncey who were opposed to it that afternoon. But though this form of play, in which every forward for the time being takes upon himself the *rôle* of a three-quarter, is not entirely novel, and in Welsh football it is to be traced from the birth of the modern game, yet it is certainly a feature the value of which has risen rapidly in the estimation of footballers during the last year or two. The Scottish team of the season before last certainly owed much of their success to the manner in which all their forwards gave and took passes in the loose, and to the rapidity with which the scrimmagers broke up from the back for defensive purposes and spread out to tackle; for nowadays there seems this mutual understanding between forwards and three-quarters, so wanting in the old style of play, that if the former are allowed to participate in passing they must also assist the latter in defence, by spreading as rapidly across the field the moment that their opposing halves have successfully opened up the play for their three-quarters.

As we write we read that the law which allowed forwards to hold their feet up in the scrimmage before the ball was put in, a law which has been liable to much abuse, has tended to slacken the pace of the game, and was itself only introduced a year or two back, has been rescinded. We do not doubt that footballers and referees will hail its abolition with joy.

And if a new type of forward is discernible as

the result of the progress of the game in the last decade, so also has the half-back had partially to change his coat. Very quick with his feet as of yore he has also nowadays to be quicker with his hands than the quickest three-quarter. In attack, with his forwards controlling the ball and heeling, he is alone, for then his partner drops back to be in touch with his three-quarters, pitted against his two opposing halves who are hovering above him waiting for the moment the ball shall reveal itself. The moment is not long in coming, the ball comes back clean from the scrum, it is swung out in one motion swift and low to the half-back standing back, and the swifter the pass the greater the opportunities of the half-back to break through: a fine sight this swing out from the scrum's heels, so typical of the new style, so different from anything else in the game, one motion only; but upon that motion depends the success of a three-quarter line. A tenth of a second's hesitation and the opportunity has passed.

The half-back has become more than ever the pivot upon which turns the success of the aggressive tactics of the outsides.

The tendency of half-backs, whose forwards have lost the ball in the scrum, is to violate the rules of the game by adopting offside tactics in their endeavours to prevent the swing out to the opposing three-quarters, and in the West of England we have seen game after game, reckoned to be first-class, spoilt entirely both from a spectator's and player's point of view by the leniency of referees in this matter. Would that they would be more firm in this respect, for constant violation

of the rule of off-side in half-back play makes a game a scramble, and scrambling is without its most pleasing features on a football field. We refer, of course, only to defending half-backs who have overrun the ball, but who make no attempt to regain their right side, and who linger round their opposing half before the ball comes to him. The loss of England's match against Wales this season at Blackheath brings home to us forcibly the folly of such methods with a really competent referee.

Concerning the full-back of quite modern times, we have noticed that more account is taken of his kicking and fielding powers than of his tackling powers, and we hold that the new style of play is responsible for this. The full-back has certainly not the amount of actual tackling to do that he used to have ; and it is as certain that in 1880 Tristram would have been chosen in preference to Bancroft, as that in 1900 Bancroft would have been chosen in preference to Tristram.

Finally, before we conclude with our suggestions to young players, we would note that the tendency of the new system of play is, that while it enhances the value of combination it is less likely to produce the really great individual player, and, with the exception of Arthur Gould, we conjure not with names as we did with those of Bolton, Robertshaw, M'Clagan, Stoddart and Valentine.

HINTS TO YOUNG PLAYERS.

Two pieces of general advice may be given to all young players irrespective of their position in

the field. "Play hard" and "Play with your heads." In that dismal *débâcle* at the Rectory Field in March 1901, apart from the brilliant display of the Scotch three-quarters, the most serious factor in the defeat of England was the weakness and want of determination in the defensive play. When a Scotchman tackled an Englishman he brought him to the ground, whereas the Englishmen as often as not, even when they got fairly up to their opponents, merely touched them and let them go on their way rejoicing. Roughness is one thing, and a thing to be avoided ; vigour is quite another, and of that there cannot be too much. Again, last January in the match against Wales, it was more than anything else the skilful way in which the Welsh halves changed their methods and hoodwinked their opponents which lost England the match—the Welsh halves played with their heads, the English played like automata. And so such advice as follows must always be used with this reservation—that the violation of a recognised method is often the best way to gain the desired end.

PASSING.

Scientific combination is to-day the keystone of success ; no individual play, however brilliant, can hope in the long run to defeat a team of mediocrities all playing into each other's hands. The first point, therefore, to insist on is accuracy in giving and taking passes, for which assiduous practice is necessary. Remember always that passing is a means to an end and not an end in

itself. Merely to get rid of the ball to another player is not in itself a commendable action ; it becomes one when by so doing that other player is enabled to score a try or to gain ground. The player who expects a pass *must keep behind* the player who has the ball. The vital importance of this principle is so obvious that it sounds like a truism, and yet over and over again is it violated even in an England Fifteen. All passes should be hard and low (to aim at a man's waist is not a bad plan), and they should be given and taken when both players are running their hardest ; for the difference in tackling a man already on the go, and one who only gets up his pace after he has received the pass, is simply incalculable. Lobbing passes are worse than useless, to pass slow and high is to court disaster and make success impossible. The player who has the ball must not get it tucked up under one arm, but should carry it rather in both hands. It is easier to aim accurately and throw hard, and the ball can be sent to right or left at will without giving the opposing side any clue as to his intentions. Before passing make sure of using up at least one of your opponents by drawing him to you and away from your *confrère* so as to prevent him bringing off a double *coup*. The psychological moment for passing is *just before* you are tackled, but better too soon than too late, and under no circumstances should you wait to give the pass till an opponent has his hands on you, for this tends to make the pass erratic and inaccurate, and also prevents you from immediately backing up and being ready for a pass back.

TACKLING.

Always tackle low and hard. There are various opinions as to which is the best place to go for a man, some say just below, and others just above, the knees. We rather favour the former, but the knees or thereabouts is a fairly safe place to aim at. Never go at a man higher than his waist unless for some special reason you want to smother man and ball and see your way to do it by going high. Make sure of bringing him to the ground : half and half measures are useless. Do not wait for the man to come to you, but throw yourself at him as hard as you can. You will find that you can cover a wonderful amount of ground with a dive at the man's legs, and the impetus will almost inevitably bring him to the ground. Avoid looking at a man's head ; if you do you will very likely be put off by feints and dodges. The best plan is to fix your eyes on the place which you intend to grip and look at nothing else.

THE THREE-QUARTERS.

In Attack.

The three-quarters should stand in such a position behind each other diagonally—an interval of six to eight yards is a pretty safe one—that they can all begin to run simultaneously the moment the ball leaves the scrum, and so be in position, each in his turn, to take their passes without

having to check their speed at all. All three-quarters, and especially centres, should run as straight down the ground as possible towards the opponents' goal. To run thirty yards across the ground, dodging antagonists as you go, may look stylish and effective, but it is entirely useless and often actually loses ground. If you do this you may at once dispense with at least one three-quarter, for at the very best your wing will be driven on to the touch-line and be practically out of play. As a rule, the centre should pass out to the wing nearest him, but passing back to the other centre is frequently advantageous, or even passing right across the ground to the far wing. Anything rather than be stereotyped. If you always adopt the same manœuvre any decent team ought to be able to checkmate you every time. Another very effective method of attack, one which is far too little tried in England, is punting high, either straight down or across the ground, and following up. This is always bewildering to the defending side, who seldom or never score by it, whilst it keeps the ball loose and gives your own side a chance of scoring which would otherwise be denied them. Of course, for the success of what we may call "irregular tactics," practice is required, and all the team must be on the alert for such developments.

In Defence.

In defensive play the three-quarters should keep as nearly parallel to the ball as possible. Whereas in attack you can hardly stand too far back, in

defence, short of being off-side, you can hardly stand too far up. Each member of the three-quarter line should mark his own man, and the moment the ball leaves the scrum and the attack begins make straight at him, and if he gets the ball bring him down. Never mind anybody else's man, put your own *vis-à-vis* out of action and you have done your duty. Promptness and vigour are absolutely essential. The moment you have successfully disposed of your man, if he has managed to get rid of the ball, you must be off and after another opponent; but, of course, your ideal should be to get man and ball together. In defence kick whenever you get the chance, always remembering that a twenty yards kick which ends in touch is more valuable than a forty yards kick which falls in play in one of your opponent's hands.

HALF-BACKS.

In Attack.

The half-backs really form the pivot of the whole game. To them, more than to any one else, belongs the opening out of the attack for their own side, and the chance of suppressing aggressive tactics in their opponents. In attack the regular plan now is for one half, and usually the same one, to work the scrum whilst the other stands nearly straight behind him, from four to six yards away. The half who is taking the scrum should be well up to his forwards' feet, and the moment the ball comes out gather it and

pass it *in one motion* to his *confrère*. The secret of success, as in wicket-keeping or fielding at cricket, lies in just this combined action. To first gather and then pass loses that fraction of a second which makes all the difference between first- and second-class play.

Having made this initial pass the half's further movements will, of course, depend on how the game develops. As we have said before, the play should not be stereotyped. When occasion offers, the half who is taking the scrum may break through himself, or pass right across the ground to the wing, or when the scrum is fairly near touch to the three-quarter on the blind side. Any such change in method necessarily implies, as in the case of the three-quarters, that the players know each other and are on the alert. Every half-back must be able to pass with equal strength and accuracy to either side, and this is not a gift which comes to most players naturally.

Defensive Play.

In defence the halves must be prepared for hard work and distasteful work. When the opposing side gets the ball they should keep nearly parallel to it in its backward course through the scrum, and the moment it comes out should *both* hurl themselves on their opponent who is taking the scrum. Theoretically this leaves one man unmarked except by the back, but practically it will be found that by the time the ball has got to the wing—if it ever does get there—the halves

will have been able to get across in time. In this tackling, again, quickness is absolutely essential, just as essential as in attack.

If the attack to be defeated is made by the forwards the halves must be prepared to throw themselves on the ground to get the ball. No attempt to get it with the feet, or to pick it up, is likely to be successful against forwards who know their business; the one and only way is to compel them, so to speak, to pass over your body. This requires a certain amount of nerve, and in doing it a half should be careful to have his head *bent away* from the feet of the forwards; in fact, to put himself in semicircular form as nearly as may be. Of course, if the forwards kick hard the half can pick the ball up and punt into touch, and every half should cultivate the short, sharp punt made with players only a yard or so away.

FORWARDS.

A good forward must always bear in mind that neither in attack nor defence is his work done till a try has been scored on one side or the other. He must be perpetually on the move. If his side is being pressed he must be incessantly dashing back to help in the tackling and saving, and it is really marvellous what saves a forward can sometimes effect. 'Varsity players of 1890 will not readily forget W. E. Bromet's performance as the *deus ex machinâ* when disaster seemed inevitable. If his side is attacking he should be well up on the chance of getting a stray pass.

Following Up.

Forwards should always follow as hard as possible. True, nine times out of ten no very striking success is scored, but it is apt to flurry a back and also to curtail his kick if eight forwards are pounding down at him as hard as they can. They should not all run exactly to the spot where the ball will fall, but spread out fanwise across the ground in order still further to circumscribe the opponent's space.

Loose Play.

When the ball is loose the forwards should be in two lines at least, so that if the ball be overrun by the first contingent it may be taken on by the second, and the original first line will follow up behind. Individual dribbling is seldom dangerous, but eight forwards keeping the ball well at their feet tax the resources of any defence pretty highly. Practice is absolutely necessary. At Oxford some ten years ago it was our custom to have little games of 'soccer—four forwards a side, and only dribbling allowed; and it was astonishing with what certainty one got to predict the amazing angles at which a Rugby ball will bounce, and how soon one acquired the art of short and accurate foot-passing—an art which is hardly sufficiently cultivated nowadays.

Hand Passing.

Another very dangerous form of forward attack is the short, rapid hand-to-hand passing. For this the forwards should be nearly abreast, with a not greater interval between them than a yard or two, and the ball should change hands like lightning. We have yet to see the team which can stop this attack when once it is fairly going.

Out of Touch.

Lining out of touch will depend on the position. If you are near your own goal-line—ten to twenty yards away—it is generally advisable to have a five yards scrimmage and not throw the ball out at all. If you are in the neighbourhood of your opponent's twenty-five you should line right out across the ground. The more you are scattered the more chance of breaking away, and at the worst it is better to be tackled in the middle of the ground than on the touch-line. When tackled put the ball down *immediately*—it is quite useless to struggle. With heroic efforts you may make a couple of yards, by which time all your opponents are around you. By putting it down at once and beginning to dribble you have quite a fair chance of doing something useful. Of course, if it is your opponents' throw you must just mark one man and see that you tackle him effectively. On occasion a forward may pass back with success from the touch-line to one of his three-quarters, but it is not advisable to try this often.

Scrimmage Work.

Forwards should form up in three lines, three, three, two, with the present most unpractical number of eight. Their first object is to get the ball in their own feet between the first and second rows. This is essential, and consequently the front row must be ready and clever with their feet to hook the ball back the moment it enters the scrimmage. Having got the ball, what you will do with it depends whether your side is attacking or defending.

In Attack.

In attack you presumably wish your outsides to get a chance of scoring, and will manœuvre to this end by "heeling out" as it is called. The best way to heel out is to hold pretty tight together and shove straight ahead as hard as you can. Always try to get the first shove, and be ready to exert all your strength the moment the ball comes in. The idea is to shove your opponents right off the ball and leave it behind you as you go on. If this proves impracticable the ball must be kicked backwards between your legs. In doing this great judgment must be exercised. If you kick it too hard it is liable to go through the half-back's hands; if it comes out too slowly and gently the opposing half-backs will be up and annihilate your own man. The *via media* can only be obtained by practice. Two points must be insisted on. First, that you must never stop pushing whilst you are

having the ball out; and, secondly, that it must always come out at the back and never at the sides. If you are being pushed give up all idea of heeling at once.

In Defence.

To shove straight against a side about as good and heavy as yourselves will gain you at best but a few yards, and that only by an expenditure of infinite effort. To screw a scrum is not very easy, but it is the only way of effectively relieving pressure. The front rank of forwards should hold each other fairly tight, and the moment they have got the ball should make a rapid half-turn *away from* the touch-line. This will have the effect of momentarily turning the whole of your adversaries' scrum. The two back rows should not make this half-turn but go straight ahead, only holding very loosely and breaking clean away as quick as they can. At the risk of being wearisome we must repeat that assiduous practice is necessary for the success of this manœuvre.

THE FULL-BACK.

The duties of the full-back are too obvious to need much remark. What we have said on the subject of tackling applies to him just as much as to any other player; in kicking he should be able to use both feet and make sure of finding touch; fielding he should be able to acquire by practice. But, in our opinion, a full-back is, as a rule, born and not made.

GOLF

BY HORACE G. HUTCHINSON

THE man who sets out to-day on the perilous adventure of trying to teach the world to play golf has quite a different task before him from him who wrote at the time of the publication of the Badminton Golf volume and the like truly valuable works. At that time it so happened that there were in the world an immense number of golfing infants, infants incapable of understanding the first step alone. They had to be taught to walk *ab initio*. Now, a good many years later, those who were in arms then have learned to toddle. They have toddled, with many a disastrous fall in hazardous places, over a good portion of the vale of tears of which the golfer's path in life is composed, and the teacher in the school of secondary education at which we now have arrived has to expound doctrines more advanced than those which were suited to the infant school. There is another point. When the "Badminton" and so on were written there were hardly any professional players in England. All those, I think, that endeavoured the hard task of conveying some information to the tiro golfer by the deceitful medium of written words, confessed with one accord that the game was far better learnt by a pious imitation of the

best examples, always provided there were such examples to be found. But at the moment of that writing, these examples were very far to seek south of the Tweed, and primarily it was to the many that had not this great advantage that the scribblings of all the scribes addressed themselves. They said frankly that the personal teaching was better than all the written instruction in the world. But the personal teaching was not to be had. Now we have changed all that, and professional instructors and exemplars are almost as many in England as in Scotland—perhaps many more. No golfer, to speak in a rough and ready way, is at a loss to find good examples. Moreover, those who were in the first phase of golfing infancy then have a formed style now. It is to those whose style is formed that the writer of to-day has to address himself, though it is a style that has been evilly formed enough, it may be, by the lessons of the writers of yesterday—let that pass. It is too late to remodel a style, and the best that can be hoped of to-day's lessons is to improve a style already formed and to put some polishing touches to the style and the execution by the suggestion of a few hints that do not come within the curriculum of the primary education.

The average golfer is a man of remarkably little guile, and chiefly it is by giving him certain hints in the direction of greater wiliness and guilefulness that written words can hope to help him. One of the greatest torments to the golfer of the less skilful classes, and relatively a far more severe trouble to him than to the golfer who is a master of his craft, is an adverse or a cross breeze of wind,

and the reason that the golfer of the more skilled kind finds this enemy of his peace so much less troublesome, is far more than he is cleverer, wilier in circumventing the wind, than that he has any particular tricks of muscle at command to obviate its ill effects. That there are tricks of muscle and swing is not to be denied, but they are not very difficult of acquirement when the need of acquiring them is pointed out. But also there are other tricks of a simplicity so obvious that they scarcely deserve that none too honourable name. It does not require a deal of golfing knowledge or art to realise that if the ball be teed high it will fly high, and if teed low it will fly low—that is presuming it is hit somewhat similarly. Also it is obvious that a high ball will go far down wind and that a low ball is best adapted for travel against a wind blowing in its, or in its driver's, teeth. These are observations so obvious that the pen almost blushes as it writes them, but they are points which the indifferent golfer often honours by neglecting.

Then again, it is not so much a matter of golf as of common sense that if the wind be blowing across the line of play from the right your ball will find less direct opposition from the wind if you tee it on the right corner of the tee than on the left, and “contrariwise” if the wind be blowing from the left. It does not need to be a champion golfer nor a champion navigator to realise the value of getting a point or two to windward. But its value often is forgotten at golf. These are the simplest methods in which a golfer dodges, or obtains help from, the wind. There are others that are less apparent perhaps, yet which ought to be apparent,

and which only require to be made apparent to be put in practice. When the wind blows across from the right of the line in which it is wished to drive the ball, then the longest possible ball is driven with a slight curve from right to left, that is to say, with a slight pull. There is a detail with regard to this driving down and against the wind that seldom is considered by the golfer who is guileless, and that is that not only does the down-wind ball carry a great deal farther than the against-wind ball, but also that it runs a great deal further after pitching; and this very much longer run is not merely the result of the wind pushing it along from behind. The wind has its effect, of course, in this way, but it has another and a greater effect in another way. When a ball driven against the wind, at a medium trajectory, has done about all that it is able to do, in virtue of the initial velocity given it, to fight its way onward through the opposing air, then, with its force spent, it falls almost vertically. If the wind be very high, the ball will come backwards many yards towards the point whence it was driven before it touches the ground, but we are supposing (at least I will ask you to suppose) the case of medium trajectory of drive and of medium force of wind. Well, it is obvious and generally understood that if an object falls vertically it does not have much inclination to go forward on the rebound. On the other hand, the ball that is driven down wind is carried on and on, after the initial energy is well-nigh spent, the wind pushing it forward, but yielding gradually to the persistent force of gravity, with the result that the ball comes to the ground at last with a very slanting

direction, which gives it the tendency to bound on, after touching ground in the direction which is indicated by the axiom that the angle of reflection is equal to the angle of incidence. We soon shall be in bunkers if we begin to use these long words, but the point that I want to impress is that the ball played against the wind will fall vertically and therefore dead (using the word in a comparative sense), whereas the ball played down wind is desperately inclined to run. I want to make this point strongly now, because I want to make a strong use of it by-and-by. But for the present I only want to say this about it, that with the wind blowing across the direction line from the right you will get your longest ball with a pull—from the left, with a slice. It has been said already. No matter. Slicing is so easy that it hardly seems worth while telling a man how to do it. It comes naturally to him, like sin. But supposing him to have any inhumanly unnatural bias to virtue, and to straight-driving, it may be as well to tell him that he must hit the ball with a little indrawing of the arms across the body, so as to make the head of the club come across the ball at the moment of impact, precisely in the same fashion as the face of a racquet or tennis bat is brought across the racquet or tennis ball to put on spin. It is not good to exaggerate the slice. You want just a little of it on, so as to let the ball come round kindly and gently with the wind helping it along at the end of its flight. It is well worth while to get a command of this stroke for another reason. I cannot tell you why it is so (although I think I know why, I should get into

fatal trouble if I went off the course to try to explain it), but I know of a certainty the fact, that if you cut or slice a ball in this way it will rise much quicker off the club than if hit in the straightforward way, with the club following right on through the ball; and the practical value of that fact to the golfer is that the stroke may be used with very good effect from behind a hill. You will often see a finished player take his brassey and cut the ball up over a hill with it where the hill was so close in front that the less skilled man would have taken an iron in order to get the requisite loft; and again there is more in it than this. With the cut-stroke, the ball, when it gets well into the air, will begin to curve from left to right. Therefore, in order that the ball may finish in the proper line, you may—indeed you must—start it rather to the left of the proper line, and this permission, or compulsion, to start its flight a little to the left, means that you get a little more distance between your club-head at the moment of impact, and the top of the hill, in which the ball has so much the more time to rise. It may seem that the difference in distance between the ball and the crest of the hill straight in front, and the ball and the crest of the hill, six feet, say, to the left is very little, but it is enough to make a big difference to the ease in getting the ball to rise. It is a difference that is not to be reckoned absolutely, but in proportion to the distance between the ball and the hill's crest, and it will be found that six feet bears a very large proportion to the distance of a fairly good lying ball from any hill-top which it is difficult to get the ball to rise. Of

course, if a ball so situated does not lie well, *finesse* is of no value. You are driven, perforce, to strong measures, strong words and iron clubs, and if you "cannot dig" your case is parlous. The cut on the ball, by which it gets the curve in its flight, is applied ultimately by bringing the face of the club across the ball, as said, and no doubt there are various ways in which this may be done, but it is possible to indicate one that seems the easiest. If you advance the right foot more than in your ordinary stance, stand more facing towards the line in which you mean to drive, and do most of the work of the swing with the left hand—I mean grip a good deal tighter during the swing with the left hand than with the right—these arrangements of the mechanism will help you, I think, to get the kind of stroke you want, that is to say, to bring the club-face across the ball. The arms should be thrown well out from the body as the swing begins to come down, then drawn rather inwards across it, as the club-head comes to the ball.

What horribly inadequate things are words to express meanings! This is a reflection common alike in a bunker, and when one wants to explain to the uninitiated one of the subtleties. It has been bad enough trying to say something intelligible about the cut stroke. The difficulty is much greater when one comes to attempt any description of the pull. The pull is the reverse of the slice. You should, therefore, to accomplish it, do most things differently from the methods for the slice. For the pull you will have your right foot behind, rather than before, its normal position for the ordinary drive. You will grip tighter with the

right hand than with the left, and you will face just slightly less towards your direction line than in the straightforward stroke. No doubt for the pull you require to have the club-head travelling, at the moment of impact, across the ball, just as in the sliced stroke, only in the opposite direction, but it is a subtler business altogether, both to do and explain. You want to have your arms well out away from you at the moment of striking, not coming in towards the body, as in the slice stroke. It is a flatter stroke, too, with the club coming more away from behind the back and not so much down from above the shoulder as in the other stroke. The club head wants to come to the ball rather with the circular motion of a scythe when a man is mowing. Then, at the moment that the club head meets the ball, there is a little turn over of the club face given by a slight turn over of the right hand, so as to bring the back of the hand uppermost. All this, I know, sounds fearfully difficult and complicated, and of course it is not easy. But the stroke comes to one with practice and a little attention. You begin at length to *feel* that you are getting the idea of it—of the flat circular sweep and the turn over of the right hand just at the psychological moment. When you do get the feeling, then you will say it was worth all the pains. There is a delight and a sense of mastery. The value of the stroke is great. You can use it not only for getting the pull which helps to get the distance when the wind is from the right, but also if you have acquired this stroke you have virtually acquired the indispensable art of keeping the ball low against the wind. For just as it was a feature

of the slicing stroke that it sent the ball up quickly into the air, so, conversely, it is a great feature of this pull stroke that it sends the ball away skimming low. When the wind is hard and dead against you, you may keep the ball yet lower by standing a little more in front of it, and turning the face of the club over a little more, but virtually you have done all the difficult part of learning how to keep the ball down by learning that little turn over of the right hand. That is the hard knack to catch.

We said, a little while back, that the reason that the ball travelled so far after touching ground when the wind was behind, and comparatively so little way when the wind was ahead, was not only that the wind was pushing it along all the time in the one case, and fighting against it all the time in the other, but also that the direction of the wind affected so strongly the angle at which the ball touched the ground and, consequently, its disposition or indisposition to go on travelling in its present direction of motion. Hitherto we have been discussing only the cases in which we wished to get as much distance as possible, and this is done, both in case of the pull and of the slice, under the circumstances considered, by getting the wind to help the ball along towards the end of its flight. But there are also a great many strokes in which the wind behind the ball is a hindrance rather than a help, because the stroke becomes very much easier in proportion as the ball can be relied on to pitch fairly dead. Such are all cases of approach strokes. We all know how much easier it is to lay our approaches near the hole when the green is very sodden, and again how much easier when we

are playing against wind than when down it, the chief reason being that the ball falls rather vertically when the wind is against it and relatively at so low a trajectory when the wind is behind. When we can rely on the ball falling nearly dead, we play with much more confidence and much more success. We cannot, as we play up to the hole, determine the condition of the ground, and make it more sodden than it is, but what we can do is to make the wind virtually against the ball, although it may not be blowing straight from the hole to the ball. This again we may contrive by the slice and the pull, only they will be used conversely to the method of their use when the object was to get the ball to travel far after pitching. In these cases, where the object is to get the ball to fall as dead as possible, with the wind from the right, you will play for the slice, so as to bring the ball curving round into the wind, and analogously, when the wind is from the left, you will play for a pull, so as to put the ball, as before, up into the wind.

Perhaps these are very obvious counsels, but we find many golfers taking no notice of the strokes that they suggest. It would seem almost as if the possibility of such strokes was not revealed to the intelligence of the average golfer. These strokes will be played with mashie or approaching iron, but they are not played very differently from the strokes with the longer clubs that are played to the like effect. There is the same alteration in the stance in each case, the same bringing the club face across the ball, in the one way for the slice and in the other way for the pull. With the iron or mashie approaching you can do more in aiding the

curve to right or left by hitting the ball on the heel or toe of the club than you can in the longer strokes where it is an object to gain distance. In the latter you lose more distance than you can afford to lose by hitting on the heel or on the toe, at least if it be more than the smallest fraction to the one side or other of the true point of impact. But with the approach strokes a few yards thus lost are not a matter of importance because you can make them up by a little harder hitting. To a man who has acquired this pull or slice, or both, in his approaching there are many shots up to the hole that become quite simple, whereas to the man who has not them at command they are full of almost insurmountable difficulty. Imagine the case of a keen green, a bunker to loft before you came to it, and another bunker on its left. Across the left bunker, and so across the green, a furious wind is blowing. What, I would ask, is a poor man who has not the pull approach at his command to do? The answer is that he has nothing to do, he is at an *impasse*. He may allow for the wind, indeed, so nicely that his ball will fall only just a foot to the right of that bunker to the left of the green. But what will happen to the ball then? Unless the forces of nature are arrested miraculously in its favour it will be carried, by the strong wind, right across the green, passing close, it may be, by the hole, but not stopping until it is far away to leeward of it. The man who has not the hooked approach at his command is in a parlous state indeed when he is brought to face a situation of this nature; but by use of the hooked approach the problem becomes much less formid-

able. As the ball comes round, with its hook, it brings up in the teeth of the wind, hanging there, and falling nearly vertically, so that there hardly is any run on it at all. It is not necessary to go into the details of the converse case, when the wind is from the right, and, in order to get the dead falling approach, it is good to use the slice stroke. The conditions under which it will be most valuable are just analogous, *mutatis mutandis*, with those in which the pulled approach is useful. And I will not merely argue in favour of these graces of golfing execution from the base utilitarian standpoint only. They are very valuable indeed from this standpoint, as the above remarks indicate very clearly, but their value is greater than this in the increased pleasure that you have in the game when you feel yourself becoming master of more mysteries. Billiards may have been a very good and pleasant game in the days before people put chalk on the cue tip and played with side, but it cannot have had as much variety or capacity for giving delight. And as for the learning of these subtle strokes at golf, I think they are not so difficult as they sound when they are described in indifferent English. The best gift that the written word on these matters can give to the ignorant is the intimation that there are such strokes, and that they are of such value. If the learner can realise what it is that he has to try for, he soon will acquire it. The trouble is that a great many hammer away, not without much pleasure to themselves, throughout a long golfing life and never realise that such strokes exist. And if they do realise them, as done by the professors, they are apt to

regard them as quite beyond the scope of their own performance—a cowardly conception and an unreasonable, for the subtle strokes are acquired not to make the game more difficult, but, as I have tried to show in the imagined cases above, in order to make some of its difficulties vanish. Be it said, by way of caution, that at the first the learner of the hooked approach is apt to find the ball flying rather further than his expectation and so to over-run the hole. The hooked ball is always a better goer than the sliced ball, except where the slice is gaining the favour of the wind ; but this is an error that is easily corrected. If all golf were as simple it would be a less annoying game.

There is, in these later days, a tendency on the part of the golfer of moderate ability to return to the old fashion of play with many spoons, in the stead of cleeks and irons, and even to adopt the “baffy” spoon, preferably to the mashie, for short approach shots. It has been said that the use of the baffy is a confession of incapacity to use the iron ; but it is far better to make such a confession as that than to go on in the abuse of the iron. In fact, the best club is the club you can play best with, and there is a straightforward simplicity about the approach stroke with the spoons which makes them much better instruments for golf in the hands of the unskilful than the irons and mashies, which require rather a special handling. Lately an impetus has been given to the tendency of using spoons in preference to the irons by the inventions of Mr. Mills, with his aluminium spoons, which have the durable qualities of the iron-headed clubs, combined with the shape of the wooden heads.

They are capital clubs. They will not drive the gutta-percha ball quite as far as the same shaped and same weighted heads in wood, but for the shorter approach strokes that does not matter ; and though the drivers of aluminium will not get as long a shot with the gutta-percha as the wooden drivers, yet they seem to me to drive the American Haskell balls just as far as the wooden-headed drivers will send them.

There may seem to be some kind of contradiction in suggesting to the golfer, on the one hand that he should set himself to the task of learning certain subtleties, such as the slice and hook, both for long shots and for approaches, and then telling him, in almost the same breath, that he may improve his game by cultivating the greater simplicity and ease that is to be found in using spoons in place of irons. I am a firm believer in simplifying the game so far as possible, yet at the same time I think it is good to have the subtle strokes at command, on occasions. The indifferent but showy amateur billiard player will commonly play with a good deal more side and screw than John Roberts, but that is not to say that when the occasion comes for a stroke requiring a deal of screw John Roberts will not be far better capable of playing such a stroke than the amateur. That is part of my answer to my captious critic. A second part is that I hardly should be disposed to commend the use of the spoon, in preference to the mashie, for approaching, to the man whose youth and general adaptability to games warranted him in an ambition to rise to anything like the top branches of the tree. But there are many who have no such warrant,

and some who even are able to realise that they have none. It is to such as these especially that I would commend the spoons. The spoon, with its wide flat sole, slides on when it strikes the ground. The iron club, with its narrow lower edge, sticks in the ground and stays there, and this sticking is the cause of the fearful "foozles" that the indifferent player sometimes makes, and sometimes falls into a habit of making, in his iron approaches. His way in life will be made much easier for him if he can but possess himself of the necessary humility to use the spoons instead of the iron clubs for this purpose. The school in which I learned, or tried to learn, to play my approaches, was an iron club approaching school, and therefore it may be that I have a prejudice in the favour of the irons, but it does not seem to me as if quite the same clever things can be done with the "baffy" spoons as with the irons and mashies, or, at least, it seems more difficult to me to do them ; but for that very reason the spoons are easier to play with. The stroke is a straightforward one, there is no cut across the ball. They can be used to take the ball quite clean, without any lifting of the turf, although, again, it is quite possible (and it is thus that Mr. Hilton plays with the aluminium spoons) to jerk with them and so to take quite as much turf as with an iron club. There is one stroke for which I think that the mashie or lofting iron has a special advantage, and that is for cutting the ball out of a cup from which it is wanted to make the ball fall dead. For an approach shot of this kind it appears to me that you should have a club-head with a narrow lower edge to clip in between the back lip

of the cup and the ball, and it is pretty obvious that this clipping in can be better done if you play to slice the ball, that is to say, bring the club-head down across the ball, rather than straightforward.

The attention of golfers who are learning the game is not always concentrated on the right points, and this observation applies to some who have been learning it for a good long while. They attend to hitting the tee shot, but it is not, in point of fact, the correct hitting of the tee shot that is the most essential thing in the game. I will make an exception—at Sandwich, exceptionally, the drive from the tee is of more importance than any other part of the game, but that is one of the exceptions that prove the rule, and generally the fact is held to be rather to the discredit of the fine Sandwich green as a test and a school of golf. Golfers will also practise the short approach stroke and the putting, and they are right in practising such important details. But there remains one stroke which perhaps is more important than any of them, and yet which is less practised than any, and this is the long approach stroke up to the hole—I mean the full bang with driver, brassey, driving-mashie, cleek or driving-iron, that is intended to send the ball up to the green. I do not think there is any doubt that in nine cases out of ten in which a first class and a second class player are brought together, the detail of the game in which the former shows his superiority is in putting these long approaches close up to the hole. In all the other parts of the game there is a tolerable equality all down the list of the first two or three classes in golf, but when you hear it said of a man “ he puts his second shots

very near the hole," you may be sure that the speaker is a critic who knows what points he ought to criticise and that he is giving the highest praise that is to be given. So many golfers do the rest of the game well enough, so few, comparatively, are good at this. There is a temptation, when practising, to put the ball up on a tee and hit it hard with the driver for the fun of seeing how far it will go. This is fun, but not business. Of course, practice, perpetual practice, is the only royal secret that shows you how to play this "second shot," as in general terms it is called, with brassey, cleek, or whatever it may be. But this, I think, is a useful hint, that it always is difficult to "spare a full shot," as it is called, somewhat paradoxically. To take a half-shot with any club, even with a long club, is far easier. By half-shot I would be understood to mean a half-swing. And often, especially against the wind, it is the better part to take a half-swing with a longer club, preferably to a full swing with a shorter, for the reason that most players find it more easy to keep a ball low off a half-shot than off a full shot. But in other cases, as for instance where the shot seems to you just a little too short for a full brassey stroke, you generally will do better to take the cleek, say, or driving mashie, than to attempt any easing of the full swing with the club that is likely to take you just a little too far. The result of using the too powerful club in this way almost invariably is that you check the swing, pull in the arms, or commit some crime that is punished by deviation of the ball into undesirable places. The swing in which you are not afraid to let your arms follow freely

through, after the ball is struck, is the swing that is far more likely to send the ball with the correctness that is so peculiarly valuable in the case (that of approaching the hole from long range) which we are considering. If a man is fairly to be designated as one who "puts his second shots very near the hole" he is not a very bad golfer, no matter what all the rest of his game may be.

LION SHOOTING

BY LORD DELAMERE

PART I

So many men from England and India now visit Somaliland for shooting that the game is continually retreating farther and farther from the coast. There are still plenty of antelopes, leopards, pigs, etc., in fairly accessible places; but districts which only a year or two ago were full of lions and elephants are now entirely shot out—to get anything like a big bag of lions one must go to a tract of undisturbed country. Records of sport at defined periods may therefore perhaps be thought to have a special interest. In the winter of 1891-1892 and the summers of 1893, 1894, and 1895 I stayed in Somaliland for the sake of the shooting; and, in compliance with a request from the Editor of this Volume, I have tried to put together some anecdotes and incidents taken from the diaries which I kept during my residence in that country. I propose to devote the present chapter to lions, lion-shooting being to my mind the best sport to be obtained in Somaliland, because it does not stop one from shooting antelope for meat, as in an

undisturbed country lions do not take the smallest notice of the sound of a rifle.

I shall not occupy space by instructions as to the fitting out of an expedition, as Captain Swayne has done this very thoroughly in his *Seventeen Trips through Somaliland*. The Somalis make excellent camp servants. I have always found them wonderfully cheery, pleasant people to deal with, and for natives very trustworthy. Only once have I had anything stolen, and then the thief was caught by my head man before I knew anything was missing.

The Somali, like the Arab, is nearly always a gentleman to talk to, but also, like the Arab, he is avaricious and grasping in money matters. A Somali who has been born and bred in Aden as a rule has nothing to recommend him.

To get good sport in Somaliland the first thing is to find a good shikari. There are excellent men to be found with care and good luck, but a great many who are absolutely worthless. In addition to others, I have always had one man, Abdulla Ashur, as head shikari. Besides being an agreeable companion, he is far and away the best finder of game I have ever seen in the country. His pluck is undeniable, and the only difficulty I have had with him is to prevent him going where I did not care to go myself. This may sound exaggerated praise of a native, but among other things he grappled a lion which had knocked me down, being severely mauled before he got the brute off, so that I naturally entertain a very high opinion of him. Owing to his skill in tracking I have only lost one wounded lion out of many that were hit, and that was not his fault, as the blood stopped

almost directly and the ground was nothing but stones for miles. This speaks for itself, as any one who has shot lions knows how difficult it very often is to recover a wounded beast without dogs.

I only once had the help of dogs after a wounded lion. In 1893 T—— and I were camped down in the Haud among the Eidegalla villages under Sultan Deria. One day I went out to try to get some meat for the natives, accompanied by a warrior called Hassan on his pony. I had just shot an oryx, and we were cutting it up, when the smallest Somali I have ever seen came running up to say he had just observed five lions asleep under a tree close by. This man belonged to the low-caste tribe of Midgans—people who do not live together in one tribe, but are scattered all over Somaliland in different villages, where they are chiefly engaged in killing antelope for meat, other Somalis as a rule thinking it beneath their dignity to do anything but go out occasionally on looting expeditions. Midgans are armed with bows and poisoned arrows, and each of them carries a knife. Until quite lately no other Somali would use a bow, but now it is quite a common thing to meet a native belonging to one of the other tribes who has discarded his spears for a bow and quiver of poisoned arrows.

Lions are occasionally killed by Midgans, but the poison on the arrows cannot be very strong, as frequently, after being sick two or three times, the lion seems to recover and get away. Captain Swayne gives an account of the way in which these Midgans hunt the oryx with their dogs. But to get on with my story. The little Midgan carried a bow nearly as long as himself, and was followed by

about a dozen small native dogs with curly sterns and prick ears. These little curs were wonderfully broken. The man trotted off in front of us, and when he got near the place where he had seen the lions he simply put out his hand, and all the dogs lay down in a bunch and never attempted to follow on after us. Then we stalked carefully towards a big thorn-tree rising above the bush. This was where the lions were said to be. The bush was very open, and when we came in sight of the tree the lions were just decamping. There were four of them, not five—an old lioness, and three lions perhaps not quite full-grown, and with very little mane. Hassan had followed close behind on his pony, so I shouted to him to try to keep his eye on the lioness, and ran on myself with Abdulla after one of the lions. This one did not seem much inclined to run, and after a short burst I managed to get a bullet into him somewhere just as he disappeared into some thick bushes.

At that moment we caught sight of another lion trotting along parallel to us about two hundred yards off. The wounded one was keeping up a continuous low growling in the bushes, so, thinking he would not get far away, we ran to cut off the other. He turned off when he caught sight of us, and we had a long, stern chase after him, as a result of which I was so blown I could not hit him, although he was lobbing along not more than a hundred yards ahead. At last I did get a bullet in his flank. He at once turned, and, growling fiercely, came bounding a few yards towards us as if trying to make up his mind to charge. Whether he would have done so or not

I do not know, as my second barrel caught him on the point of the shoulder, bringing him on to his nose, and before he could recover himself I put in another bullet from my second rifle and finished him.

It is more than likely he would not have charged, as I have several times seen a lion make this kind of demonstration when slightly hit, more, I think, to try to frighten his assailant than anything else. A lion that really means charging up comes quite silently, galloping very fast along the ground like a dog.

While this was going on, we could hear Hassan shouting in the distance, so now we ran off towards the sound. When we started the shouts seemed to be almost stationary, but as we ran they got further and further off till at last we could hear nothing. We then turned to go back for the wounded lion. As we got near the place where we had left him, we could hear a tremendous row going on, men shouting, dogs barking, and the unmistakable grunts of an angry lion. Running up, we found the lion, with his shoulder broken, standing in a bush surrounded at a respectful distance by the little dogs. They kept up an incessant yapping, and every now and then the lion would make a drive at them, but they were much too quick for him with his broken shoulder, and were at him again directly he retreated to the bush. The little Midgan and one of my men were close by, yelling with excitement. As I walked up to try to get a shot without hitting one of the pack, the lion took no more notice of the dogs, but kept his eyes fixed on me. I never saw a lion look nastier, but I suppose his broken

shoulder had sickened him, and I shot him without difficulty. The Midgan, after calling his dogs, had run on after us, and had come on the wounded lion. We skinned this beast, and the little Midgan rather amused us, as he got so very much annoyed because his dogs would not eat some great chunks of raw lion-flesh he cut off and offered to them. We were on our way to skin the other lion when we met Hassan looking rather sorry for himself. He said that the lioness had trotted along quite quietly at first, and he had brought her round in a circle towards the place where he had left us, riding alongside her, and shouting to let us know where he was. Unluckily she crossed the track of the wounded lion, and after smelling at the blood she became perfectly unmanageable, making off at a gallop and charging him whenever he got in front to try to turn her. At last she had gone into thick bush on some hills, where he had lost her. When we had skinned the other lion we made a cast to try to pick up the fourth, but could make nothing of him—I never got this lion, although he killed one of our donkeys the next day.

We had not been back in camp very long when T—— came in, saying he had run across a lioness in the hills, which he was sure was the one we had seen, as she was very angry. She had run into some long dry grass, and had charged out towards his men, when they were going up to light it. T—— was very unwell with fever at the time, and, although he had two or three shots, he was so shaky he could not hit her, and at last felt so ill he had to give her up. His shikari told me the lioness was very much beat from being

badgered about in the sun, and he was sure we could find her. I owed her one for frightening Hassan, so we started at once, Hassan not coming, but sending a relation of his on the same pony. After a short ride we got to the place, and found the tracks going into a long strip of high feathery grass. We cast all round and could find no tracks coming out, so decided to burn the patch. It was about two hundred yards long and perhaps fifty broad. I could not command the whole of it, so I told the men to light it at the top and along one side, and Abdulla and I took up our station half-way down the other side, about thirty yards out from the edge. At the bottom end I put the warrior on the pony to see if the lioness broke that way. Almost directly the grass was lit a big spotted hyena blundered out and came within a few yards of us, but the great part of the patch was burnt before there was any sign of the lioness. Then I caught sight of her slinking along through the thin grass at the edge of the strip going towards the bottom end. She did not see us, as we were rather behind her and standing quite still.

When I shot she seemed to stumble forward, but recovering herself caught sight of the man on the pony, and before I could shoot again she was half-way towards him, going like a flash. He had not seen her when I shot, as she was hidden by the grass, and by the time he got his pony turned round and started she was close to him. He galloped straight away from me, and I dared not fire at the lioness for fear of hitting him. For nearly two hundred yards it looked any money on the lioness. She got right under the pony's tail,

but did not seem to know how to strike, and at length, to my great relief, the pony began to gain on her. She at once pulled up, and turned into a bush, where she lay down stretched out at full length, panting. Running up, I shot her before she could prepare for another effort. My first bullet had gone through the muscles of the forearm just below the shoulder, and being solid had only drilled quite a small hole. The natives said that the reason she could not catch the pony was because a lion cannot spring without a momentary halt to crouch. If this is so, a pony could always get away from a lion galloping straight behind it, unless the pony was such a bad one that the lion could come alongside. On two or three occasions I have been chased myself in the open grass plain, but have always got a fair start, and my pony has had no difficulty in keeping out of the lion's way. A pony boy of mine was very nearly caught one day in the open. He was trying to round up a lion, and got rather too close to it on a tired pony. He only just got away. This same lion afterwards chased me and two or three of my men for quite a long time. Unless a pony falls down I am sure there is nothing to be feared from a lion in the open, if one gives him a pretty wide berth so as to get a start when he charges. As a rule the lion will give up the chase after a hundred yards or so. This pony of Hassan's was about the best I ever saw in Somaliland. He would not put a price on it, because he said he could make quite a respectable income by making looting expeditions on its back, as it was so fast nobody could catch him.

A year after this I met Hassan again, and asked

him how his pony was. He said it was very well, but that he had very nearly lost it a short time before. He had been down in the waterless plain on a looting expedition with some other Eidegalla warriors. After a successful raid they split up to avoid pursuit, and Hassan was on his way home driving some of the looted camels in front of him. It was a very dry year, and although it was the rainy season, he had been unable to find any water in pools to give his pony. The result was that, having been ridden hard for two or three days with little or no water to drink, the pony got beat, and at last lay down, about twenty miles from the wells they were making for. No amount of stick would get it on its legs again, and Hassan was in despair. He knew there were no villages at the wells where he could get vessels in which to carry water back to the pony, and it seemed as if nothing could be done to save it. At last he thought of a plan. Driving the camels at top speed to the wells, he gave them as much water as they could drink, and then hurried them back again. He found the pony where he had left it, in a very bad way, but immediately proceeding to kill and cut open the camels, he took the water out of their stomachs and gave it to the pony, which revived sufficiently to struggle on to the wells. After a few days' rest it completely recovered. Hassan added that he could very soon get some more camels, and that he would rather have cut the throats of a hundred than have lost his pony. This story shows a great deal of resource in a native, but the life a Somali leads makes him wonderfully quick at finding a way out of a fix of this kind. It was very lucky the pony

was not killed by lions or hyenas while Hassan was away.

Just before Hassan's pony was so nearly caught by the lioness we had a pony killed by lions, the man on its back escaping rather cleverly. At that time T—— and I had two separate camps, six or seven miles apart, each of them on the edge of the Marar Prairie, on a bān or open grass plain many miles in extent. This was the best place for lions it has ever been my luck to come across. Hardly a day passed that lions were not seen by T—— or myself, very often right out in the open, miles from any bush. It was cool, cloudy weather while we were there, and the lions seemed to do most of their hunting in the day-time. There were so many, and they were so bold, that the Somalis were quite nervous about walking through the bush in the day-time. T—— and I between us shot twenty-four lions in this place in little over a fortnight. Besides lions there was more game than I have ever seen anywhere else. Large herds of hartebeeste, oryx, and Soemmering's gazelle were to be seen feeding in every direction. Besides this, in the open there were a good many ostriches and a few hunting cheetahs. In the bush at the back of our camps were Waller's gazelles, leopards, warthog, and innumerable dikdik and birds. In the rocky hills I saw several klip-springers.

One morning T—— was roused by his natives, who told him that three lions were just crossing a strip of open ground within a hundred yards of his camp. Before T—— was ready, two or three of the men jumped on ponies and galloped after

the lions—three very fine males with manes—which were by that time making off. The natives meant to try to keep them engaged till T—— had time to get his rifle and cartridges and catch them up. The lions were galloping among scattered mimosa scrub, making for the thick bush beyond ; and with an object in view a lion can get along at a very fair pace in the cool of the morning. One of the men got a start of the others, and was rapidly overhauling the lions, when he lost sight of them for a moment. He galloped up to the bush where he had last seen them, and, as he rounded it, one lion came at him from behind and the other two from in front. They had got sick of running and had waited for him. The native did a very clever thing. There was no chance of getting away by galloping, as he was regularly hemmed in, so, half-checking the pony, he put his foot on its wither, and jumped right into the middle of a mimosa bush. Almost as he jumped the lions knocked the pony over, and when T—— came up he found them eating it, taking no notice of the mounted men close by. T—— hit one, and while he was following it up the other two gave his men the slip. These two lions were decidedly out of luck, as I got them the same night.

That morning a lioness killed a heifer close to my camp. I had already seen her tracks several times, but they had always led us on to some stony hills where we had lost them. This time the same thing happened again, so, thinking she would probably come back that night to finish the heifer, we decided to sit up for her. We therefore made

an enclosure of thorns under a mimosa bush close by. The flat top of the bush came down to meet the thorns built up all round, and one could hardly tell the whole thing was not a bush. In the front was a hole to shoot through, and at the back we left an opening so that we could get inside. After this we returned back to camp, and in the evening after dinner went off again, taking my bedding on a donkey. This donkey was also to serve as a bait, for the natives had cut up and carried away the heifer. We tied the donkey by one foreleg, almost touching the fence of our zereba, and after shoving in my bedding, crawled in through the opening at the back. Two men who had come with us crammed this hole up with thorns, and then went away, talking loudly to make the lioness think that all was safe if she were anywhere near.

After looking about for some time I made out the lioness slinking along behind our bush. She would not come up to the donkey, but lay down some way off under a bush. There was no hole on that side, so I could not shoot with any certainty; and at last, getting sleepy, I lay down, telling Abdulla to keep his eye on the lioness, and wake me if there was any chance of a shot. I had not slept long when he touched me, at the same time putting his hand over my mouth to prevent me from calling out on being suddenly woke. I got up on my knees, looking out of the hole, but for a moment I could not make out anything.

It was a lovely night, but even by the brightest moonlight a lion is not a very easy thing to see. There was an open glade in front of the donkey,

and at last, standing right out in the open, I saw two lions. They seemed as if they could not make out why the donkey did not run away, and stood quite still looking at him. As I watched they suddenly started, and came racing towards us side by side like two enormous dogs. When the lions got up to the donkey they did not seem to stop in their rush, but donkey and lions all went down with a crash together. How they actually knocked him over I did not see, as at the moment I drew back my head involuntarily, because, although we were absolutely safe inside a mass of mimosa thorns, the whole thing felt unpleasantly close. When I looked out again I could easily have touched one of the lions, which was standing with its forepaws on the donkey and its hind-quarters within a few inches of our fence. The other lion was standing on the far side looking me straight in the face ; but I am sure he could not see me, as the moon was right in his eyes, making them shine as if they were alight. I could only see his head, as the other lion's body was in the way, so I determined to give the one nearest me a shot. There was very little of him to be seen except his hind-quarters, but he was so close I was sure the bullet would drive right through him.

As the rifle came up to my shoulder it touched a branch, which seemed to make a crack like a pistol shot, and the lion turned half round to see what it was. At the same moment I fired, and he fell, rolling over and over against the fence, and roaring loudly. Thinking that in his struggles he might carry away some of our zereba, I gave him

two more shots to finish him. As I shot the second time, the other lion, which had run back a few yards, came and stood close to the donkey, looking straight towards us. I pulled at his chest directly I was loaded. He plunged forward, hitting the corner of our zereba, then swerved off, and we heard him crash into a bush, where we found him stone dead in the morning. The bullet had gone through his heart. These two lions were very fine specimens. One had a very thick, almost jet black, mane; the other had a lighter mane, but for a wild lion very thick. There is no doubt these were the lions T—— had seen, as the next day, riding over to visit him, I followed their back trail to within a mile of his camp. They were in the best of condition, but empty, so that may account for their boldness.

Shortly before this I shot three times at a lion which was eating my donkey. The night was as dark as pitch. The lion took very little notice of the first two shots, although one of them hit the donkey in the ribs. The third shot was a very lucky one. The bullet hit the donkey in the stomach, and, going through, caught the lion at the junction of the neck with the chest, killing him on the spot. One would think that a 577 rifle blazed in his face at about five yards would frighten any lion. This one had killed and eaten a sheep the night before, taking it from the same village where I sat up for him.

The two foregoing stories would seem to show that a large percentage of the lions killed in Somaliland are shot at night over a bait. This is not really so, as it is quite a chance if a lion passes

the place where you have a donkey tied up. Night shooting, to my mind, is a thing to be avoided, except now and then as an experience. It generally means a very disturbed night, especially if there are many hyenas about, and in the morning you are not fit for a hard day's work. Occasionally by bright moonlight it is very interesting, but if circumstances admit of lions being killed by day, it is rather like shooting a boar in a fine pig-sticking country to kill a lion over a bait at night. Sometimes it is the only chance you have of getting a lion, either because you are moving camp next day, or because the country is unsuitable for tracking. Under these circumstances you are bound to try it.

I have never myself shot more than two lions in one night, but a man whom I met in the country showed me the skins of four he had shot when sitting up over the dead body of an elephant. It was very dark or he might have got any number, as he told me that he was shooting most of the night, and that in the morning there were tracks of many lions all round the carcass.

I have once or twice sat up over a dead animal. This way of getting lions is only likely to be successful when there are many hyenas about, as they make such a noise that they will attract any lion that may come past within a reasonable distance.

PART II

I HAVE already described two different methods of hunting lions. One of them could hardly be called a method at all, as it depended on news brought in by natives as to where a lion had actually been seen. The second plan consisted of tying up a donkey for a bait, and sitting up to watch it at night. A much more interesting way of hunting lions than either of these, and a very successful one if the native shikaris employed are any good, is to track them. A lion lies up in some cool shady place for the day, unless the sky is overcast and the sun cannot get out, when he will occasionally be found hunting at any hour. If you can strike his spoor of the night before there is a very good chance of following it up to where the lion lies, should the ground be suitable. There is no form of hunting so exciting as this. When the spoor is found there is generally nothing to show if you have struck it early or late in the lion's wanderings, so that it is quite a chance whether it leads you for hours over all sorts of country, or whether, after half a mile down a sandy river bed or path, it turns off into a thick patch of reeds or bush close by, where the lion is lying. It is extraordinary how the excitement grows as time goes on, and still you keep the track, sometimes very slowly, where only now and then part of a footprint can be seen on a soft place between the stones, at other times as fast as you can walk over soil where the track is visible many yards ahead. And

when the spoor is lost, and minute after minute goes by while you cast about vainly in every direction, how wretched you are, and how quickly your spirits rise again when a low whistle or snapping of the fingers announces that one of the trackers has hit it off further on !

At last, certain signs show that you are getting near the end ; the trackers take off their sandals and tuck up their loin-cloths under their belts, lest a corner flapping in the wind should scare the lion. For the first time you take your rifle from the native who has had charge of it, and, with your head shikari carrying a second rifle, steal forward till the lion is sighted or ringed in a small clump of bush. Then, when all is over, and the skin is being taken off, how pleasant it is to sit in the shade, listening to the excited talk of the natives, and letting your nerves quiet down again after the hopes and fears of the morning ! You ride home to camp with the lion-skin behind your saddle, while one of your men after another gives his version of the morning's proceedings in a hunting song. On the other hand, when you get a shot, and miss after a long and difficult track, it seems as if any number of lions killed in the future will never make up for the loss of this one, which is always the biggest lion, carrying the finest mane you have ever seen. The ride home to camp is then a silent one, as no lion means no sheep for the men, and they are correspondingly downhearted.

The first thing to be done in tracking is to find fresh spoor. Natives will often bring news of spoor, but unluckily the average villager's idea of

a fresh track is rather hazy. I have several times gone a long way to find at the end a track several days old. On one occasion two natives arrived, saying there were fresh lion tracks in a river-bed, luckily not more than half a mile from camp, but when we got there the fresh lion tracks turned out to be the spoor of two hyenas, at least a week old.

The spoor of the large spotted hyena is not unlike that of a lioness on certain ground, but the difference can easily be told, because a hyena has claws like a dog, whereas the retractile claws of a lion are always sheathed and leave no mark. The best way to find spoor is to look for it yourself with good trackers. Should there be any villages near camp which lions have been in the habit of raiding, it is very necessary to get there as early as possible in the morning. If once the large flocks of sheep and goats and herds of camels which have been shut up in the villages all night are let out, the ground all about is a mass of indistinguishable footprints, and every path from the villages is choked with long strings of beasts going off to their feeding grounds. Hitting off a lion's spoor under these circumstances is almost impossible, and the dust raised by the herds is very disagreeable.

Besides villages, any well in the neighbourhood is a good place to look for spoor. If a lion is about there ought to be no difficulty in picking up his spoor within a day or two.

The best piece of tracking I ever saw lasted five hours. In 1892 two of my men got badly mauled by a lion, so our camp had to stop where it was

till they could be moved. After a time one of them was able to walk about with his arm in a sling, and the other was going on well, so one night I decided to leave the big camp next day and go with two or three camels to some villages only a day's march away. Early the next morning Mahomed Noor, the headman, started with the camels. I stopped behind to get some breakfast. Just as we were going to follow, a camelman, who had gone up the river-bed close by to get some water, came running back to say that a lion had been down to drink at one of the shallow sand wells in the night. I started at once with Abdullah and two other trackers, telling my pony-boy to follow on as soon as he could get the pony saddled. When tracking, I have always found it the best plan to have the pony led some distance behind. The boy ought to have no difficulty in following the tracks of two or three men and a lion, and if the pony is kept close up, it is sure to stamp or blow its nose at the critical moment. In open bush, or down a river-bed or path, the boy can follow by sight ; but he must stop if he sees that the trackers have lost the spoor, while they cast about and pick it up again. Absolute quiet is most necessary while tracking ; for although some lions can hardly be frightened by any amount of noise, others will steal away at the slightest sound.

When we got to the well there was the spoor plain enough in the sand, but rather blurred by some rain which had fallen at daybreak. This made the tracking a little difficult after we left the river-bed, but when we had followed it slowly for

some distance, we came to a place where the lion had lain down under a thick bush, evidently to shelter from the rain, as the spoor after this was quite distinct on the top of the damp ground. This made us think we were in for a short track, for it must have been light when the lion went on again from here, and lions generally lie up shortly after the sun rises ; but this day proved an exception, because it was cloudy and cool till late in the forenoon.

The spoor now led us along a sandy path, where we could follow it as fast as we could walk. When it turned off into the bush we quite expected to see the lion at any moment ; but not a bit of it—he wandered about through endless clumps of mimosa and “ irgin ” bushes, as if he did not mean to lie up at all.

Carrying the track through this sort of country is very slow work, as, whenever it leads into a thick patch of covert, it is best not to follow it through, but to make good the ground beyond, so that if the lion is in, the place can be driven. Very often, if a track is followed into really thick bush or long grass, the lion decamps out of the opposite side, and, at best, a snapshot from behind is all you get.

The track at last led us down a little sandy watercourse, which it followed for some distance. Up to this time we had had no real difficulty in making it out, but now came our first serious check. The nullah turned off along the side of a stony ridge, and, instead of going along it, the lion had turned up the hill. We had got the general direction that the lion had been going in, but this was no good to us, as on casting forward in the

same line to the bottom of the other side of the ridge where there was some sandy ground, we could find no sign of his having passed in that direction. We spent some time hunting about, growing less hopeful as time went on. A man following a trail by sight certainly has an enormous advantage over a hound hunting it by nose, because time is of no particular object to him, and every direction can be tried in turn. After making our cast forward we went back to the little water-course, and followed that down for some distance, hoping that the lion had turned down hill again ; but here, too, we were disappointed, and gravitated back to where we had first lost the spoor. We knew that the lion had not gone straight on, nor had he turned back ; he must have gone along the top of the ridge and then crossed into other stony hills where it was hopeless to try to track him.

Abdullah, who is never defeated, said there was a big river-bed further on in the direction in which the lion was going. It seemed a very slender chance, as he might have turned off anywhere in between, but it was the only one, so off we went. We were evidently in luck that day, for we had only gone about a quarter of a mile when we struck the spoor. The lion seemed now to have made up his mind as to his direction, for he kept on straight down the middle of the river-bed. The sun had come out from behind the clouds, and in places the sand was very deep, so that we were not sorry when at last the track led into a little island of bush in the great flat of sand. There was no doubt the lion was at home, for on

casting round no sign was perceptible of a track coming out. The island, raised a little above the river-bed, was formed of a mass of thick-tangled bush and creepers clustered round a few big trees. The water coming down the river after heavy rain had washed it roughly into the form of a triangle, the apex of which pointed up the river. From this point the sides widened out to the other end, which was about thirty yards broad, the whole length being somewhat under a hundred yards.

The shape made it an easy place to drive, for a little way out from the point one could easily command the whole of it. The lion was almost certain to break out at one of the sides towards the bush on the banks of the river-bed, in which case I should get an easy broadside shot. If we followed the track into the place, the noise we were sure to make would be very likely to get the beast on his legs, and he would sneak out at one side as we went in at the other, especially as the water had left a lot of dead sticks along the edges, over which it would be impossible to walk quietly. Abdullah also said that from the way he had wandered about this lion must be very hungry, and would sleep lightly. These considerations decided us to drive. I posted myself with Abdullah a few yards out from the point, and the other two men, having collected some stones, began throwing them in at the far end. Abdullah was right about this lion sleeping lightly; for at the first stone there was a growl and a crash in the bushes, and then, for a minute or two, not a sound. The men started to walk down, one on each side, shouting and throwing in stones. I was watching them, and

wondering what had happened to the lion, when there was a faint crackling just in front of us, and he appeared at the point of the island. Although we were standing within a few yards of him, and absolutely in the open, he did not see us. He was half turning his head to listen to the men behind, and perhaps he had been asleep, and the strong light dazzled him.

He was facing straight towards us, and was so close that I did not like to fire at him, as, on receiving the bullet, he would be very likely to plunge forward in the direction he was going and be into us; nor did I want him to come any closer: so, as he stepped down on to the sand, I moved my rifle up towards my shoulder to attract his attention. He saw the movement at once, stopped dead, and turned his head sharply towards us. For the fraction of a second I thought he was going to be startled into charging, but he plunged off to the left with an angry snarl at us over his shoulder. As he passed I pulled, and he skated along on his stomach and fell down a little ledge in the sand. This slewed him round, and he lay facing us, spread-eagled on the sand, evidently quite unable to move. All the life in him seemed concentrated in his eyes, which glared at us furiously. Another shot put him out of his misery. The first shot, a very bad one, had grazed the spine just in front of the withers; another quarter of an inch higher and it would have missed altogether.

This lion was quite maneless, except for a few long hairs on each side of the neck, and his teeth were worn down quite short, so he was evidently very old. He was in very good condition not-

withstanding, but his stomach was quite empty, which accounted for his going so far before lying up. We had to stop at the main camp for the night when we got there, and did not follow up our camels till the next day. I have described this track rather at length because it is a good example of many similar days.

My first experience in tracking lions was early in 1892, and the night before was rather an exciting one. After hunting elephants unsuccessfully for about a month we were on our way south, when we arrived one day at some villages where the natives had been very much bothered by five lions which were said to be still in the neighbourhood. A girl had been killed two days before, and an enormous amount of damage had been done among the sheep and cattle. The first day we camped there M—— and H—— had shooting zerebas made at the village to which the lions generally came, and just before sunset they went off there.

V—— and I tied up our two donkeys just outside the camp, on the chance that the lions might come and look us up. Just after dark we were having dinner in the tent when there was a scuffle outside, and it was evident that something was attacking our donkeys. It was pitch dark, and we fired several shots in the direction of the sound before we discovered that the attacking beasts were hyenas. We did not mind having a donkey killed instantaneously by a lion, but we had not bargained for the poor beasts getting mauled by hyenas, so taking a lamp we went out to see what had happened. My donkey had got

off with a nasty bite in the hollow of the hind leg above the hock, and we had him taken into the camp at once. The other was completely disembowelled and must have been killed instantly. We could not find any dead hyenas, but we were pretty sure that one or two must have been hit. Seeing that if the lions did come to the dead donkey there would not be much chance of hitting them on so dark a night, we pulled the carcase right under the fence round the camp, and, to prevent hyenas dragging it away, tied a rope to one of its legs, and passing it over the fence, fastened it to a heavy water barrel inside the camp. We sat up for a bit and got a few shots at hyenas, and then we went to bed, telling the sentry to keep a sharp look out and to let us know if lions came to the carcase.

Some time after I awoke to find Abdullah bending over me, with my rifle in his hand. He was frightfully excited, and all I could get out of him was "Libah, sahib, libah!" ("Lion, sir, lion!") Jumping up I rushed out just as V—— fired two shots into the darkness. The first thing I saw when I got to where he stood was that a great piece of the fence round the camp had disappeared, leaving a broad gap. I could not for a moment think what had happened, and then it struck me that when the carcase had been dragged away the water barrel must have got hitched against the inside of the interlaced mimosa boughs and the whole lot had gone together. It was frightfully dark outside, and we stood peering out for some time without being able to distinguish anything; but after a few minutes we could hear something tearing at the flesh quite close by. We had a shot or

two at the sound, and the beasts, whatever they were, went away. As at that time we knew nothing about lions, we were not quite sure that they were not hyenas after all ; but Abdullah stuck to it they were lions, so we got our beds out and lay down one on each side of the opening, just behind the fence to watch, hoping that the brutes would come back. Nothing further happened however. At daybreak we sallied out to see if by any chance we had managed to hit a lion, but we only found two or three dead hyenas. One of these brutes had been partly eaten ; we thought at the time by other hyenas, as it was still too dark to make out tracks. We came to the conclusion we had made idiots of ourselves, and had been shooting all night at hyenas, and we did not feel any the better when our friends came back from their night at the village and told us we had probably frightened every lion out of the country by our bombardment.

Abdullah still insisted that there had been lions round the camp, and a little later we found the spoor of one big lion by the body of the half-eaten hyena. The ground was very stony and there were no other tracts to be seen, but one lion could hardly have dragged the donkey and heavy barrel away so quickly, so there were probably more. M—— and H—— had got hold of a man at the village who said he knew where the lions always lay, so they went with him. Soon after they left, Abdullah, who had been hunting about, came and told me that he had picked up the track of one lion on soft ground a little way from camp, and that we ought to follow it. At that time we none of us knew much about tracking, and we had

had such bad luck after the elephants that we did not think much of our shikaries ; so V—— said he would not come, and I did not think it was much good, but Abdullah persuaded me and I went. After we had followed the track for some distance I quite caught his enthusiasm, and when the single track was joined by three others, I was divided between delight at the prospect of having four lions all to myself and the thought that perhaps I had more on my hands than I could manage alone.

After a track of about an hour we came in sight of two or three big thickets of “irgin” bushes surrounded by open mimosa scrub and intersected by narrow paths. My second shikari at that time was a very tall fellow, called Jama, with enormous feet. Several times during the track Abdullah had turned round to pitch into him for making such a noise, and now he confided to me that “Jama walk all same cow,” and that we had better leave him behind here with the pony and boy, as the lions were sure to be in the place in front of us. Knowing nothing about it, I agreed and went on with Abdullah. We were walking quietly along the outside of one of the thickets when Abdullah suddenly clutched me by the arm and pointed towards a tree standing on the edge of the bush a few yards off. The tree was divided into two towards the bottom, and the sun was throwing the shadow of a bush on the ground inside the hollow.

This was where Abdullah was pointing, getting more and more excited ; but I could make out nothing at all, until a great yellow beast moved

suddenly out of the shadow and slipped away on the far side. I fired from the hip, letting off both barrels into the tree. We rushed round to the other side of the thicket just in time to see a fine lioness come out. I could not get a clear shot at once, and when I did, after running some distance, I was shaking so that I could not get on her at all, and missed. She kept lobbing along just ahead, every now and then stopping to look round and show her teeth at us. Each time she stopped I shot, but so badly that I wasted seven bullets at different ranges without touching her. The first six did not seem to annoy her at all, but the last hit the ground just under her feet, and either the bullet striking so close frightened her or a stone hit her, for she sprang off with a snarl and a flourish of her tail and, putting on the pace, in a minute or two ran clean away from us. I was terribly disappointed and annoyed with myself, and I thought, of course, that everything was over for the day after all this shooting ; but Abdullah, who was almost weeping, hardly gave me time to get my wind a little before he rushed me back again. As we ran round the place where we had first seen the lioness, a fine lion appeared walking slowly out of another thicket towards us. As I shot, he turned and plunged through an opening in the bushes to our right. We ran round an outstanding bush to head him if he broke out, and met a lion facing us. Just as I fired I heard a moan to the right, so I was sure it was not the same lion. This one staggered away at the shot and fell stone dead close by.

Abdullah called up Jama and the pony boy, and

they soon had the hide off and tied on to the pony. I thought all the time that Abdullah knew all about the other one, but as he seemed to be going home, I asked him if we had not better go and look for it, and he replied that it was the same lion all the time, and that I had missed it the first shot. I did not feel quite sure about it myself, but the moan in the bushes could only have come from a wounded beast, so I told him we had better go and look anyway. He evidently thought it was waste of time, but when we got back to where the lion had been hit we soon found some blood, and going quietly down a little path between the "irgin" bushes we came round a corner almost on top of the lion. He was stone dead. I was very pleased at scoring off Abdullah, as he had shown such evident disgust at my shooting. I did not say anything about the moan I had heard, and he could not make out how I had made out that there were two lions. Both lions were full-grown males with fair manes, one rather darker than the other. The darker of the two was full of hyena flesh, so he was evidently one of those that had been to our camp the night before.

We found afterwards that the three tracks, which had joined the single one I had started to follow, also came from our camp; so there had been four lions there altogether. The villagers recognised the dark-maned lion as the one which had killed the girl, so he was well out of the way.

We met H—— on our way back to camp, and told him he might run across the lioness if he followed our track back to the place we had come

from. An hour after we got back to camp he came galloping up, having seen two lions, curiously enough both males, and had shot one with a better mane than either of mine.

I do not know the proper name for the bushes mentioned above, so I have called them by the native name "irgin"; they are light green, with numerous fleshy spikes, which when broken give out a milky sap. The first thing you notice on entering a patch of these bushes is the curious smell, very like that in the lion house at the Zoo, only not so strong. If you do not know this, you are sure to think that there are lions in the place, or that there have been quite lately.

Rather curious coincidences are sometimes brought to light by spoor. Not very long after the date of the story just related, M—— went to a place where two lions had been killing regularly, and sat up two nights for them with a donkey as bait. The lions must have left the district for a day or two while he was there, as there were no fresh tracks to be found anywhere about. The day after he came back to camp I happened to ride out in that direction. Soon after we started we came on the spoor of two lions, which led us along a path till we came to M——'s shooting zereba. The night after he had left, the lions had walked over the very spot where his donkey had been tied up in the middle of the path.

A little later, again, I happened to be at a place where V—— had camped a few days before. A lion roared near my camp several times in the night, and next morning I heard he had taken a

sheep from a village close by. We picked up his spoor in a river-bed near the camp, and after following it for some distance came to some wells. The lion had drunk twice, and between the drinks had laid down under the fence of a shooting zereba which V—— had made to watch the water. After drinking the second time he had gone away.

Now and then when tracking you come across places where lions have killed, and if it is on sand or bare soil, you can tell everything that has happened almost as well as if you had seen it. We were camped once on the edge of a river-bed and thick covert ran right down to the back of the camp. One night there was a tremendous scuffling in these bushes, so in the morning I went out to see what had been going on, and found that two lions had been chasing a warthog, which had just saved its bacon by getting underground. It must have been a very near thing, as the lions had ploughed great furrows in the sand at the mouth of the hole, showing they had pulled up pretty sharp. Warthogs generally go to ground when pursued, and as there is no second opening to the burrows, and presumably no chamber at the end where they can turn, they always go in backwards. This has actually been seen by sportsmen who have been riding after them with a spear. I should think this pig can hardly have had the time to do this. Perhaps he got jammed in head first, as he refused to be smoked out when V—— and I tried it.

Warthogs are fairly common in Somaliland, especially in the hill country. I remember the

first I got gave us a lot of trouble. One of the men came in one morning to say he had seen a fine boar feeding close to camp. I snatched up a rifle and two or three cartridges and ran to the place with Abdullah. When first I saw the pig he was cantering away through the bush. I shot and broke one of his legs, but he was out of sight before I could get another shot. We tracked him for some distance by the blood, and caught sight of him some way off, but I could not get a clear view of him, and missed with both barrels.

We then discovered we had no more cartridges, but went on tracking, hoping that my other shikari, who had stopped behind to get some, would come up. We soon saw the pig again, and when he started off with a leg swinging we determined to try to run him down. For a long way we could only just keep him in sight, or rather Abdullah could only just keep the pig in sight, and it took me all my time not to lose Abdullah, as I had lately started up-country after the sea voyage, and was frightfully out of condition. Just as I was seriously thinking of giving it up, Abdullah stopped and began beckoning to me to come on, and when I got to where he was, I found the boar had pulled up and was sitting on his haunches facing us. As we ran up he made a bit of a rush, but we each of us bolted for a tree, and he retreated again to his bush. Here we were with nothing but a hunting knife and an empty rifle between us. We found that the boar was very weak from loss of blood, and never came more than a few yards in his rush, so we got some big stones, and coming up behind bushes we pelted him,

whom I have had the pleasure to meet, invited me to join him in an expedition to certain mines and forests in the Sierra Frigiliana in which he held an interest, promising as an additional inducement that he would arrange an ibex hunt.

I was very keen to study the botany and entomology of the higher mountains, and could not be deterred by the absence of beds and other needless accessories of civilisation from greedily accepting this unexpected opportunity. In spite of favourable reports from the Captain of the Guardias Civiles, to whom the organisation of the expedition had been entrusted, I was quite unprepared to find that ibex are still sufficiently plentiful, and that there was nothing remarkable, or merely historical, in the statement that several had been seen together.

Well! on we drove to Velez in some agitation, my friend convinced that he had forgotten his sketch-book and pencils, specially brought to illustrate our journal, myself equally disturbed about my stalking-glass. Everything had, of course, been taken in a small compass (but on my part with somewhat needless forethought), from spirit-lamp to sticking-plaster, my bag contained innumerable small *unnecessaries* in addition to changes of clothing, with botanical and entomological apparatus. The spirit-lamps were little tin boxes of "patent consolidated," made by a "Co. Limited," our own spirits being highly volatile and not limited.

Arriving at Velez-Malaga, we found two comfortable small bedrooms in a scrupulously clean and tidy fonda, called the Hotel Linares.

A simultaneous grab at our dusty luggage produced shouts of joy from my friend. His sketch-book was found, embedded among his shirts ; my telescope was also carefully stowed in the sleeve of a khaki coat. We dined well and cheerfully after a short walk round the town. On the walls of the dining-room every possible and impossible combination of fish, flesh, fruit, and vegetable is depicted in works of doubtful art, which constitute the customary adornment of all Spanish inns. It was explained to me that at one time a considerable industry was carried on at Seville in this style of art. One man painted the grapes, tomatoes, and melons, another the fishes and lobsters, and another the baskets and boxes out of which they fell, when the joint results were distributed throughout all towns and villages, even to many private houses.

What a falling-off was this in the ideal of Spanish Art which once held so high a place among the nations, and of which such magnificent examples are found at every turn !

A real serenade, intended for some fair Juliet near at hand, disturbed my friend at two in the morning, but failed to reach my ears. We looked early from our windows at a perfect little kitchen-garden on the flat roof of the next house. My father, who was a bold amateur farmer, used to say that he could grow a crop of turnips on the dining-room table by bringing in the proper soil. Such farming may help the pot but not the pocket.

We walked before breakfast to the church of Santa Maria, and to the picturesque old Moorish fort and tower which stand out so well against the

snow-capped peaks of the Sierra Tejea. The fine old doors of the church are richly ornamented with quadrangular raised metal bosses and grand substantial hinges of crude frondal design. Looking down from the fort you see the coast village of Torre del Mar, somewhat spoiled by the big chimney of the sugar factory, to which surrounding fields of waving cane contribute. The hills on either side were dotted with innumerable white haciendas, now scarcely more than mere grave-stones of that industry which once made Velez-Malaga one of the richest of provincial towns, exporting every year many thousand kilos. of dried raisins, the finest in the world, before the dreaded plague of *Phylloxera* devastated the vineyards and reduced the country to comparative poverty. Some are now being replanted, but for the most part other crops of less value have taken their place, and many of the unoccupied houses are falling into bleached and staring ruins.

After luncheon we drove a short and easy stage to Nerja; the road was decent, indeed good, as compared with others of southern Spain, where too frequently they resemble in miniature the mountains and valleys through which they pass, reminding one of the German orographical models of great battle fields.

At Nerja the Fonda was sufficiently comfortable though scarcely *soigné*, but electric light was everywhere abundant, supplied by water power at a merely nominal cost. An open space which terminates in a railing overhanging the sea bears the proud name of Balcon de Europa; here we had a lovely view of the mountains, with patches

of snow leading up to the higher and completely white cap of Tejeo to the north-west.

The head woodman from the forest—José Triviño—met us here, and gave his opinion on the prospects of sport ; a tall, upright, active-looking man with a thoroughly honest face, reserved but keen, he reminded me of a Highland stalker. His brother Antonio, the keeper on the same ground, was of similar type but some years younger, José being only forty-seven though his weather-beaten face suggested sixty.

After dinner my friend and El Capitan engaged two *habitués* of the Club in a game of cards, the stakes were small, but judging from the expressions of the surrounding crowd the play must have been intensely exciting.

Ignorant of the face-value of Spanish cards I was unable to participate in the general interest, but the conversation of the bystanders turned on sport, and inclined to sarcasm upon the subject of an Englishman attempting to walk on their mountains and shoot their wild goats ; one very loquacious fellow, who had a good deal to say about his own powers, told the company that I should never hit anything, and prophesied “stag-fever” at the mere sight of an ibex, accompanying his chaff with so much gesticulation that I grasped the meaning of his pantomime and good-humouredly told him that I had got over that long ago. This burly and rubicund sportsman went by the nickname of Juan Chimenea, and assuredly John Chimney was full of smoke and gas though his fire subsequently proved to be defective. Two or three rather primitive rifles were produced and handed round,

one an old Henry Winchester repeater, my own single express by Henry of Edinburgh was also examined and approved. The final verdict of the company was that if the "Matuteros" (by which nickname the brothers Treviño were known—those who evade the *octroi*) meant business we should have a chance at the ibex, but if otherwise we might see them but should not get a shot; in short it was evident that they knew the tricks of the Scotch deer forest where the Laird used to tell the stalker to let his Sassenach guests *see* some good stags.

We started early the next morning, a mule saddled with rugs without stirrups, a horse and saddle with stirrups, and a pack-mule being provided. El Capitan was already mounted, and the men on foot, my friend and I were smitten with a mutual attack of self-denial, and took refuge in the old remedy of "heads or tails." I won the stirrups, but a small boy was hoisted up behind the saddle and clung round me as far as the nearest village, Frigiliana, where we breakfasted.

Here was an old palace belonging to the Duquesa de Fernan-Núñez, with a large family coat-of-arms over the door; it is now converted into a sugar factory, worked by water power with a large wheel, of which the bearings appeared to be dangerously worn; it was rather depressing to walk into the spacious hall and find mules tied up on either side with all sorts of rubbish lying about; to see the lines of clean pale brown sugar ridged up across the floors of the salon and spacious bedrooms above, and to find sacks, full

and empty, taking the place of furniture around the walls.

Riding on again from Frigiliana we passed through a series of rocky hills where Antonio made a good shot at a partridge, on the ground of course, but rather too far for a certainty ; it was hit, probably by a single pellet in the head, for it rose at the shot and describing a semi-circle in the air came down head foremost within twenty yards : it was a young male, but no scruples or restrictions are observed here about sex or season, and I have eaten partridges in Spain up to the end of June. Soon we entered the scattered pine forest, and a more lovely bit of scenery it proved to be. Here were the high crags towering along the sky line above us, each with some quaint weather-beaten pine claiming precarious root-hold in its cracks and crevices ; larger trees formed picturesque groups on either side of the rough mule track with an undergrowth of cistus, rosemary and daphne, while behind us the horizon of the distant sea was a faint line across the end of the valley, its many-tinted surface studded with white sails.

Assuredly all promises were fair for our hunt on the morrow as we approached the white hut, Venta Panaderos (about 3200 ft.) at seven o'clock. Charcoal burners were at work around, cutting the pines and reducing them to more portable and more salable form. This was the owner's first visit to these lovely mountains ; his pencil and sketch-book were frequently in request, and he vividly shared my intense regret that his purchase of the growing timber should have caused a man with the true eye of an artist, and a thorough apprecia-

tion of the beautiful in nature, himself to become the destroyer of so much of the picturesque effect in this lovely scenery. Had the land also belonged to him he would have replanted the forests, but being under contract to remove the timber within a limited term of years, the remedy lies in other hands and the landowner apparently prefers trusting to nature to restore in her own time the clothing which he has sold from off her back.

The hut in which we found ourselves was the calling-place for all mule teams passing between Granada and Nerja. Folding doors enclosed a mud and cobble paved room some 50 ft. long, with a large open fire-place at one end, a stable at the other, and a second stable opening opposite to the door, with two smaller rooms on the same level, occupied by the resident family—a man and woman with five or six children. They kept open house in the truest sense, for the doors were seldom shut, and mules, horses, goats, chickens, dogs, men and children jostled each other at all times of the day in passing in and out. Guns and old-fashioned powder flasks hung on the walls, with strings of onions and the rough ponchos of the men; but the place was nearly pitch dark, the only small opening being closed with shutters to prevent a draught by day and to protect the single primitive lamp by night. This lamp was hung from a beam near the fire and consisted of a wick projecting from a dish of oil, often acting as a siphon and giving a rich flavour to any food inadvertently placed below it. By a liberal use of my friend's pine trees we kept up a blazing fire, which served for lighting the room, drying clothes, warming the

men who crowded round it and cooking the dinner. There were about seventeen men here on the night of our arrival and the simple fellows were most good-natured in making room for us whenever we approached the fire. The conversation was general, with much laughter and explanatory gesture—a mode of expression which added largely to the appreciation of John Chimney's voluble narrative of his numerous hunting exploits. Here he was in great force. El Capitan at once appropriated a shelf near the chimney corner, where he covered himself with coats and rugs from which he seldom emerged during the next thirty-six hours, except when he was unable to reach food without standing on his legs. We left him thus smothered when we started on the second day. Dinner consisted of corned beef and bread and cheese washed down with some good light wine; but as Mrs. Nagel had been unable to believe that we could find any place so uncivilised as to possess neither knives nor forks, my two pocket knives came in very useful. Cigarettes and pipe, followed by excellent whisky "toddy," prepared us for such rest as could be found on the mud floor—but here the trouble began. We were favoured by the hostess with a mattress, just wide enough for one and a half, in the side room where there was a small separate fire-place—but the water-tap was here and one side at least was very wet. Divested of my coat I shared the mattress with my friend, covered by a Scotch shawl and thick overcoat, quite determined to be proof against all possible disturbance. Alas! the sounds of the night were too much for me. The conversation and laughter round the fire went

on fast and furious for hours, gradually and by slow degrees yielding to a perfect chorus of coughing with the usual Spanish accompaniments of that complaint ; this again gradually merged into the doubtful harmony of a general snore, mingled with the dull munching of many mules, whose heads were within a few feet of my own, on the other side of a very thin match-board. When *do* pack mules sleep ?

I have been asked, and have asked others who should know better than myself, whether the noise made by a mule is like that of a horse or like that of a donkey. Opinions differ very widely, but my experience on this particular occasion convinced me that the sound is that of an aborted "bray" rather than of a "whinny." One animal certainly expressed himself *sotto voce*, as if ashamed to disturb the company, but unable entirely to suppress his feelings. During the only quiet hour in the night some one drew water from a tap above my head and sprinkled me freely. At 3 A.M. the men began to pack their mules in the general sleeping-room, and by no means silently. I can understand *now* why a Spanish worker sleeps in the day-time.

It was an agreeable surprise to arise unbitten in the morning, for one flat blood-sucker had dropped on my hand at dinner (a direct descendant of the senior branch of the Norfolk Howards before they visited England for the first time in the reign of Elizabeth). I suspect that the fleas and other familiars had no time to attend to outsiders.

It was a sad disappointment to find a dense driving mist and rain, which continued all day,

and condemned us to postpone our hunt. In such weather climbing would be not only useless but dangerous.

Between the showers I found a few interesting plants, and some larvæ of micro-lepidoptera, but there was little here not also to be met with on the lower ground. Antonio Treviño was evidently well acquainted with the flora as well as the fauna of the mountains; he attributed some useful or medicinal qualities to nearly every plant. One (*Thymelaea tartonraira*) was a violent emetic; another, that handsome thistle (*Picnomon acarna*) made excellent tinder for flint and steel; the juice of another was good for cuts and bruises; and, above all, the Esparto grass was valued for making lariats and shoes, or rather sandals. These sandals were much wider than the foot and turned up at the edges around it, being fastened with grass strings over the instep and around the ankle. On rocks and rough ground they afford an extremely safe foot-hold, and are far superior to the string sandals (*apagatas*) with which I had provided myself. The soles of the latter are too narrow, and are apt to tread over at the sides—the canvas toe and heelcaps become sodden, and it was necessary to wrap the feet in pieces of cloth to prevent the strings from hurting the skin when tightly fastened; nevertheless, even these are far superior to any kind of boot. Had Tantalus been a keen sportsman no more cruel torture could have been devised for him than a day of mist and rain within easy reach of the haunts of the ibex; moreover, our time was limited, but the barometer was rising. Before evening some more Granada

men had arrived with their mules, and the blazing pine-fire soon cheered them into animated conversation. Wet stockings came off and were laid on the unburnt side of the half-consumed logs, in much danger of falling into the furnace beneath. Cooking was in progress for more than an hour before the public dinner, the steam from the constantly stirred rice mingling with stocking steam—a delicate exchange of flavours, suggesting “*Riz au pied de messenger*.” This seemed a popular dish into which the men dipped their spoons in turn, each keeping as much as possible to his own side of the mess until there was little left to dip for. We opened a tin of rolled tongue and dined more wisely than many a gourmet, and quite well enough.

After another night, nearly sleepless so far as I was concerned, the morning was clear and calm, a few clouds drifting up the valley at intervals, but nothing to interfere with sport. I was very anxious to go at once with the men to the highest points, but thought it best to leave the arrangements to those who knew and to begin by learning the business.

We rode on mules nearly a thousand feet higher than the hut and then dismounted, and were placed to command the point of a hill near the mule-track, while the men went round and climbed the peaks above to drive the ibex down. This was contrary to all my notions, but until I found the same plan adopted throughout the day I held my tongue—a strong protest altered the tactics on the morrow.

In the first drive I saw two female ibex passing

through the brushwood, about three hundred yards off, between us and the beaters. Antonio, who was placed on my left, also saw them, but the driver could give no account of which line they had taken, and they must have broken back unobserved. Shots were fired on the ridge, intended only to disturb the game.

Antonio, José, Juan Chimenea, and another man all carried rifles. José reported having seen a big male on the ridge quite near him, but his dog had frightened it before he could fire. After some delay, on account of mist, another drive was organised. Again from high to lower ground, again round the point of a hill, on the slope of which we were placed. There was much firing, shouting and dog-barking in the distance, and at last José came up much excited, assuring me that the ibex had passed between me and the rock on my left; had they done so I must have seen them, for 150 yards of open ground was all I had to watch. Eventually it was admitted they had gone another way, and this was just the way that might have been expected, up the face of the rock on my left, but out of my sight. Then we held a council of war. Were we to return to the hut and give it up or try other ground on our way to the mine to-morrow? Or, were we to give up the mine, go on to Frigiliana, sleep there and work the favourable heights of the Iman mountain? I was severely taken to task for saying I would not in any case shoot at a female, the men assuring me that males were seldom seen here at this time of year. After some deliberation we decided on the latter plan, and a rather rough descent being made, during

which my friend sat down quite as often involuntarily as by intention, we remounted our mules and set off for a pass to the east through some magnificent scenery, comprising the rocky corries from which the ibex were expected to *descend* to us in the previous drive. After getting over the pass another drive was suggested, and we were again taken *down* hill to a small intervening ridge, between two valleys, where we were assured the ibex would cross.

I noticed as usual that the men with rifles remained above us. After about an hour three female ibex dashed across the hill far above me, and two shots were fired, followed by a third after a short interval. One of the goats separated from the others, evidently wounded, and dashed down the dry course of a mountain torrent straight towards me, disappearing behind a big rock; the others went on to the higher ground. Antonio Treviño soon followed the game, for it was he who had fired, and the ibex was found dead in the stony gulch immediately below my position, having run some hundred yards or more beyond where I last saw it. The second shot was a miss, and the third was fired by John Chimney, who came tearing down the hill with a long story quite at variance with the authentic version. He was much chaffed for having fired a long shot when another beast which he did not see was said to have been close to him. After the passing of the wounded female for a hundred yards or more within shot of me without my seeing it, I was glad that this great professor should be accused of similar blindness. These goats are small, and not easy to distinguish

amid surroundings of their own colour. In the valley below we found the mules, and rode up to Punta Iman, where we arrived after dark, comfortably tired and ready for whatever food could be found. Here was a small hut, cleaner and neater than our quarters of the previous night, and not so crowded. The first question was how to provide a mess for the men. Three eggs were found, and the yolks of these were beaten up, with the gradual addition of a little oil and lemon juice, the whole slowly heated in a frying-pan, and eventually added to a large pan of bread cut from a loaf we had with us, the white of the eggs having been dropped into the heated mass, making a really excellent compound, from which the men dipped after a portion had been set apart for ourselves. No sounds disturbed us during the night, except the soft licking of a dog at some tinned food left partially unprotected. Coffee and whisky had sent us to rest on a mattress wide enough for one and a quarter, but about 3 A.M. my friend complained of being too hot. I suggested that he should light a match, when it was discovered that I was on the floor in my shirt-sleeves, and he had all the rugs and overcoats wrapped around his selfish body (*Ce n'est que la verité qui pique*, so I know he will forgive the epithet).

Before dinner we had discussed plans for the morrow and I had insisted upon the necessity of being above the game, so it was finally arranged that I was to climb to the highest ridge and my friend was to make his way leisurely to the central pass, a sort of saddle in the middle of Mount Iman, through which the goats were in the habit

of passing both ways. To carry out this programme I started at about 7.30 for a four hours' climb, our camp being about 2200 ft. above sea-level. Had we not been pretty well tired the night before I should have liked to start at 4 A.M. and to get a rest at the top instead of having to do the hard work immediately after a long climb, but time was limited. Well, it was obvious to me that we could not climb from the west, so we must pass round the north side and ascend behind the mountain—the track showed that others had long been aware of this—and on and up we went until the “on,” with a decent level, was a real rest as compared with the “up,” and until the “up” became a strain against which my sleepless limbs rebelled. By the time I had hoisted myself by my finger nails upon shelves of rock, and crept on my knees under boulders from which the foundations had been washed by melted snow, I was fairly done and could hardly put one foot before the other. The barometer told 5000 ft., and yet up we went, and when the level of the small remaining snow-patches was reached, I could have sat down and slept with my head in my hands. A cup of tea and a crust of bread before starting was well enough, but now there was no water and my mouth was too dry to discuss the contents of my pockets ; yet we had to hurry on, for men had been left on the way up to drive the corries. At last, after a short descent, I was posted behind a big rock commanding a view of a flat open space of about 250 yards, with an almost sheer precipice of 600 ft. on my right, and instructed to watch the open front. Had I been less sleepy it would

at once have occurred to me to look over the ledge and watch the ground from which the animals were expected to come, rather than that across which they were expected to pass after reaching the summit. From my position I was unable to see anything passing on or below the ledges of rock.

After half an hour or more, during which I had the greatest difficulty in keeping my eyes open, Antonio scrambled down from above me in great excitement and pointed out four ibex about 250 yards off at the farthest end of the open space before me. He had watched them ascend the rock below, and they must have passed within 60 yards of me, but out of sight. Even if I had been fully on the alert I should not have seen them, but I had been undoubtedly nodding, and the point at which they showed themselves was too far for a shot ; so I contented myself with watching them, through the glass, leisurely making their way south towards another hill. One was a good male, the others also males, but with smaller heads. Before they were well out of sight shouts were heard below, and I was hurried on to another point, looking down into a wide corrie, with precipitous walls of rock on either side. Here Antonio pulled out some food and I also tried to eat ; there was evidently no hurry, but shouts were heard again and rocks were being rolled down the corrie on the other side. I soon saw the cause of this. About 350 yards from me, on the opposite wall of the gorge, were three ibex, a male, a female, and a young male. I watched them through the telescope and marvelled at the

wonderful way in which they seemed to scale the wall, with jumps and pauses like those of the little black and white hunting-spiders one often sees in pursuit of their small prey. Antonio was on my left, and now José appeared above me on the right. The ibex were coming my way and I felt sure of a shot, but José could stand it no longer and began shouting to the drivers behind them to use every effort to prevent them from breaking back. I now learned that Nagel was below me, and that if they went down they must pass him. He was at the mouth of the corrie. A driver, on a commanding point opposite, was hurling rocks and firing his gun whenever the beasts turned towards him; they could not scale the rock between him and ourselves, although they tried bravely several times. At last José began firing at them and, after he had tried three shots, I also fired, but the distance was hopeless. Only with the telescope could I distinguish the male from the female. They tried hard to pass the driver on the point, but although he could not advance, and could only run up and down about thirty yards to head them, first one way and then the other, he poured down such a shower of rocks when they were below him, and fired his gun so opportunely when they were above him, that at last they dashed for the mouth of the corrie and gave my friend a chance. He fired at both the male and the female, but his borrowed rifle, with which he had not had even one trial-shot, carried high at short distances, and thus failed him at the critical moment. Juan Chimenea was with him and the male stood on a rock about twenty-five yards off looking at him, half broad-

side. Whether he had "stag-fever" or not I can't say, but the rock, on which the ibex had stood, was found to be slightly injured by the bullet, and the beast escaped unhurt! While all this platooning was going on below I watched the little male, now deserted by the dam, as he slipped back and hid under some bushes. I hoped he would also get off, but two ravens found him out and, hopping round him with hoarse cries, at last dislodged him. He made a great effort to scale the rock again, but slipped and came down head first, his forelegs stretched out straight in front of him until he landed heavily some thirty or forty feet below. Here he rolled over and was, I thought, killed, but he jumped up and ran on out of sight; he was, however, so badly injured that the men below walked up and shot him.

A council now took place between the men with me above and the men with Nagel below, and it was decided that he was to return to Punta Iman for the mules and baggage and I was to walk down to Nerja on the coast. By this time I was rested and went off fresh enough; after two hours we found water in a cave at the side of a dry water-course. There were many of these caves, formed by the hollowing-out of soft places in the bank in flood-time. Some were in use as folds for goats and dwellings for goat-herds; others were blackened by the fires of the charcoal-burners. The spring, or rather it was a slow drip into a basin of rock, was in one of the latter and could only be seen by lighting a match. The water was deliciously cold and fresh, and I drank until the men warned me to drink no more, and then I drank again and filled

my flask. Another half-hour brought us to the track by which the mules were to come, but we waited over two hours for them, and when they came the road was so bad and the man who led my mule so keen to describe his adventures instead of watching the mules, that I dismounted, preferring to trust my legs rather than those of a mule dragged by the head over boulders and slippery rocks at an angle scarcely over 45° . Thus we accomplished the descent to Nerja by about 9.30. Antonio and José, after cleaning my rifle, were dismissed with presents and friendly commendation, and returned to their mountain homes by a bright moonlight. Fatigue was a thing unknown to them—José was going to walk half-way to Granada on the morrow! Before dining I enjoyed a cheap wash. In the morning Nagel was up before me, or, at least, dressed before me. "Halloa," said I, "dressed already?" "Yes! I have had a wash." "Do you mean a tub?" said I. "No! A towel." Tubs are scarce!

On our way back the driver of our trap stopped for a drink and the woman in the house showed us seven or eight birds in cages, to one of which she drew special attention. It had been caught on the coast and she did not know what it was. I said that anywhere else I should have sworn it was a snow bunting, and was surprised to find that some one from Malaga had told her it came from the snow. It was truly that species and is worth mentioning, because Colonel Irby (whom I met at Malaga) writes in his *Ornithology, &c., of the Straits of Gibraltar*, that it is but a rare visitant in Andalusia.

It is somewhat presumptive to venture upon any decided opinion as to the best method of getting shots at Spanish wild goats after so slight an experience of their habits, but on the ground described I should feel very confident of being able to kill males with good average heads in April or May, although not the best time for sport, if free to follow my own devices, as when in Oregon, thirty years ago, I killed many examples of *Ovis montana* in somewhat similar haunts. First, it is clear that when disturbed an ibex does not willingly go downhill, thus, if stalked, he should be approached from above—if driven, from below. A combination of the two methods promises the best results. The rifle should be on the ridge, the driver, awaiting a signal when possible, should be on lower ground. Secondly, no one who is not in thorough training and accustomed to mountain climbing and difficult or even dangerous walking, should attempt too much hard work before arriving at the stalking ground. Better one night or more in the open, under such shelter as the rocks provide, than a long tedious climb before the actual sporting work of the day begins. Where the distances are great and the ground rough, give a whole day, if necessary, to preliminary arrangements. Take food, and above all, water to the high ground, say 5000 ft., sleep, eat, and drink before sunrise, and be on the highest pass as daylight breaks. At this hour your game is on the move ; later they are more or less at rest and in shelter. If you cannot get a shot by fair stalking before they settle down, signal your drivers to disturb the deep corries and precipices, and when they move it will be *upwards*.

From above you can watch them with a glass, and if due care be exercised you can generally shift position behind the ridge so as to intercept their line without giving them your wind. Wind is of course very treacherous at such altitudes, but by watching the leaves or grasses you can generally see whether it descends after passing you or blows away in a true line above the slope from which you expect game, and thus over their heads. No animal has a more perfect knowledge of the first principles of mountain engineering than an ibex. His path is always angular on a steep ascent, but on arriving at the foot of an overhanging or precipitous ledge, he usually follows the foot of the wall to the easiest pass, and unless you can command his line from above, you should carefully study the ground to discover where this point is. There will usually be time to arrive there even after the game is on the move. Silent shoes are an absolute necessity, and care must be taken not to rattle or dislodge loose stones. Rapid movements are frequently required, unless, of course, as one of a party of guns, you are posted in a fixed position to await your chance. In such case the science must be left to others and orders must be obeyed. Cultivate the power of lying flat on the stomach and looking down from immense heights (no one who is subject to *vertigo* can be trusted alone on a mountain. In such a position you can see without being seen, and as the attention of driven game is always attracted below, a small motionless object above them is not observed, even when on the skyline. In firing, *never forget to put a cap or some other soft substance under the rifle if resting on a rock—*

more shots are thrown wild by want of this elementary precaution than by unsteady nerves. The hand is not sufficient to prevent the jar of recoil on such a rest, unless with exceptionally light charges.

The Sierra Nevada affords equal opportunities if the accounts of those who live near the snow-line are to be believed, but I have no more experience of the higher elevations there than is to be gathered from an entomological excursion in June.

My introduction to the Spanish Ibex has developed a very friendly feeling—which should be mutual, considering the harmless nature of our first interview. Whether these amiable relations will survive the test of a further acquaintance remains to be seen.

BILLIARDS

BY MAJOR W. BROADFOOT, R.E. (RETIRED)

WHILST willingly complying with the flattering request of the Editor for an essay on this favourite game, it is desirable that the writer should disclaim pretension to the position which the title "English Sport" appears to indicate. Very few persons, if indeed there are any, may be considered masters of the art of playing billiards; for to be so implies a combination of sound theoretical knowledge with great practical skill, a condition which for many reasons is hardly attainable—amongst others, because professional players do not ordinarily get the requisite education, whilst amateurs cannot afford the time required for practice. These preliminaries being understood and acknowledged, consider for a moment how great is the contribution towards the amusement of the human race by a ball in various ways. Children get more fun out of it than from any other toy however elaborate; it forms a leading part in the games most popular among boys; whilst for older people its importance may be appreciated if tennis, racquets, cricket, football, golf, lawn tennis, croquet, and, last but not least, billiards are

remembered. Perhaps some reader with a turn for statistics may compile a list of such games ; their number and variety would be found surprising and not without interest.

As to billiards, though nothing certain is known, there is reason to believe that it has been developed from some such game as bowls, and was originally played on the ground or in a court, but subsequently raised to the dignity of a table. This was first of rough construction, the bed being made of wood ; in time list cushions followed, the balls being propelled by maces straight or curved, oftener the latter, as better suited for pushing, by which means most of the strokes seem to have been made. Gradually improvements were introduced ; early in the nineteenth century cues to a great extent superseded maces, leather tips having been invented by a French player ; these naturally led to the application of chalk, a refinement about which some venerable stories are current. For many years the game had an evil reputation ; it was played perhaps with innocence in the houses of the great, and without much of that quality in gaming rooms and public-houses ; but respectability, whether professional or commercial, was careful to avoid or conceal appearance in its realms. Perhaps the first public sign of emergence from this state was when Kentfield opened his subscription-rooms in Brighton ; they were in some degree exclusive, and were frequented for a few years before and after 1850 by the best amateur players. The table had difficult pockets, smaller than those now known as standard, but he and some of his clients attained great excellence of

play. Of the amateurs, Mr. H. Rimington-Wilson was admittedly the best ; his play was greatly admired, and he took a remarkably small start from the champion. Mr. Henry Munster, too, was an excellent billiard-player, and one of the best winning-hazard strikers that ever lived ; he was the only amateur of those days who could play *massé* really well. Mr. Mardon also may be mentioned ; he played a cautious game well, and wrote a book on billiards which is still known and quoted. He contributed occasionally to the newspapers, sometimes referring with admiration to Mr. Wilson's games with Kentfield, at other times upholding the superiority of Kentfield's game to that played by Cook and others on easy tables ; but latterly, having some difference with his former idol, he avoided the rooms and transferred his allegiance to the elder Roberts.

There were many other fine players who owed their skill in great measure to Kentfield, the acknowledged champion till he declined the challenge of John Roberts, senr. This was in 1849, and there is little doubt that on an ordinary table, with easy pockets, Roberts would then have won ; for in addition to great natural aptitude for the game, he had by that time mastered the spot stroke sufficiently to place him far ahead of any player whose game depended mainly on cannons and hazards. But on a table with $3\frac{1}{4}$ -in. pockets and a reduced baulk it is possible that Kentfield might have been successful ; even so, Roberts's victory could not have been long deferred ; youth, power, and a genius for the game must soon have placed him in the position he rightly assumed.

Whilst champion his influence on the game

was very great ; he altered it from dependence on losing hazards and cannons to one wherein winning hazards prevailed, thereby placing it on a sound basis, for of all strokes the winning hazard demands most constant accuracy. Also, after a red winner, the ball is placed on the spot so that its position for the next stroke is absolutely known. This certainty, with other things, led to spot-stroke practice, the groundwork or foundation of the best play which has since been seen. During the first part of Roberts's championship, the next best players were Bowles, who had rooms in Brighton, and Charles Hughes ; after them *longo intervallo* came Dufton, whose name is familiar from often playing with Roberts, and as a teacher. He had the honour of instructing Our Most Gracious Sovereign, when Prince of Wales, in the mysteries of the art, and was very proud of that fact.

As time went on, wooden beds and list cushions made way for slate and rubber, longer breaks attesting improvement in materials and in play. Gradually, too, youthful talent appeared ; Joseph Bennett, William Cook, and, greatest of all for many a day, if not still now, John Roberts, jun., came to the front, one and all of them rivalling the performances of the champion. Cook came first ; his style was different from that of the elder Roberts, less robust and enterprising but more delicate, and, in consequence when table and all were right, more likely to lead to long breaks. In 1869 he challenged the older player, and the match (of which the interest survives to the present day) came off in January 1870. It was played on a table with 3-in. pockets, an arrange-

ment certainly premature, for discounting spot-stroke play ; but, as might have been expected, it resulted in cramping the game for both men. After a rather slow but interesting and close game Cook won by 117 in 1200 points.

Then followed the busiest and briskest time the game has ever had, certainly as regards professional play, and probably also as to playing for stakes by amateurs. Young Roberts challenged Cook and Bennett challenged Roberts for the championship with varying results, till, in 1885, John Roberts, jun., stood out from all competitors as easily first in a class by himself. To his father's power and constitutional strength, which he inherited to a great extent, he added a fertility of resource and an aptitude for play which amounted to genius. In addition he was an excellent showman ; he pleased his public and kept his room well filled. At first, discerning the taste for large scores quickly made, he used tables with easy pockets and cultivated the spot stroke ; then, finding that persons who for the most part did not understand the stroke complained of its monotony, he set about devising a substitute. The big scores must be continued at the old pace, but they must not be made by continually repeated winning hazards. Solution was difficult, but not beyond his power ; the spot stroke was barred, and what is known as " top of the table play," a clever adaptation of spot play, accompanied by runs of close cannons, borrowed from the American game, was introduced. Spectators were delighted and charmed with much genuine play combined with tricks which sometimes were neither sound nor fair, and the

public responded in a way satisfactory to the caterer. Thus things went on for many years which, however, were not so prosperous for lesser stars, and the absence of genuine contests began to be felt. There was no competitor for the championship, play between second or third rate men did not attract, and handicaps were few and far between, mainly, no doubt, because it was difficult to find a substantial sum for prizes.

During this period many excellent players came forward: D. Richards, a very fine player at pyramids and close cannons; his brother, S. W. Stanley, whose contests with T. Taylor were great exhibitions of gameness and tenacity; W. Mitchell and W. J. Peall, both phenomenal spot-stroke players, the latter having made the largest break on record at the English game; John North, awkward and ungraceful in style, but a formidable antagonist, recently killed in a street accident; and, great as any, if not of greater promise, Shorter, whose brief but brilliant career is not forgotten. Besides these, younger men have since appeared, of whom Dawson, Stevenson, Diggle, Memmott and Weiss are in or about the front rank, the two last named hailing from Australia. Other players of much merit are Harverson, Bateman, William Cook—son of the late ex-champion, a promising player who excels at close cannons—Spiller, a good teacher, and M. Inman, who contrives to unite sterling play with the contortions of a nervous amateur.

In spite, however, of all this talent, professional billiards did not seem to be in a very flourishing condition; money, of course, could be made by

teaching, by attending to rooms for play, by exhibition games, and perhaps otherwise, but no one could attract the public as Roberts did, and even his powers were scarcely equal to the task. A genuine struggle was wanted, and after some skirmishing he accepted a challenge from Dawson to play a match of 18,000 points on even terms on an ordinary table with standard pockets. The first half of the game was played at Messrs. Wright's room in Argyll Street, the second in the Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly. The game was chiefly remarkable for Dawson's determined effort to shake the prestige of his great opponent, and for the indifferent display at times by both men. In fact, the difference between exhibition games and one on which a good deal depended was abundantly manifested. Eventually Roberts won by a considerable margin, which he may or may not have owed to playing in his own room ; and soon after the match he went abroad. During his absence several remarkable contests have taken place between Charles Dawson and H. W. Stevenson. Both men have played very fine games, the former having, it is believed, won the greater number. This was to be expected, for Dawson is an older player of great determination and endurance, more able just now to do battle against contrary circumstances, which must in a long game sooner or later make themselves felt ; whereas Stevenson, though more facile and brilliant when matters are favourable, is from temperament or condition perhaps more susceptible to the influences of evil fortune. That is, at any rate, the impression which has been formed after careful attention to their games, and

it conforms with results ; for Dawson won a remarkable game after his chance seemed hopeless, and in no instance that can at the moment be recalled was the finish close. Comparisons are odious, and there is no necessity to press them further nor to prophesy the results of future matches. Stevenson will become increasingly formidable as he gains in experience, whilst at any time Dawson when fit is qualified to disconcert undue confidence.

Again, Diggle is, in essentials, but little behind these two ; less, perhaps, than many excellent judges may think. He plays a calm, thoughtful game, and has made breaks which abundantly testify to his endurance. Unfortunately for him, his game suffered greatly from the abolition of the push stroke ; and he has not, so far as may be judged, taken extraordinary pains to overcome disabilities by the use of *massé*, or by care in planning series of cannons so as after each to leave an open stroke. Dawson has been his chief opponent : they are old antagonists representing York and Lancaster ; but though latterly in receipt of a considerable start, Diggle can hold his own more nearly than is commonly supposed.

Turning now to amateurs. During the 'forties and 'fifties there was much less play than now in London clubs ; the game was for the most part carried on in public or private rooms, or in such an establishment as the Cocoa Tree, which for a long time might justly claim to be its headquarters. There many good players met, and much money changed hands. Soon, however, most of the good clubs had rooms of their own, a preferable arrange-

ment in many ways, though possibly not conducive to the strict enforcement of etiquette. It is impossible to give anything like a satisfactory list of the chief players, but the following names, in addition to those already mentioned, come to mind, and are doubtless known to many clubmen: Captain Campbell, of the Army and Navy Club; Colonel Mundy, who commanded the 19th Foot; the late Lord Dudley; Mr. John P. Ward, the best of a family of good players; Mr. W. W. Rodger, of Hadlow Castle, Kent, who won the University match in his day and developed good form afterwards—all earned deserved reputations; whilst of those still amongst us, Mr. Russell D. Walker, General G. V. Johnson, Captain Bayly, Mr. Dudley D. Pontifex, and Mr. Reginald H. R. Rimington-Wilson, are all fine players, the last three having attained exceptional skill. Mr. Philbrick, of Brighton, was some years ago a very fine pyramid player and winning-hazard striker, and many more names might be mentioned. Besides these, there are others with whose play the present writer is less familiar, but who have established their eminence by winning or creditably competing for the amateur championship promoted by the Billiard Association. Of these, the names of Mr. Sidney H. Fry, Mr. Christey, Mr. A. W. T. Goode (the present holder of the title), and Mr. Large come to mind, and there are others who approach, if they do not equal, the skill of those mentioned.

This consideration of representative professional and amateur players leads one to reflect on that most difficult question, how the distinction between them may best be drawn. At first sight it seems

simple enough ; those who make their living by the game are professionals, others are amateurs. But this is scarcely a practical solution, though whether a better can be found is open to question. In a general way the statement is fairly true, but there are many persons, amateurs under that definition, who really are in every respect more nearly allied to the professional than to the other class. Such, for example (writing generally and disclaiming any intention to offend) are the leading players amongst licensed victuallers. Their surroundings favour the cultivation of the game, proficiency in which is not incompatible with success in their business. On the other hand, a marker would be a professional player under the rule indicated, yet there is not one in a hundred who really attains the requisite skill. Their average form is much better than that of ordinary amateurs, but it scarcely equals that of the class above mentioned ; at any rate, markers who reach the standard of the best competitors for the B. A. amateur championship probably abandon marking in favour of public play and teaching. Also it would scarcely be fair to exclude a man from the amateur stakes because a billiard-table is connected with his business. Persons engaged in table-making may play very well, but it would be misleading to class those as professionals ; so with hotel keepers, licensed victuallers, and others. Nor can skill of play form the criterion ; there are and have been amateurs, though very few, whose average exceeds that of many professional players. Hence it is evident that the difficulty in bringing the various classes of amateurs together for purposes of competition is

very great; perhaps insuperable, and possibly it is no misfortune to the game that it should be so; but if amateurs of all sorts cannot be induced to compete, it is a mistake to talk of an amateur champion. Any such championship should be qualified, even though the invitation may be general.

The question of the professional championship, though not so difficult, is yet very far from being simple. The Association may reasonably urge that the player who has qualified under their conditions remains champion till he is defeated under the same terms, or loses the position by death or resignation. This might be difficult to dispute if its authority were universally recognised, but that can scarcely be admitted as matters now stand; and the problem is further complicated by the general assumption that the champion is the best player of the day. Of course this may not, under any ruling body, be the case; for two or more men may be so nearly equal that the issue is decided by other elements than skill, and of three men the least skilful may become champion. That has already happened and may again occur. Besides this, the best player may not concede the authority of the Association nor approve of its conditions; in which case the anomaly of one or more players offering points to the champion may easily arise. It is difficult to see how this can be prevented, but probably, by raising the value of the position to a sufficient extent, inducement for the best players to compete would be supplied. This involves raising the Association in status and in wealth, a development which is still among the possibilities of the future.

Passing to a matter of greater general interest, it is probable that simplification and improvement of the rules of billiards cannot be long postponed. They urgently require reform, and it would be a great matter if a well-arranged code could supersede the various ones which now exist, and are issued by the firms which supply tables. Generally, no doubt, the most recent revision by the Association prevails, but it is by no means accepted in a full sense of the term even in London. And there is sound reason for this, because the legislation which prohibits the spot and push strokes increases the duration of games, which, in amateur hands, lasts already longer than the patience of those waiting for the table. This remark, it is clear, applies with more force to those who can play a tolerable game, and extends further in application the better the players are, until they reach a very high class indeed, when they can score at the top of the table as fast as by spot play, and are sufficiently skilful to continue series of cannons without a push stroke. Various remedies, in order to increase the speed of play, have been considered. Some persons and clubs prefer that both strokes should be allowed ; others would keep the spot but bar the push, or, if both are prevented, would reduce the points required for game. It is clear that amateur play is slow enough at any time, and that legislation should tend to help men to finish their games faster, and not by making scoring more difficult to prolong them. This is a principle which should be kept in view by any one who undertakes to draft a fresh code or to revise old ones. And, like everything else, it must not be

pushed to extremes ; for no one desires to spoil a fine game by making the pockets absurdly easy or by permitting foul strokes. Reducing the game from 100 to half or three-quarters of the length would, no doubt, meet the case as far as time is concerned ; but men accustomed to a game of 100 points do not readily revert to a shorter one, the winning of which involves somewhat different tactics.

Of the future of the game it is safe to say that further advance may be expected ; tables, balls, cues and other implements will be improved whereby better play will be attainable, whilst advantage may be expected from a simpler code of laws. But beyond a general opinion of this sort it is unwise to go ; the further development of the game must be uncertain. Our tendency, as a nation, is conservative. We prefer to stick to old ways till the advantage of change is unquestionable. Hence we prefer our large table with six pockets to the French pattern of more convenient size ; but the Americans, who give us a lead in many ways, have deliberately discarded the large and adopted the small table without pockets, finding sufficient variety in the cannon game. Each has special advantages, but the smaller table has two which are very obvious : a rest is seldom required, and the table may be put in a room of moderate size, whereas there are comparatively few private houses in London in which a room of ample size for the larger table can be afforded. Moreover, as the player's eye is nearer the balls when the table is small, greater perfection of striking can be cultivated. Hence we see foreign and

American players with control over the balls to which our best men cannot pretend.

Before closing this sketch it has been suggested that some remarks about play and practice might be useful to beginners at the game. They must be brief, for space is limited, and purely general, for particular instructions can be found elsewhere, and men's circumstances are so various that what is best for one is unsuitable for another. When young people have the run of a billiard-room at home, some of the older folk look after their early efforts and train them in the laws, written and unwritten, of the game. This is of much advantage, but is not attainable by all, and those who begin later must by greater diligence make up for lost time. Both should give entire thought to the work in hand ; if it be practice under a teacher, learn from him why he places a ball in a certain position, strikes it in a certain way, and so on ; then, before there is time to forget, replace the balls and repeat the stroke till confidence is felt. A note-book on which rough diagrams may be drawn, and the teacher's instructions recorded, is of great assistance to memory. In practice, either with or without a teacher, there is little temptation to talk on other subjects whilst at play, but when engaged in a game with a friend the case is different ; his conversation may be most fascinating and calculated to draw forth one's own undoubted powers, but if steady play is valued do not yield to the temptation. When the adversary is the better and more experienced player, there is excuse for seeking advice or explanation of certain strokes ; but if his break is interrupted and thereby brought to an end he will

not be pleased, and it is better to postpone conversation till the game is over. When habitually interrupted by the opponent, either cease playing with him or come to an understanding on the subject : the man who talks incessantly during his adversary's break or innings is an unmitigated nuisance. Spectators, too, should be careful that their conversation is so carried on as to avoid distracting players. Attention to such matters, care on entering or leaving a room, avoidance of moving in front of a player, and so forth, characterise the man who has been well entered to the game and generally create a favourable impression.

Of all the faults usually committed by amateurs, such as standing badly to the stroke, playing with bad strength, or the wrong game, &c., none is more reprehensible than want of attention. This is commonly shown by playing with the wrong ball, or being in doubt as to which is the right ball. The first is a serious offence, for which a penalty is provided ; the second, when frequent, becomes a nuisance, and causes unnecessary delay.

In conclusion, it is desirable to invite attention to the entire suitability of billiards for ladies, many of whom play with much skill. The game affords interest and exercise without undue fatigue, whilst the attitudes, when correct, must of necessity be graceful. No game or pastime sets off a good figure to greater advantage, whilst the delicacy of touch which ladies possess is most valuable and leads to good scores. It must, however, be recollected that in all cases practice and play must be subordinated to more important matters. Work and duty come first—play afterwards. If that is

acted on, no indoor game is more interesting or better for health, as age increases, than billiards, including its branches of pool and pyramids, in a comfortable, well-ventilated room. There the weary may find satisfactory relief, and so be better able to meet life's changes with tranquillity.

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