

REMINISCENCES

OF  OF

THE COURSE

THE CAMP

THE CHASE



COLONEL R. P.

MEYSEY-THOMPSON



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Charles Moore.

with Mr. Whitehead's
best wishes for new year

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THE COURSE

THE CAMP

THE CHASE

REMINISCENCES OF . . .

THE COURSE
THE CAMP
THE CHASE

BY

COLONEL R. F. MEYSEY-THOMPSON

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PREFACE.

A COUNTRY that has no history is said to be a happy one. A woman "with a past" does not consider it a subject of congratulation. Lucky man is, however, more fortunate, and may consider that a compliment lies hid in the request that he should write a history of his past life, since the scenes in which he has played his part may be supposed to contain sufficient interest to bear description for the amusement of others.

There is another side of the question, however, which is scarcely so flattering, for such a request also implies that the active part of a man's life may be deemed to lie behind him, and that for the future he must be content to read of the achievements of younger men, instead of sharing in them as in the days of yore.

There is one merit that I can claim for the anecdotes related in this book; this is that they are absolutely true, and care has been taken to check the incidents by referring to diaries and old letters, where memory might have unintentionally proved inaccurate. It is a record of life, as I have known it, for nearly fifty years.

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REMINISCENCES OF
THE COURSE, THE CAMP, THE CHASE.

CHAPTER I.

YORKSHIRE CELEBRITIES.

IN 1851 the great match between "The Flying Dutchman" and "Voltigeur" took place at York, on Knavesmire, when the former revenged himself for his defeat in the Doncaster Cup in the previous year. This match absorbed the minds of every man, woman, and child in Yorkshire in a greater degree than any sporting event that I can recall to memory.

The very cart-horses were "Dutchmen" for some time after this event, while "Voltigeur" became a favourite name for pointers and setters. It may have been the impression then stamped on my youthful mind, by the frequent conversation of those about me regarding these two famous horses, that laid the foundation of a love for "Silk" and "Racehorses," which has ever since accompanied me through life.

Of the incidents connected with this famous race there are not many fresh facts to be recorded. It may, however, be news to some persons that "The Flying Dutchman" had been sold to my cousin, the late Mr. Henry Stafford-

Thompson, on behalf of the newly formed Stud Company at Rawcliffe, before the race at Doncaster. He was to be delivered up after he had run, and everyone connected with the stable fully expected to see him easily win the Cup. That he did not do so is a matter of history. Mr. Henry Thompson, who then generally advised as to the management of Lord Eglinton's racing stud, always stated that Marlow lost his head and did not ride to orders; but Mr. Richard Johnson, the famous old northern racing judge, put the case in a different light, in a conversation on the subject in August 1897. He said—

“The cause of the horse being beaten was that Lord Eglinton said to Marlow, after he was ‘up,’ ‘Now, go and make an example of him.’ I was quite close to them when this order was given, and Marlow forced the pace so that the ‘Dutchman’ was run to a standstill, as he was a little short of work. Undoubtedly,¹ if he had waited on ‘Voltigeur’ he would have won, though the latter was a good horse. Undoubtedly, the ‘Dutchman’ should never have been beaten.”

Marlow was certainly not a first-class jockey, though a fair, steady rider; and it should also be recollected that, in both the Cup and the Match, “The Flying Dutchman” carried a slightly heavier weight than is now recognised as the proper weight-for-age scale. It is believed that the measure of the “Dutchman” was never found out, in his home trials; and when it is recollected what trial tackle was possessed in “Van Tromp” and “Elthron,” among many others, there is sufficient proof of what a phenomenon he must have been.

It had been intended that “The Flying Dutchman”

¹ This word was a very favourite expression of “Judge” Johnson.

should retire to the stud after the season in which the Doncaster Cup was run, and dire was the consternation at his defeat, with the loss of prestige that would ensue staring the newly-formed Rawcliffe Stud Company in the face. Mr. Henry Thompson, therefore, successfully used his powers of persuasion to induce the Earl of Eglinton to retain the horse in training, for a match with his conqueror. The confidence of all connected with "The Flying Dutchman," that he could beat "Voltigeur," when thoroughly wound up, proved to be fully justified.

He did not prove a success in England at the stud; and his stock mostly inherited a very long back, which much militated against their chances. On the other hand, they were excellent hacks, and first-rate jumpers. They were generally well-balanced, with plenty of length, good bone, long arms, beautiful shoulders, and very resolute; so that at one time they were almost invincible in steeplechases (not exceeding three miles), over the old-fashioned, rough, country courses then in vogue.

"Le Batave," "Benazet," "The Brick," "Woodbury Hill," "Top Sawyer," and many others, by their repeated victories, stamped him as one of the best steeplechase sires of the day.

Though he would have been invaluable in Ireland, breeders of blood-stock in England care nothing for steeplechase horses, and as his flat-race progeny were not up to the mark, he was soon dubbed a failure. He was sold to France, where he eventually became the progenitor of a higher class of horse than he had given us here. "Dollar," "Sornette," "Dutch Skater," "Jarnac," "Massanissa," and others, were good racehorses, and showed that if our breeders had had more patience, they would have even-

tually reaped their reward. His daughter, "Brown Duchess," won the Oaks, and his blood is one of the strains in the most successful racing family of the present time, that of the mighty "Galopin" and his even more famous son, "St. Simon."

At this very last Ascot meeting, indeed, his blood has again come to the front in an astonishing way. "Elf II.," son of "Upas," son of "Dollar," son of "The Flying Dutchman," has put us all to shame, and carried off our most coveted prize—the Ascot Cup. It is quite on the cards that he may eventually become a successful sire, and bring that splendid blood again into fashion, even as "Barcaldine" and "Arbitrator" resuscitated the almost extinct line of "West Australian."

The female line has also shone lately with a blaze of triumph, and carried off the St. Leger of 1898 by the help of "Wild Fowler," whose grand-dam, "The White Witch," was a daughter of "Massanissa," the well-known son of "The Flying Dutchman," and thus added further testimony to the value of "a nick" with this famous family of racehorses.

"Ellington," his only Derby winner, took the longest time to win that race that any horse has ever required; and mayhap, if all the stories that floated about were true, he was more than lucky in winning it. If the present Regulations of Racing had been then in force, no Derby would have gone that year to Swinton, for when his jockey took his seat in the scales, on weighing-in, he carried in his hand a whip, weighing 7 lb., with which he averred he had been riding, and it was only by the help of that whip that he could draw his weight correctly. That a change of whips had been effected

was of course very broadly hinted afterwards; at anyrate, it speedily had the effect of causing the new rule to be added, by which no jockey is allowed to weigh with a whip, or any substitute for one.

In the autumn of that year, Admiral Harcourt, in my presence, related to my father how he had called on his friend, Lord Abingdon, on his return from the Derby, and after some little conversation exclaimed—

“I have just won the Derby! are you not going to congratulate me?”

“Oh! is it a subject of congratulation?” replied Lord Abingdon, “then I do so heartily!”

“What is fame? an expression of terms eulogistic,

The making a hero, by popular cry!

It may last but a day, that is characteristic!

Then the man is forgot, who was praised to the sky.”

Though “The Flying Dutchman” was a very resolute horse, he was actually ridden occasionally in his gallops by the daughter of Mr. Henry Thompson, who afterwards married Colonel Soames Jenyns, the chief of the 13th Light Dragoons (now the 13th Hussars). She was the finest horsewoman of the day, and many of her feats were long remembered in her native county. Very frequently she used to come out hunting on thoroughbred two-year-olds, and it was quite a lesson to watch the way she handled them, and soothed their impetuosity, regardless of the plunges that the excitement of the hunting-field caused them to make. Whenever she did ride a hunter that knew its business, no one could go straighter or harder. Her daughter, Miss Jenyns, now hunting in Cheshire, inherits her mother’s talent to the full, and for elegance of seat, skill, and daring, is unsurpassed.

Once, when Miss Thompson was staying at Kirby Hall with her father, before she married, I remember seeing them mount at the hall door before going out hunting. All the guests, who had been invited for the covert shooting, also came downstairs to see them start. The late Duchess of Roxburghe was amongst them, and not having much knowledge of the capabilities of a horse, or, in fact, of riding at all, exclaimed, "Oh, Miss Thompson, do show us what you can do." This was rather a startling request, as there was no fence of any sort to be seen, except an iron railing, separating the large, circular gravel drive from the park. After settling herself in the saddle, the girl just looked round, started her thorough-bred horse into a hand canter, and jumped the iron railings, much to the satisfaction of the Duchess, who never for one moment appreciated the nerve and skill required to do such a feat in cold blood, but still felt that she had seen something worth seeing.

The brother of Mrs. Jenyns, the famous gentleman rider Mr. G. S. Thompson, steered "Cambondo" in the St. Leger, and was one of the very best jockeys of his day. He could go to the scales quite easily at 7 st. 6 lb. His determined finish at Doncaster, against Johnny Osborne on "Holy Friar," who won a short half-length, still lingers in the minds of those who saw it. It was a representative field of jockeys, too, that it would be hard indeed to equal at the present day. Fred Archer was third, on Lord Falmouth's "Yorkshire Bride"; Maidment fourth, on Mr. Savile's colt by "Skirmisher"; Tom Chaloner fifth, on Mr. Johnstone's "Perkin Warbeck"; while Lord Wilton's ch. f. by "Lord Clifden," was sixth, ridden by Tom Cannon. It only required G. Fordham

and Custance to have included almost the whole of the crack jockeys of that day. Mr. Thompson's greatest feat, perhaps, was getting Lord Zetland's "Hardrada" home, and beating F. Archer, on Mr. Cragg's "Oxlip," by a head, in the Garbutt Pedestrian Handicap at Stockton, after a desperate finish from beyond the distance.

In a characteristic letter he writes: "I think I should hardly like to crow over poor F. Archer, unless I also mentioned that I had had *three* close finishes with Johnny Osborne, and that he had beaten me by a head in each of them. Very disgusting! I spoke to his mother, a dear old woman, of his heartless conduct to me, and begged she would give a good talking to him!

"I should think my race-riding career was chiefly remarkable for carrying more dead weight than, I imagine, any other jockey ever did. 5 st. 10 lb. of lead I often carried; and once 6 st. 6 lb., to ride 'Fairyland' 13 st. 10 lb., and it did not stop her winning!"

For the first winning race he ever rode—indeed the first time he ever rode a race—he carried a very different weight. His father had made a match with a friend, to be run at a meeting held on Rawcliffe Ings, half a mile at catch weights. There was no actual condition as to the riders, though the meeting being an amateur one, Mr. Thompson naturally supposed that only "gentlemen-riders" could ride in the match. At the last moment, however, his opponent produced as his jockey a lad from John Scott's stable, who had ridden several winners in public, weighing under 7 st., and as Mr. Thompson weighed 11 st. himself, he very naturally objected. Having found, on referring to the articles, that there was no clause about the jockeys,

and feeling very much annoyed at being "done," Mr. Thompson rode off to the carriage where his wife was sitting, and requested her to "Hand me out George." Through the window he was accordingly handed, and quickly transferred to the back of the "Maid of Skelgate," his bodily weight being only 2 st. 13 lb. "Hold your reins tight, and as soon as they say 'Go,' come home as fast as you can," were the orders he received, and carrying them out to the letter, he won by several lengths, to the delight of the crowd.

Once when schooling the famous "Globule" with the York and Ainsty, he got a fall near Whixley, and turned a complete somersault. On reaching home, he missed some money that had been in his waistcoat pocket, so he returned the next day to the place where he had fallen, and there he found the coins at the very spot. "Globule" was a very small horse, but extraordinarily stout, and he won the Great Metropolitan Steeplechase, of four miles, at Croydon, at that time perhaps the next most important steeplechase after the Liverpool.

Mr. Heathcote, who then owned and lived at "The Durdans," Epsom, now the residence of Lord Rosebery, had a famous racing pony, and before the Metropolitan Steeplechase was decided arranged a match between this pony and "Globule," to be run on the succeeding day. The conditions stated that 7 lb. were to be allowed for every inch in height, and great was Mr. Heathcote's consternation when the two competitors came to be measured, to find that whereas his own pony was 14 hands 2½ inches, "Globule" was only 14 hands 3 inches. He therefore had to meet "Globule," the recent winner

of the Metropolitan Steeplechase, at a difference of only $3\frac{1}{2}$ lb. in weight, which was, of course, a foregone conclusion. "Globule" subsequently ran third for the Liverpool Grand National, and was one of many instances showing how well little horses can perform over that tremendous course, if only they are not crushed with too much weight.

Mr. George Thompson once had an extraordinary escape from what might have been a fatal accident. He was riding a four-year-old into York, when it bolted coming down Blake Street, facing the end of which is Harker's Hotel. With great difficulty the runaway was stopped on the very pavement of the house, but when turned round to go back the horse started off again, and went up a narrow passage between St. Helen's Church and the Clarence Hotel. This was paved with large stone flags, and across it, about half-way down, was a high iron railing dividing it into two parts. The four-year-old went straight at this, and managed to get over without either horse or rider getting a fall, though two of the iron spikes were broken off. A cross-bar, also of iron, ran across the top of the railing, at the height of 5 feet 2 inches from the flags. This must have been actually cleared, or a very heavy fall would have been a certainty. The spikes rise 6 inches above the cross-bar, making the total height of the leap 5 feet 8 inches—a formidable obstacle indeed to face on a wild four-year-old.

Mr. Thompson still has in his possession one of the plates won by "The Flying Dutchman" in the historic match; it is undoubtedly one of the greatest racing trophies of this century.

How well I remember when "Blink Bonny" won the

Derby and Oaks. I was at school at Sherburn, not far from Malton. When the news arrived, our dear old master, the Rev. John Mason, vicar of the parish, started off with his brother, the doctor, to drive over to P'Anson's to interview the famous mare. They returned, much disappointed, old Mr. Mason telling his pupils that "she was only a little brown mare, and he thought very little of her."

The ideas of people, unused to racing, concerning race-horses, are often very amusing to those who are more expert at the game. What is generally liked is a horse "as round as an apple," and it is quite forgotten that two-year-olds and three-year-olds are really mere babies. When they see the same horses at mature age, as stallions or brood mares, fully grown and very fat, they feel satisfied, and can appreciate them; but a horse in severe training is rather a puzzle. They do not appreciate his good points, and do not admire him. "Blink Bonny's" skeleton now reposes in the Museum of the Philosophical Society at York, together with one of the stirrups she carried when she won the Derby and Oaks, and which broke in the latter race, fortunately without causing any harm.

There are other interesting relics in that museum, telling of Knights of the Road. There repose the iron girdle and shackles worn by that Prince of Highwaymen, Dick Turpin, when he was confined to York Castle before his execution. There, too, lie the shackles of an even more famous highwayman than Dick—W. Nevinson, who was finally captured and hung at York, 1676. He was credited with having performed many acts of charity to the poor in his district, and was so popular in consequence

that he was nearly always warned in time when the emissaries of the law were after him. It was he that used to let off the ladies—at least the young and pretty ones—for the ransom of a kiss and a gavotte when he robbed a coach or chaise; and it is recorded of him that if his victims appeared to be poor and unable to afford the loss of their money and valuables, he occasionally handed them back the whole, or a portion of their property, only reserving for himself the spoils of the rich. He lived at a cottage between Thirsk and the Hambleton Hills, not far from Feliskirk, where the ancient hospice stood of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. From this cottage, tradition tells how Nevinson once escaped by the ingenious device of reversing the shoes of his horse, so that his pursuers, in consequence, followed his tracks for some distance in the wrong direction, in the snow which had just fallen. The highwayman was thus afforded sufficient time to make good the start he had obtained, and escaped through the intricate valleys of that wild moorland region.

Of Dick Turpin's famous ride to York—if such ever did take place—there is supposed to be a memento in the Infantry Barracks at Fulford. A huge elm tree stands there, not far from the old Great North Road from Doncaster, which is popularly believed to have been planted over the grave of "Black Bess." At anyrate there is this coincidence with the touching legend, that the tree and the alleged place of the death of the mare are both just within hearing of the deep tones of the Minster on a calm day. Dick Turpin was executed at York in 1739. My maternal grandfather, the late Sir John Croft, was once stopped by highwaymen in Kent, soon after his return

from the Peninsular War, but as he was at that time rather a local hero, on finding who their captive was they released him without ransom and set him free. He was in the habit of keeping up great state—in the fashion of those days—and his outriders and men-servants being always dressed in crimson livery, his equipages were frequently taken for those of Royalty. When attending church on Sundays, a footman in crimson livery used to walk behind him, carrying the prayer books. The permission to use the Royal livery and the Royal Lion as a crest was a special grant made by King Charles I. on 17th June 1641, after paying a visit to Sir Christopher Croft, and obtaining a subsidy from him. Sir Christopher, however, afterwards joined the Commonwealth, and being attainted at the Restoration, he lost the right to use both the liveries and the crest, and it was not restored until 1834. In that year, in consequence of Sir John Croft's services in the Peninsular War, he was granted the right—so unusual for a commoner—to have "supporters," and it was then discovered that the attainder had never been removed. Sir John was most anxious to regain the right of using the Royal liveries, the Royal Lion as crest and the Cross of St. George, but was informed this could only be done if he was able to prove a Royal descent. Fortunately he was able to do so, and the ancient privileges accorded to his ancestor were given back, with the exception that, in consequence of the attainder, the liveries were to be crimson instead of scarlet for the future.

He had brought back a clever Portuguese horse with him, and was rather fond of backing him to do unusual feats. One of these was to ride half-way down the Devil's Dyke

at Brighton, then to turn round and ascend again, which he successfully accomplished. Another time he rode up and down the steps leading from Waterloo Place into St. James's Park in London, which are very narrow. A horse accustomed to the rugged sierras in the Peninsula, and sure-footed, as all the native horses are, did not perhaps find so much difficulty in accomplishing these deeds as at first sight appeared.

A very interesting relic exists at Red House, on the banks of the River Ouse, in Yorkshire, where the statue of a headless horse is a conspicuous object in the park. It is the only statue of a horse lying down that I ever remember to have seen. The inscription at the base tells that this horse was the property of Sir Henry Slingsby, and won the Hunters' Race on Acomb Moor at York in 1633, on the occasion of King Charles the First's visit to Red House.

Poor Sir Henry Slingsby lost his head in the Royal cause, and it is supposed that some zealous Puritan knocked off the head of the statue to accord with the fate of its master.

The capture of Sir Henry was scarcely a friendly act. His near neighbour at Beningborough Park, on the other side of the Ouse, was Sir John Bourchier, one of the Regicides, and a most bigoted Puritan. He had reason to suspect that Sir Henry had left his mansion at Scriven and was hiding at Red House, and for six weeks he kept a close watch. At length, on a hot day, he saw Sir Henry through a telescope. He had come out on to the roof to get a little fresh air, and Sir John at once armed himself with a search warrant and captured the unfortunate baronet, who was shortly afterwards convicted of treason, after a mock trial by a pretended court, and beheaded.

CHAPTER II.

SPORT FORTY YEARS AGO AND TO-DAY.

MY early reminiscences include seeing the daily coach from Leeds arriving at Harrogate. There was then no train communication between the two places, and in fact there was no railway to Harrogate itself, the terminus of the line being at Starbeck. Scarborough has also left many quaint remembrances, among them being the soldiers at the Castle in pre-Crimean days, in all the glory of high stocks, epaulettes, cross-belts, and swallow-tailed coats. We went up once to see the ball-practice, which was carried on in the field in front of the Castle, at two targets facing each other, 100 yards apart—quite far enough for old Brown Bess! A Minié bullet, which was said to be able to kill a man at the distance of a mile, was viewed with great awe. I very vividly remember the bells of the old church being joyfully rung when the news came of the victories of the Alma and Inkermann; and what interested us children quite as much was seeing our mother go out to dinner in a sedan chair.

We used to take home little presents for special favourites among the work-people, tea at 4s. per lb., sugar 8d., and only a very tiny bit of twist tobacco could be bought for 6d. Wages were then only 8s. and 9s. a week, except in the harvest time when they rose to 12s.

How much better off in every way are the labouring classes now!

In 1853 a terrier bitch was bought by one of the keepers, J. Robshaw, which laid the foundation of a very plucky race, that came into my possession in 1866, and has been carefully treasured ever since. A travelling tinker came to the stableyard at Moat Hall (where my father lived during his father's lifetime), accompanied by a white terrier; and the keepers, who were waiting about to go out shooting, began to chaff the man about his dog. It ended in an offer to back the bitch to kill three cats in a given number of minutes, "and they might put them how they liked." The offer was quickly accepted, the cats obtained, and then cats and dog were bundled into a sack together, the mouth tied up, and the "poke" thrown on the floor. The keepers greatly enjoyed the joke, and the presumed discomfiture of the tinker. There was a great rumpus in the sack; but when the time was up, and the contents were shaken on to the ground, every cat was dead, and the keepers had to pay up. Such a dog could not be allowed to go away, and after much chaffering a bargain was struck, and the terrier bought by Robshaw. This man was a great character in his way, and queer stories occasionally cropped up as to what his life had been before he became a keeper. He had the best game-cocks in the country, and many a main was fought in some quiet corner, usually when other folks had gone to church. He loved a good dog, and seemed to have friends everywhere who kept him posted as to the whereabouts of every noted dog of every known breed.

A short time previously he, and a friend of his, had managed to annex a bull-dog that had just won

the first prize at a show of the "Fancy" at Hull, in order to use his services for a terrier bitch that they possessed. Large rewards were promptly offered for the recovery of the bull-dog, but he was kept for a week, and after their purpose was served he was quietly put in a hamper, and sent off, directed to his owner at Hull, no one being a bit the wiser as to where he had been, or for what reason he had been taken.

Bull-dogs were then a very different class of dog from the hideous, misshapen brutes that are now accepted as the proper type. Bull-baiting had not so very long been suppressed, while dog-fighting was a very popular pastime, and for large stakes too. A bull-dog was a working dog, and had to be an active one, while such was their courage that sometimes no means whatever, however cruel, could make them relax their grasp when once their blood was up. Fortunately they were not a quarrelsome race, but they were greatly dreaded.

The bull-dog above mentioned was a splendid specimen, with straight, well-shaped legs, a comparatively long, powerful muzzle, very muscular loins, and a whip-tail. His weight was about 56 lb. Among the produce of the above alliance was a puppy, named "Nailer," which grew into a very powerful dog, 40 lb. in weight. "Nailer" was matched against, and beat every noted fighting dog in the district. His owner then took him over to Kirk Hammerton, where a recently captured otter was kept in an iron cage, partly submerged in the river Nidd, the captor deriving an income by allowing any dog to tackle him, at a fixed sum. Up to this date every dog had been easily beaten, but on "Nailer" being put into the cage, he at once attacked

the otter in the water, and in a short time killed it. In the following year the same man obtained another otter, and again "Nailer" was taken over, but the owner promptly refused to allow the dog to attack it. "T'warnt noa use," said he, "t' dog wur bound t' kill th' otter." Whilst wrangling over the matter, "Nailer" settled it himself, for somehow managing to get in unperceived, he at once engaged the otter, and very quickly killed it also. "Nailer," therefore, was sought as a husband for the tinker's terrier, and on the principle, I suppose, that it is impossible to have too much of a good thing, a daughter of the ensuing litter was in due time consorted with her father, and the foundation was laid of as plucky a race of terriers as ever faced anything with a hairy skin.

Sir C. Slingsby very kindly gave me a charming dog puppy, "Vespa," which inherited some first-rate blood. The first ancestor of which there is record was "Old Vermin," bred by Ned Bates, the then huntsman to Sir R. Puleston; other ancestors, famous in their time, were "Malpas," bred by Rev. T. Drake; "Old Snow," bred by the Earl of Sefton; and "Old Wasp," bred by James Stephenson, of Chester. This latter little champion won seven prize battles, in the last one of which he gave his opponent 1 lb., and fought for 1 hour and 40 minutes.

These terriers and their descendants have accompanied me in all my wanderings, and have now arrived at the tenth generation. They have never been entered at any show, so that, untrammelled by any club rules, or hampered by the changing fashion of the day, I have been free to breed them for shape and work, as judgment has dictated.

Once, when a very young child, I was taken on a pony to watch my grandfather, Mr. R. J. Thompson, shooting on his pony, at the advanced age of eighty-two. A most vivid remembrance has ever lingered of seeing him led up to a "point" in a turnip field, and of his killing a right and left out of the covey, without dismounting. When a young man he joined the 4th Dragoons, who were very soon employed in hunting the adherents of the unfortunate "Prince Charlie" in Scotland. Some of the entries in his diaries are very interesting; and how stern discipline was then, is well shown by the entry on 6th August 1793:—

"A court-martial, in which Barnsley received 520 lashes, and Jones 420. Their sentence was 1000 for desertion."

A more amusing entry appears 11th June 1794:—

"Went to see Gretna Green, four miles from Longtown, and made the old parson who performs so drunk that he could not read ye marriage ceremony to a couple who went there soon after to be married, and they were obliged to wait till he was sober."

17th July 1795 has the grave note:—

"Marched to Gullayn Links to attend the execution of Fraser and Mctosh, two mutineers of ye Grants who were condemned to be shot. Fraser made much resistance."

On 27th December 1798 he "shot three wild geese, one with ball at 150 yards flying, and another at 100 measured yards flying."

25th March 1799 gives—"Great race at Newmarket between 'Diamond,' Cookson's horse, and 'Hambletonian,' Vane Tempest's, for 3000 guineas. 'Hambletonian' won."

The diary for 1800 is headed with the philosophical resolution:—

“Resolved to live as jollily this New Year as my purse and constitution will allow, without injuring them.”

He was an exceedingly good shot, and very fond of it, and was the first landowner in his district to stop trespassing in pursuit of game, thereby incurring, I am afraid, much odium. No one then thought of stopping any respectable person from shooting, and my father used to relate that, when he was a young man, it was the usual custom to pull up and have a shot at any covey of partridges that might be observed, when driving along the road, regardless of what property they were on. Partridge shooting, of course, was then over pointers or setters, and indeed there is no reason, certainly in the north country, why they should not still be shot over dogs, as far as the total of game killed during the season is concerned. In the south of England it is undoubtedly different, with the poor covert, large fields, and small fences that are usually found there. In Yorkshire, however, there are plenty of hiding-places, with the high turnips, rape, clover, thick hedges, and tangled ditches that are everywhere to be found, except on the Wolds. Once, when a boy, I accompanied my father and a cousin out shooting, and we did not leave the house till 12.30 P.M. It was in September 1858, the year of the great comet, and when the bag was counted in the evening, besides hares and rabbits, the two guns had accounted for thirty-three and a half brace of partridges. As far as I can see, the conditions have not changed in the least since then, excepting that they are *now more favourable for the shooters*. The fields are the same, and the hedges

are the same, but the corn was then mown with the scythe, which left a much shorter stubble than the reaping machine does now. With the machine there are constant patches left of long straw, where the corn has been "laid," that afford more concealment than the old stubbles did. In addition, the days of high farming are over, and the land is far fouler than it used to be. A farmer was then ashamed to have thistles and nettles on his land, but now they and the docks often seem to be the chief crop grown. Though there is no reason, as far as agriculture is concerned, why pointers and setters should not still be used, other conditions have changed, and this is probably the real reason that dogs have gone out of fashion. How many keepers and how many owners are there who, if they were given the best brace of dogs in the world, would know how to set about working them? About fourteen years ago, having some excellent partridge shooting at the foot of the Hambledon Hills, friends often came to shoot with me there. Many a time, when asked if he was ready to start, the guest would say, "Oh, yes!—but is nobody else coming?" Then when told, "No, we are going to shoot over dogs," the exclamation was quite a common one, "Dogs! I have never seen dogs work in my life." At the end of the day they would agree that a bag of thirty to forty brace of partridges, for two guns, was a charming day's sport, and they had also learnt—the chief pleasure in shooting thus—the *chasse* the covey gives when broken up, before all the scattered items are accounted for. Of course, "driving" birds requires infinitely more skill for the actual shot, but apart from that, there is nothing else demanded from the shooter,

as he sits on his shooting seat. The arrangement of the day has to be thought out, but the carrying of it out is done by others—the drivers—and whether one bird, or a hundred are put up, makes no difference to them, after they have once started. Planning the “drive” according to the wind, and the known flight of the birds, placing the butts and the “flankers,” requires very close observation and skill on the part of the person organising the “drive.” When once settled, everything should go on automatically, if the “drivers” know their business, and no more planning is required to start the one bird or the hundred birds on that beat. It is a mere matter of chance then, as to how many happen to be there at that particular time. Look how different is shooting over dogs! As soon as the covey is broken, *each* bird gives occasion for thought and skill; and human wits, aided by the dog’s keen scent and cleverness, are in each case pitted against the bird’s intelligence. Whether it has run on, after it has been marked down, has to be decided by the dog’s nose, and he may have to “road” it in turnings and doublings for 200, or 300 yards, before he can at last “peg” it down. All that time the shooter is following close behind, with every nerve on the *qui vive*, for fear the bird should make a successful double, and suddenly get up silently behind, and escape out of shot. When this bird is accounted for, dog and gun must hasten back and search for another, until each one of the whole covey, of mayhap sixteen or twenty birds, has been dealt with. Then, and not till then, may the shooter go and look for a fresh covey. In this way very little ground is disturbed in a day’s shooting, and if there are plenty of birds, with good covert, a manor

of only 2000 acres will provide many days, with a fresh beat each morning. Very many qualities, too, are called forth, that go to create a sportsman. When the covey is first flushed, besides selecting for your aim outside birds, on your flank of the covey,—if possible, the old cock who rises first, and then the old hen who usually gets up last,—the number that rise must be rapidly counted, and the eye be kept on them until they alight. They will probably have to be flushed a second, and possibly a third time, before they break up, and ere this happens a fresh covey may very likely be stumbled upon. The difference in the number of the birds, and the absence of old ones, if you have been lucky enough to kill them the first time, will tell you whether they are the same or not. If it is a fresh covey, let it alone for the present, and, picking up any birds you may have shot, go and look further for the first lot. When this rises and scatters in every direction, quick eyesight and good memory are requisite, in order to make rapid mental notes of the place where each partridge may drop, to be sought for in succession.

The prevailing fault at first of beginners is that they want to do the work of the setters. Instead of slowly sauntering along, or sitting on a gate, if it is preferred, while the dogs quarter the ground under the direction of their master, new hands want to hurry after them, and to walk the birds up themselves. This only distracts the dog's attention, and instead of helping does very much the reverse. Birds, until they have been much shot at, very seldom take much notice of a dog, beyond crouching down. If the dog points steadily, and does not move forward, partridges will sit quiet for a long time, and the guns can

come up at their leisure. Another thing to be noted, too, is that partridges seem to have only one idea in their heads at a time, and they watch what first alarms them, taking little notice of anything else. They keep watching the dog, therefore, and do not notice anyone approaching, if he comes quietly, until he is close up to them.

Of the other form of partridge shooting, viz., walking them up in line, I have little to say. It is a poor form of sport. There is too much noise and hurry. It lacks the skill in using the gun required in "driving," and the element of hunting shown in using dogs. It has only one redeeming point, viz., it has the charm of congenial society, and—is better than staying indoors.

It is "Society," no doubt, that has brought in the modern forms of partridge shooting, to the exclusion of setters. A badly broken pointer is a great nuisance. Few keepers are good "dog men," while most owners have other things to do, and have little time for training their own dogs. It is the fashion of the ordinary sporting writer to attribute the disuse of setters to the bare-shorn stubbles; but, good gracious! who on earth wants to shoot partridges solely in stubbles!! I don't suppose that at any time they killed many there, except when they shot them on the ground as they were feeding, which was frequently the case in the first half of the last century. Even at the beginning of this one this was not an unknown custom. But when once the practice of shooting birds flying came in fashion, and root crops became common, the stubbles were sought to find the birds in; while they were shot in the turnips or other covert. Even now, scattered birds will sometimes drop in a stubble field, and lie well there, but this is not what the sporting writer refers to.

His idea seems to be that coveys can only be shot in stubbles—*ergo*, if a fresh, unbroken covey will not lie there, dogs can be of no use. Q.E.D.!!

Another point is that nowadays an owner wants to shoot at a great many other places, and has little time to spare for killing his own game. Formerly, in days of limited facilities for locomotion, the squire had to depend upon his estate at home for his sport, with perhaps a few days with his immediate neighbours. They also were in the same plight, and they wished to make their fun last as long as possible. They had not a great number of friends whom they must invite in return for past hospitality; and as to shoot properly over dogs there should not be more than two guns, it just suited the habits of the time. In these days the host wishes to kill all the birds in one or two parties and have done with it, and since, in “walking up” birds, it does not matter in the least how many guns there are, he is able to give pleasure and make due return to a great many friends at once. Lastly, there is always excitement in a crowd, and eight or nine good sportsmen gathered together are sure to have a merry time if there is plenty to shoot at, and nothing occurs to mar the pleasure of the day.

Pointers and setters have therefore fallen into disuse, and more sociable forms of shooting have become the fashion. In the southern counties the country is often too open to make shooting over dogs profitable, and the north has followed the fashion of the south. Late on in the season, too, partridges become so wild, and take such long flights, that pointers and setters can be of little use, so by one means or another the way has been paved for the introduction of “driving.” To the skilful gunner this is

most attractive, and happily it is becoming more and more the practice, instead of "walking in line"—which latter, moreover, can only be successfully carried out early in the season.

A frequently asked question is, "What constitutes sport; where does the difference begin between it and pastime?" The answer to this seems to be that the former, to be perfect, consists of the pursuit of a wild creature, which is absolutely uncontrolled in its movements, and is in the full possession of its wits. The more the ingenuity of the pursuer is required to outwit the quarry, the nearer does that pursuit approach to perfection. For instance, no one can maintain that the tracking of a wounded bird with a retriever, however well the dog performs, is on a par with the "roading" of a pointer or setter after a fresh running bird. In the first case the poor victim has just been badly wounded, has suddenly lost its power of flight (its natural means of escape), is thoroughly frightened, and cannot possibly devise a plan of action as well as the comparatively calm mind of the bird that is still in full possession of its powers. The pigeon hustled into a trap compares ill with the same pigeon in its wild, rocky, sea-washed home. The rabbit shaken out of a bag amongst a crowd of shouting spectators and yelping dogs, without a hole or other place of safety to run to, is on a very different footing from an old buck rabbit started by a terrier, with 200 yards of well-known ground between himself and his house. The capture of a 50 lb. salmon swept into a net is quite another thing to the landing of the same noble fish when it has risen of its own accord and seized the tempting lure. Sport has no sympathy with cruelty, though the latter may possibly be inseparable

from its performance, but a real sportsman ever regrets the pangs, that he would willingly avoid causing, if possible, and does his utmost to lessen them.

Lastly, let no one decry any phase of sport because he takes no interest in it himself. Possibly he lacks the skill or physical attributes to become an adept; or he may never have had the opportunity of learning its A B C, and has therefore never acquired a taste for it. No one, however, can fully possess the qualities of a true sportsman, if he seeks to magnify his own pursuit by belittling that of another.

Different qualities are required, and in many cases special gifts, to attain the front rank as a performer in the various branches of sport. There are some, however, that are needed in all; and no one can ever hope to achieve success unless he possesses in an eminent degree observation, energy, patience, calmness, and quick powers of balancing in the mind the signs noted, and of drawing true deductions therefrom.

This chapter may be fitly concluded by a quotation from a letter of one of the Fairfaxes (the ancestors of my mother) to his mother, when he was a lieutenant in the Royal Navy, and which shows how shooting was followed two centuries ago. It is dated Plymouth, 28th October 1690, and contains the following paragraph:—

“My diversion will be to walk into the fields with a gun.”

A few days afterwards Robert Fairfax was promoted post-captain, and appointed to the command of the “Conception.”

CHAPTER III.

ETON.

IN January 1859 I went to Eton, remaining there until December 1865, during a momentous period in the history of the college. Those years witnessed the commencement of the Volunteer Force, the Beagles, and practically of the "Eight," as it is now constituted, and marked the beginning of the epoch of change in the life of an Etonian, that has since made gigantic strides. It was then still the fashion for all boys to "shirk" a master, going through the streets of Eton to the Rafts, though when once arrived at the river they were again safe "in bounds." Present Etonians could hardly realise what Eton was in those days, before the birth of the above three great institutions. At that time the Eton Eight had no annual race to look forward to, and boys were made members of it for various reasons, and who had no claim at all on the score of merit.

Sometimes they got into the Eight because they were popular boys in the Sixth Form, the cricket, or other eleven, who could pull a fairly good oar; and it was not till the advent of Dr. Warre, as a lower master, that this was all altered. When he took the Eight in hand, dire was the dismay and discontent amongst those who had hitherto mismanaged matters to their hearts' content. After Dr. Warre received permission to train the Eight and

take it to Henley, there was a great reaction in his favour throughout the School, which culminated with the first victory for the Ladies' Plate at Henley Regatta. By the way, on one occasion when returning from Henley, an accident occurred to the train that might very easily have been a most serious one. We were approaching Twyford Junction, and, having an idea that we were to change there, and the pace appearing very great considering how close we were to the station, I got up and looked out of the window. It was a fortunate move, for there was just time to see that we were going straight into the station-master's house, and to call out to the others in the compartment to be prepared for the shock. Fortunately an empty horse-box took the edge off the speed of the engine, but the latter was still able to break the powerful buffers of the permanent "stops," and then to crash through the wall of the house, where it lay on its side, having fallen through the floor. There it lay puffing, panting, and steaming, with the big wheels going futilely round, while the enginemen in vain tried to get at the machinery to arrest the action, which seemed as if it would go on for ever. The horse-box had been reduced to small splinters, the buffers of the carriages in the forepart of the train were broken, and some of the occupants were badly hurt. None, however, of those in our carriage were injured, though all who were sitting with their backs to the engine were violently thrown into the laps of those sitting opposite, in spite of having been well prepared for the coming crash. The cause of the accident was stated to be that the engine-driver mistook his orders, and thought that he was to run through the station, as he had done on the down journey, instead of going into the siding. He

was unaccustomed to the route, having been sent that morning for the first time with the special train, which he was then taking back.

What Dr. Warre has done for Eton few can tell, and only those who were there in that early period can guess. Not only did he coach the Eight and reform the whole tone of the boating on the river, but he also threw himself into the Volunteer Movement, and worked hard at training the shooting team. They were shortly rewarded by winning both the Ashburton Shield and the Spencer Cup in the Public Schools' Competition at Wimbledon.

I was very unfortunate in my fag-master during my first half. As a rule fag-masters were kind to their fags, and did not exact much service from them beyond making tea, preparing a few pieces of toast, frying eggs and bacon, or some similar kind of dish, and as soon as this had been done the fags were dismissed. I fagged with two others for a mess composed of three—my own particular master and two others, one of whom afterwards rowed in the Eton and Oxford Eights, and on several occasions stood between me and the bully for whom I fagged. In those days we had nothing to eat before going to early school, and immediately on coming out, at 8 A.M., the fags had to repair to their masters' rooms. At 9.30 A.M. I had to be at my tutor's for "pupil-room," and my fag-master would constantly take out his watch and keep me waiting there until there was just barely time for me to get to Mr. Dupuis' house in Weston's Yard, knowing full well that I should get nothing to eat until dinner at 2 P.M. Sometimes I have been half fainting for want of food in the raw winter mornings, for I went from pupil-room straight into "School," from which we did not come out till 11.45 A.M.,

and then there was pupil-room again till nearly dinner time. Whilst keeping me waiting, "X" would amuse himself by "spanking" us with hair brushes, generally using the bristles side, or with a cane, and varied the performance by making us do the same to each other, till we could not help bursting into tears from pain, hard as we tried not to do so. When, however, "P" was present, he would not allow this bullying to go on, and frequently spoke to the others about it. One day, however, "X's" ingenuity devised a new torture, that very nearly put an end to my career altogether. This was to pour boiling tea down our throats, because there happened to be "blacks" in his cup. We were told to stand together, and he commenced with me. To this day I remember the shock that seemed to strike me as I swallowed a mouthful of the boiling liquid, for the water had only just been poured into the teapot. Something seemed to be pressing me into the ground from the crown of my head. I felt perfectly dazed, and turning, staggered out of the room with only one idea—to get to my own room, if possible, and lie down. Before I had gone three or four steps "X" ran after me and carried me back, and then got thoroughly frightened, for I could only gasp, and was utterly unable to answer, or even grasp the questions that he asked me one after the other. I did not feel any pain after the first acute sensation, but only felt thoroughly stunned, as if I could do nothing but lie down and be quiet; and the only words that I really distinguished, and which fixed themselves into my memory, was "P" saying, "What an infernal shame. What a d—d bully you are. Poor little chap." Finally, I got downstairs, and even managed

to get to school, without anyone finding out; but all my life since I have suffered from a delicate throat, which has constantly required great care. My eldest brother, who shared my room, and who was only a little boy in the Fourth Form, when he found out what had happened, most pluckily went up to "X" and told him what he thought of him; and anyone knowing the immense gulf there is between a little Lower Fourth Form lad and a boy in Middle Division of Fifth Form, will understand the admiration I felt at his so doing. I was but eleven years old at the time, in Lower Greek, in the Lower School, and it can scarcely be wondered at that I never complained to the authorities, for the schoolboy code of "never peaching" is held the more sacred the younger the boy. One good result followed, that "X" was too thoroughly alarmed to bully us any more, and the next half I fagged for another master.

The Eton beagles grew out of a very small commencement, like most other things. In 1859 a boy in Lower School, named Edwards, kept a very few hounds with which he pottered about, and occasionally ran a drag. The following year Moore, in the Sixth Form, had a rather more pretentious pack, but it was not till 1861 that it became a school institution, and subscriptions were received. In this year J. Chambers, a member of the Eight, was the master, afterwards so well known as the winner of the walking race at the championship meeting, and the perennial umpire of the 'Varsity boat race until his early lamented death. In 1862 W. Trench, also in the Eight and the football eleven, became master, and regular Whips were appointed, these being Schneider, a member of the Eight, and H. Meysey-Thompson, my

eldest brother. 1863 saw Honble. F. G. Pelham, master, who won the School mile, and was second in the steeplechase. H. Meysey-Thompson was the first Whip, and won the hurdle race, running third also in the mile. The second Whip was Griffiths, afterwards the captain of the boats. In 1864 H. Meysey-Thompson became master, and won the 3-mile steeplechase. He should have also easily won the mile, which was run on the Dorney Road. He was leading past the Sanatorium, when a man called Gaffer—one of the “cads” who hung about the wall doing odd jobs—drove rapidly by in a baker’s cart and purposely turned right across him just before going under the railway bridge, of course stopping him altogether. Another competitor, Dering, shot by in the confusion, and my brother was never able to get through the crowd of boys, who were running in with the competitors, and had perforce to finish second.

Amongst his other achievements, he afterwards ran second for the Inter-’Varsity hurdle race. It proved rather a disastrous race, for part of the course had been newly turfed, and only one of the competitors had sound, old grass to run on. This was Jackson, who, though really far the slowest of the four runners, won the race for Oxford through the accident of having firm ground to run on. The paths of the others could easily be traced after the race, the turf having been torn up by the spikes of the running shoes, and the course looking more like a newly-ploughed field, instead of a running ground, excepting the line of Jackson’s hurdles, which remained as smooth as a bowling-green. The four runners were—C. N. Jackson, 1; H. Meysey-Thompson, 2; Hildyard, 3; R. Fitzherbert, 4. My brother soon afterwards ran second for the hurdle

race at the Championship Meeting, and a little later was the winner of a rather sensational match at York. Clare Vyner was entertaining a party at Newby for Thirsk Races, and Mr. "Charlie"¹ Fox having been considerably chaffed by some of the guests about his performance in a race he had been riding, retorted that if they could beat him on a horse he could beat them on his own legs, and offered to run any man in the room for £50. Clare Vyner instantly took him up, saying he would name someone to beat him, and then named my brother. Fox had really forgotten that there was a high-class athlete in the room, but he was too proud to draw back, and though Vyner offered to let him off the match he insisted upon going through with it. The race was run from Buckle's Inn towards York on the Tadcaster Road, and a large number of people came to see it. Lord Neville — now Marquis of Abergavenny—and the late Lord Wenlock each brought a coach-load of people, and there were numerous carriages besides. The race was a foregone conclusion, and although Mr. Fox was attended by two professional runners, whom he had engaged to train him, and ran gallantly in front at a great pace, for the first three furlongs, the result was never in doubt, and he was beaten very easily.

The two Whips in the year of my brother's mastership of the Eton beagles were Algernon Turnor and Sandbach, and the trio were succeeded in the following year by C. S. Newton, master, myself as first Whip, and E. Royds second Whip. Newton was in the Eight; I won the Fencing, the 200 yards race, was second in the hurdle race, and, making the highest score for Eton at

¹ The Honble. Charles Lane-Fox, brother of Lord Conyers.

Wimbledon, shot for the Spencer Cup. Whatever chance that I might have possessed for this trophy, was quite thrown away for want of food. We left Windsor before 8 A.M., having had an early breakfast, and after arriving at Wimbledon went through a long competition for the Ashburton Shield. This was over about 2 P.M., and those who had friends in the camp then went off to luncheon. I knew no one, nobody looked after me, and never having seen a camp before I did not know where to get any food, or how to set about obtaining any. When the shooting commenced for the Cup at 3.30 I was faint for want of something to eat, and had quite gone off my shooting. I have often wondered since how those in charge of the team could possibly have neglected to look after the competitor who was to be their champion, and on whose sole shoulders rested the possibility of winning the prize for Eton. It was very strange.

I also really won the Long Jump, though I was only placed third. The nominal winner, T. H. Phipps, fell prostrate on landing, and so did Oswald, who was placed second. Of course these jumps should not have been reckoned, unless the measurements were taken to the nearest portion of their bodies. Instead of this, the distance was allowed to be counted to the part furthest from the take-off, and thus I was beaten, though my jumps were better than theirs when they stood erect. Even thus one of my jumps was the longest, for I cleared 18 feet 3 inches, but put my toe on the line when I took off, so the jump was not allowed. We jumped from a chalk line, like a cricket crease, in a grass field, and as there was nothing to jump at but plain grass, it was not easy to make a great performance. I was offered another

try, but as I had to meet J. H. Ridley in a few minutes in the 200 yards race, I refused, and besides I claimed to have won already. The sympathy of the school was entirely with me, and it was generally thought I was unfairly dealt with. I won the 200 yards race. Ridley won the 100 yards race, and the "quarter" at the Championship Meeting the next two years.

My fellow-whip Royds won the steeplechase and mile in 1865, and afterwards won the four-mile race at the Inter-'Varsity sports, and also the Championship four miles. Poor fellow, he met with a fatal accident almost immediately afterwards amongst the glaciers of the Alps.

A hunting whip was presented to me when appointed First Whip, which has been my constant companion ever since. I swam with it in the hunting accident on the Ure. It has accompanied me in all my wanderings, and is the only hunting crop I have ever possessed during the thirty-four years that have lapsed since its presentation.

For the first few years of the "beagles," it was customary to present a "testimonial" to the Master, and when it came to my brother's turn, it was decided to give him a silver hunting-horn; the money was subscribed, and he was requested to choose one for himself in London. He did so, and a day was appointed for a breakfast, at which the formal presentation was to take place. Suddenly some one suggested that instead of making a present of the horn, it should instead be turned into a sort of "badge of office," to be held by each successive Master during his term of mastership, and that his name and year should be engraved upon it. This being a new idea, was received with acclamation,

and it was in vain pointed out that the money had been subscribed for a totally different object, and that if an official horn was desired, a special subscription should be raised for it. Boys are but children, and argument is lost upon them. Something fresh is apt to tickle their imagination to the exclusion of other considerations, and so, though the breakfast was held, no testimonial was given for the year 1864.

Two of the most exciting events, that stirred us all to the highest enthusiasm, were the marriage of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales, and the visit to Eton of the popular hero, Garibaldi. For weeks before the first event, we all assisted in making huge quantities of artificial roses, for the immense wreaths that connected the artificial towers erected over the streets at Eton. Our excitement was at its height when the carriage containing the bride and bridegroom passed through the college for the first time, and we shouted ourselves hoarse as we ran alongside the carriage, hat in hand, as far as we were able to accompany it. At any time it used to be the greatest pleasure to us, if any of the members of the royal family passed through Eton for a drive, but our especial favourites were Her Majesty the Queen and H.R.H. the Princess of Wales. There are no more loyal subjects in the empire than the boys of Eton College.

When Garibaldi arrived in his well-known red shirt, he received one of the greatest receptions possible. His deeds, as reported in the newspapers of the time, had raised our imaginations to the highest pitch, and we crowded eagerly round his carriage for the honour of shaking hands with him. He was extremely pleased.

He stood up, shaking hands vigorously with such numbers of boys who pressed on, one after the other, that he must have been glad at last when the ordeal was over. Had he lived in these days he would probably have taken the local music-hall, or some similar place, given lectures, and made a fortune—*Tempora mutantur!*

In the winter months we often had the pleasure of seeing the Queen's staghounds pass along, either on their way to the meet, or returning to their kennels at Ascot. Charles Davis was the huntsman, and old as he then was, his remarkably graceful seat, and neat, slim figure, marked him out as being still an exceptionally fine horseman. It was quite a red-letter day when the pack was seen approaching, and we used to rush eagerly to see them pass. Long may they continue, now that the opposition to their existence has met with the fate it deserved. It is very unlikely that a single one of the thousands who lately appended their signatures so readily to the protests against the pack had ever hunted with it, or had the slightest practical knowledge of the conduct of the pursuit they were so anxious to meddle with. Their knowledge was but hearsay, either gathered from the newspapers, or from speeches made by persons as ignorant as themselves. The greater part, if not all, of the signatures, were those of old ladies, shop-girls, domestic servants, post-office employees, even of school children,—a goodly crew, forsooth, to decide upon the merits or demerits of the case. Horace's advice, "*Ne sutor ultra crepidam,*" is as much wanted now as it was at the time when he penned it so many centuries ago.

There were boys at Eton at that time destined to become very famous in after life, and amongst them were

Mr. Arthur Balfour and Lord Randolph Churchill. The latter did not show any remarkable promise, being chiefly distinguished for not caring whom he "cheeked," whether it was a bigger boy or a master. If he saw the opportunity of saying something smart, he did not lose it through shyness—or fear of the consequences. Another very distinguished Etonian of that epoch is Dr. Hubert Parry, who was at Mr. Evans's house with me. We always expected him to turn out a great musician. He was ever composing songs, even in those days, and took his degree in music before he left Eton. He played a very prominent part in the House football eleven, helping us to win the football cup for "My Dame's" in 1865.

That famous athlete and sculptor, Mr. C. B. Lawes, was also then at Eton. He succeeded in winning nearly every athletic prize to be got there, in rowing and running; and, after being Captain of the Boats, passed on to Cambridge, where he was stroke of the 'Varsity Eight, also winning the half-mile, mile, and two-mile races. He was the first champion mile winner, and secured both the Diamond Sculls at Henley and the Wingfield Sculls on the Thames. He was born in 1843, and now, in his fifty-sixth year, has actually broken the records in cycle racing, for both the flying quarter of a mile and the flying mile. The "*laudatores temporis acti*" have indeed something this time to boast of, in Mr. Lawes' marvellous achievement.

Mr. F. G. Hobson was at "Joynes's," and became one of the band of first-rate gentlemen-riders who have hailed from Eton, and set the seal on his fame by winning the Liverpool Steeplechase on "Austerlitz." His example was subsequently followed by poor "Roddy" Owen, whose death, from cholera in the Soudan, brought such genuine

sorrow to his many friends and comrades at home and abroad; and who did such good work soldiering in Africa and India, after he had gained the object of his ambition, in winning the "Liverpool" on "Father O'Flynn." The fame of the "Lytteltons," in cricket, has been world-wide; in rowing, "Willan," "Tinnè," and "Goldie," are still names to conjure with; whilst Lord Rathdonnell (Tom Bunbury) was scarcely, if at all, inferior to them. In politics, besides Lord Randolph Churchill, the name of Lord Rosebery is a tower of strength. He was extraordinarily clever, and most amusing. In "Pop," the Eton Debating Society, we used to look eagerly forward to his speeches, which were full of sparkle, and a great contrast to those generally made by other speakers. It was his wont, when practicable, to speak towards the end of the debate, and to cut up and criticise, in a very scathing manner, the most prominent of his opponents. Excellently well used he to perform this operation. He was fond of shooting in the holidays, and came sometimes to Auchnafree, in Perthshire, which fine grouse moor was then rented by my father. At Kirby Hall, in a place of honour, is a beautifully pied stuffed grouse, that was fired at simultaneously by Lord Rosebery, my father, and myself, it having attracted the attention and the aim of each of us as it rose with a brood, on the 12th August 1866.

Lord Rosebery was also the first competitor I drew, when fencing for the prize in 1865, which I finally won. He was a most dashing beginner, and gave, at first, considerable trouble in repelling his attack, but he tired with the rapidity with which he made his thrusts. I had worked very hard to win this competition, and, no doubt, was in excellent condition. On the very first night, when

I entered Angelo's School-at-Arms, old Mr. Angelo took me in hand himself, as no other master was disengaged at the moment. Mr. Angelo was very fond of a little "*tour de force*"—the trick of disarming your opponent—which is very easy, if he happens to be a beginner or is careless. The trick consists of manœuvring your own blade until you get it exactly on the opposite side of your opponent's foil, to where the tips of his fingers meet the ball of the thumb. A very slight effort then knocks the handle of his weapon out of his grasp. As I had never in my life had a foil in my hand before, Angelo very soon was able to put his favourite trick into practice, but instead of the foil flying out of my hand, as he had expected, my wrist gave to his jerk, and I still retained my weapon. "Hulloh," said he, "you have a wrist! You are worth teaching. Now I shall teach you myself, and you shall win the fencing." He took great pains with me after that, and so did his chief instructor, that beautiful fencer, Mr. M'Turk. After I left Eton—and, indeed, before it—I was most kindly given "free run" of the School-at-Arms in St. James's Street, and for two or three years I constantly attended there in the summer; but the exigencies of the service then took me away from London. My old friends, too, Angelo and M'Turk, had died, and I knew the place no more. I learned to beat my opponents by combining attacks. After a little loose play, to get an insight into the other's method, I commenced on a settled plan. I tried one attack, which was probably guarded against; after a little more play, I returned to the same attack, but the instant it was met I instantaneously added another. If this was again guarded, in a short time I repeated the two previous attacks and added a third. This was almost

always fatal, but I never knew anyone who could defend a fourth—even M'Turk himself could not do so. By working on this system, the brain, knowing what it was going to perform, could direct the hand with marvellous rapidity. I combined the different attacks quite by chance, as the fancy took me at the time, so that no opponent could learn especially to guard against them. Each day they would begin differently, and succeed each other differently. I never forgot, however, at any time what movement I had commenced with, or with what others I had followed it up. To gain complete command of my wrist, I pinned on the wall of my room a small piece of paper, with a small circle, the size of half-a-crown, figured upon it. I also had another piece of paper, with a very tiny target on it. Every time I went into the room—perhaps a dozen times a day—I took up a foil and practised feints and rapid thrusts at the figure on the paper, till the point of the foil never worked outside that small circle. Then putting down the foil, I would take up my rifle and snap six or eight times at the target, also doing a little position drill. I was rewarded by winning the fencing, and by being the best shot of the Eton team at Wimbledon, in the Public Schools Competition.

My teachers would never allow me to practise "single-stick" for fear of spoiling my wrist for fencing; but my next brother, the late Mr. A. C. Meysey-Thompson, Q.C., not having naturally quite so supple a wrist, was allowed to practise both forms of "passage of arms," and won the first prize in each, the year after I won the fencing.

There is a very peculiar game of football—played, I believe, at Eton alone—called the "Wall Game," at

which goals are almost unknown, and one of the most triumphant moments of my life was when I once kicked a goal at the "tree" end. It was only in a small match. My usual place was "flying man" or "short behind," and on many occasions did I have a try to hit the "tree" or the "door" which constitute the respective goals at either end. There was never any time to take a steady kick, for the "bully" was always very close; and whenever the ball did come out, my usual experience was that I kicked the ball, and somebody else kicked me, which invariably resulted in my falling on to the flat of my back. On the occasion referred to, we were so far away from the tree end that, though I had more time than usual, I thought it useless to try for a goal, and kicked simply in that direction, without taking any particular aim. It is always the unexpected that happens, however. Away the ball sped, and I think that our opponents were almost as pleased as we were to see the ball hit the tree, for it was the only opportunity most of us ever had of seeing a goal obtained in a match at the wall. It was a glorious moment, although the pleasure of anticipation had been wanting!

CHAPTER IV.

ARTFULNESS AND ART.

THERE was a quiet boy at Evans's, who did not take much part in games, and who was not particularly studious—from the master's point of view—but who was an exceedingly clever mechanic, and devoted to fishing. His great delight was to drive the engines between Windsor and Slough, and he had copies of every detail of every one of them; all beautifully drawn to scale by himself. He made more than one small engine, entirely by himself in his play-time, at the local ironmonger's shop; one, at anyrate, being just large enough to take him as passenger up and down the garden walks. Neville was so keen, too, about fishing, that he used to get up very early in the morning, and effect an exit from the house, to try for trout near the master's bathing place, below Windsor Lock, and he caught a considerable number from time to time. He was always back in his place in school at 6.45 A.M. On one occasion he wrote to the late Frank Buckland and asked him to give an Eton Boy some eyed trout ova, and the former most good-naturedly sent him 200. These were placed in a tooth-brush dish, close to the window, and a sufficient change of water was obtained by having a tumblerful of water above the dish, from which depended some lamp-wick, that, acting

on the principle of a syphon, kept up a constant drip. Some more lamp-wick at the other end of the dish carried off the overflow into a tumbler below. The whole of the apparatus was balanced on nails driven into the wall.

A considerable number of the ova hatched out successfully; and about the time when the umbilical bag was absorbed, they were transferred to a water-tight fern-case, placed on the window-sill. A more pretentious current was now required, which was effected by placing a tin bath on the top of the bed, to act as a reservoir, and "a stream" was obtained by adding some india-rubber tubing, with a tap to control the supply; some more tubing carried the waste water out of the window. The fern-case was made to resemble a natural pool, with little grottoes of stone, a gravel bed, and a few water plants, and very healthy the troutlings were. It was wonderful at what a pace they grew—but then we stuffed them with food! As the fish increased in size, they had to be weeded out, until at last only about twelve or sixteen were left; the largest of them being at the end of the half as long as a "middle finger," and all being beautifully marked with crimson spots.

They were an endless source of amusement to us, and a great deal of knowledge of the habits of trout was gained by watching their movements. It was interesting to see how they came out into the current from their hiding-places as soon as ever the tap was turned on, just for all the world as, when a mill is set going, their bigger relatives sail out into the mill-stream, and commence to feed. In their earliest days they were chiefly supplied with the roe of soles, obtained from the fish-

monger, and the tiny ova just suited the wee fish. As they got larger they required other food, which was supplied by getting caddis from the Thames, flies, tiny worms, and, as they grew still bigger, very young fish of various descriptions. At one time we got a quantity of perch spawn from the river, which was duly hatched out in a "gold-fish" bowl; and the perch-fry was then given to the trout. It was a noteworthy circumstance that after they had gorged themselves on flies, until their little bodies resembled those of well-fed city aldermen, they would still manage to stow away some caddis; and then, when they looked as if they must burst if they swallowed anything more, they would yet chase and manage to get down a tiny perch or minnow. If, however, the diet was reversed, and the dinner began with fish, as soon as they had had enough of them they would look at no other kind of food. It was an instructive lesson, that I have since often turned to good account. Neville took the "survivors of the fittest" home with him, and turned them into a pond. The next summer the pond was netted to see how they had progressed, and our "monster" of the fern-case had grown into a goodly trout, nearly one and a half pounds in weight.

I once saw a magnificent trout caught by a gentleman on the bank of the river, opposite "Middle Club" in the playing fields. We were only practising cricket, and all stopped to watch the contest between man and fish. He landed it at last, and very kindly brought it over in the well of the punt, that we might see it. It weighed between 8 lb. and 9 lb., and was caught on a red palmer. It does seem a shame that so many magnificent trout are

yearly caught by the unsportsmanlike device of a live bait. All fishing for them should be restricted to "fly" or "spinning," and if an angler is not sufficiently skilful to catch them thus, should he not leave them for better fishermen than himself?

In the world of art there is one name that must not be forgotten, the famous painter, Mr. A. Stuart Wortley. His pictures of grouse-driving and moorland scenery were quite a revelation when they were first exhibited; and, though he has since had many imitators, he still remains unsurpassed in depicting the poetry and glamour of the wild scenery, which makes the pursuit of grouse so unspeakably charming. It is seldom that such an exponent of the art of shooting, so thoroughly versed, too, in all the details of the management of a "drive," combines the power of placing his knowledge upon canvas. In this happy instance the pictures afford universal pleasure, for the eye of the art critic is equally charmed with that of the sportsman, his painting being assuredly correct in every detail. Artists without knowledge of their subject are too prone to make some glaring error that offends the sense of the expert; while, when the positions are reversed, the sportsman only succeeds in producing what the artist too truly designates a miserable daub. May Eton soon send forth another worthy to follow in the footsteps of Mr. Stuart Wortley! There is room enough for several.

An honour was once accorded to me that I am afraid was unmerited. On Jenny Lind most good-naturedly coming to sing at a village concert, got up by the Rev. Stephen Hawtrey, for his school near Windsor, I was invited to sing in a duet with her, and the fact has been a

very pleasant memory ever since. I must have been very small at the time, for, as I stood by her, holding one sheet of the piece of music, I remember that she seemed to tower above me, and I fancied she must be very tall indeed. As such I continued to think of her, until, going round Madame Tussaud's wax-works one day, I suddenly came upon the effigy of the famous prima donna, and it was with quite a shock that I discovered how very small in stature she really was. I fear that the difference between her real height and that of my imagination about accords with our respective parts on the occasion of the duet.

In our time the greatest honour that Eton could bestow was to be elected a member of "Pop." Nominally a debating society, it really was a most exclusive club, and was limited to twenty-eight members. No one had a chance of being elected to it unless they were distinguished in some way or other, and were "good fellows into the bargain." No one, however he excelled in the athletic world, was considered a "real swell" in school-boy language unless he was also a member of Pop. It was the touchstone of excellence, and the election to it the hallmark of Eton. Many and many a boy, winner of races, and a member maybe of one of the various elevens, tried to win this coveted honour, but in vain. It is a pity that it has somewhat fallen from its high estate. To be a "Member of Pop" now no longer carries the distinction that it formerly did, for by some means or other a rule seems to have been established that a member of the "Cricket Eleven" or "Eight" *ipso facto* becomes a member of Pop. Formerly he had to stand the chance of an election, and frequently was black-balled if not thought

worthy of the honour, though unless he was unpopular he was almost sure to be elected. It is the way of the world, however, and the tendency of the day to destroy the exclusiveness of societies, and to level down as well as to level up.

Mountjoy, the famous pedestrian, was at one time a "common object" at Eton, as he was engaged in walking one of his 1000 mile matches against time. He walked on the Slough Road, and we often accompanied him a short way. He always seemed to like our company, but as time progressed he got very weary, and did not care for much conversation.

One of my early Easter holidays was spent in London, and we used to go to Allen's Riding School, in Seymour Street, to find amusement in jumping-lessons. At that time the great American horse-tamer, Rarey, was performing there, and the untamable savage "Cruiser" stood in a loose-box. How Rarey ever succeeded in getting his straps upon him, single-handed, is a marvel to me to this day, and proved what extraordinary courage and coolness he must have possessed. When we used to go with his groom to look at "Cruiser," the man first used to peep through a hole to see whereabouts in the box the horse was, and if he was well away from the door the latter was cautiously opened, and whilst one man advanced with a pitchfork at the "charge," another took in the food or water, or whatever was the occasion of the visit. "Cruiser" would stand sullenly eyeing us, but he knew too well what pitchforks were made of to try experiments with them. The men retreated cautiously backwards after their mission was fulfilled, but the very moment the last portion of the pitchfork had vanished and the door slammed to,

“Cruiser” simultaneously dashed against it, and would sometimes scream with rage, at the escape of his longed-for victims, to the accompaniment of a battery of kicks. Still, in Rarey he acknowledged his master, and was perfectly docile with him, after he had once been thoroughly cowed by him. Many years afterwards I heard the end—the real end—of “Cruiser,” which is not generally known, I believe. A party of Americans came to Gibraltar whilst I was quartered there, and some of them dined at The Rifle Brigade Mess. I soon found I had a subject in common with the guest who sat next to me, and in the course of a conversation about horses the names of Rarey and “Cruiser” happened to crop up. He then related to me the following story, a very characteristic one, of the cuteness of our cousins over the water:—

He said that he had formed one of a small syndicate that bought “Cruiser,” when Rarey had finished with him, with the object of “showing” him round the States, as the horse so inseparably connected with Rarey’s greatest achievements. They had a specially strong padded-box for him on the ship, and crowds of people came on board at Liverpool to take a last look at the horse, before he left England for ever. They took out also another quiet stallion, who had run rather well, who only needed an ordinary box, but no one paid any attention to him, all the gape-seed being expended on the savage in the strong box, which had his name painted on it in large letters. They were unlucky in their voyage, as they soon met with such a storm that the captain ordered both the boxes to be thrown overboard. He, however, yielded at last to their entreaties, and only the quiet horse was sacrificed, “Cruiser” being saved from the same fate at

considerable risk. On arriving in America, they made a tour with the horse, who everywhere drew the crowds they desired, but much disappointment was sometimes evinced that the horse was so much quieter than they had been led to expect. "I guess," said my informant, "it kinder seemed as if the horses had somehow got into the wrong boxes at Liverpool, and that 'Cruiser' had gone to the bottom after all." He further told me that they had been a long time before they had been able to meet with another horse resembling "Cruiser" in appearance, and that they had been most lucky in getting one so like, that even those who knew them scarcely could tell one from the other. I asked him how he managed to satisfy those who were too curious about the supposed "Cruiser's" docility, and he answered that he always put it to them that it was the result of the extraordinary powers of taming, by one "of their own fellow-countrymen," and that no other nation on earth could have produced a man to have achieved the same. This bit of bunkum, he said, appealed to their national pride, and invariably satisfied them.

In nothing, not even shooting, has the public taste been more educated than in fishing. In my boyhood there was only about one angler where there are thousands now, and every available place has, perforce, to be strictly preserved. A rather impudent letter was written a short time ago to a friend of mine, the writer mentioning that he was the secretary of a fishing club, which numbered nearly two thousand members. My friend has some ornamental water, partly in his park, and partly in his pleasure-grounds, which is stocked with coarse fish. After mentioning who he was, the writer proceeded to state

“that his club had selected this water on which to hold their annual competition, and that they had fixed the following Wednesday for the day. Thanking him in anticipation, he begged to remain, etc. etc.” Fancy the relics that would have remained—the broken bottles, sandwich papers, etc. ! and imagine the vision of two thousand anglers on camp stools, amongst all the pet ferns and ornamental bushes !! My friend begged to decline the proposed honour, and no doubt was held up to the “execration of all true anglers” at the next club dinner !

There is one great feature of fishing—that it seems still to enthrall its votaries, after increasing old age has caused other pursuits to be relinquished. Eyesight may have considerably failed, obliging a man to give up shooting, but even if he cannot see a trout rise, as of yore, he can still sit in a boat and derive pleasure from catching fish with a spinning-bait, or the more homely float-tackle and worm. An old friend in Ireland, Mr. Reynell—the brother of the popular Sam Reynell, of Meath fame—used to be rowed in his boat, on Lough Derravaragh, when past the age of eighty, from the first day of the fishing season until its close, and never missed a day if he could help it. He enjoyed the excitement of catching the great lake trout, pike, and perch, which he caught trolling, with all the zest of his younger days. I met another old friend one boisterous day, fly-rod in hand, on the banks of the Derwent in Yorkshire. When I expressed surprise at finding him out in such cold, harsh weather, he replied, “I don’t think I shall take any harm. It is my birthday next week, and then I shall be seventy-four. I shall not be able to go on much longer, so I never

miss a day now." That was twelve years ago, and the fly-rod, alas, has had to be relinquished, but my old friend is still in possession of excellent health, thanks, no doubt, to the outdoor pursuits that he always vigorously followed.

It is a popular idea that no one ever forgets the catching of their first salmon. I only know that mine did not give me half the pleasurable excitement that the capture of the first little burn troutie did. In 1858 my father had a charming moor in Durham lent to him, and great were the preparations made by the younger members of the family for their first campaign against the trout.

We had none of us ever seen a trout alive, and were perfectly ignorant of how to set about catching them, though we had caught coarse fish all our short lives. The head-keeper, however, was an "artist" in fishing, and soon overhauled our tackle on the evening we arrived. We went to bed almost too excited to sleep, and with much jealousy as to who would be lucky enough to catch the first fish. The next morning was sunny and hot, and not at all an ideal day for fishing, but our little burn meandered through a very wooded valley, where there was plenty of shade, so the rays of the sun were not so harmful as they would have been, if there had been no covert. At all times, too, those trout are the keenest to take that I have ever met, and no matter what the weather is, no angler ever returns home from the burn without having been rewarded, if he is at all skilful.

On this occasion Webster, the keeper, took a party of eager children to the stream, halting us about 20 yards

from it, and cautioning us not to show ourselves, while he proceeded to bait the hooks. Seeing that my turn was not likely to come for some time, and being very anxious to begin, I proceeded to put on a worm for myself, and was hurrying down to a spot where there was a tiny waterfall with a pool below, when I was ordered to leave it for one of the elders.

Gloomily I stepped to the bank of the stream, not knowing where to go. I happened to be standing where the bank was a little raised, with some big stones below, and almost accidentally I dropped the worm into the water, letting it be carried along by the current. Just as it was passing the place where I stood, out dashed a little trout, which grabbed at the bait, missed it, and darted back again to the stone it had come from. I at once forgot my grievances, and with the greatest care, and trembling with anxiety, dropped the worm in again exactly as before. Once more, on reaching the same place, the little trout dashed out, but this time he picked up the worm, and hurried back with it to the stone. The next moment he was flying through the air, and alighted in the very middle of the astonished group, who were still busy putting on the baits. In default of any other reasons, I came in for some scolding—instead of praise—from the other competitors, for having been in such a hurry to begin, and I was told “that I ought to have waited, as they had, till Webster had finished and could show us where to go.” But my trout was safe in my basket, and I felt so triumphant that I was able to take the scolding very philosophically.

CHAPTER V.

THE MOORS.

I HAVE mentioned above that the moor was "lent" to my father, for in those days so little were English moors thought of that Mr. Hildyard, the owner, who also hired a Scotch moor, most kindly would take no rent for it. The following year, however, my father insisted upon paying something, so Mr. Hildyard at last consented to take £100. Now, it would command a high sum if let for the season. Another famous moor in Yorkshire was given up about that time as not being worth the £36 per annum for which it was rented. It now, however, is taken by a syndicate, and over 2000 brace have been killed on it in a season. No doubt it is "driving" that has so increased the value of these moors; the birds were there formerly, but they could not be got at, and if the shooting was to be restricted to "over dogs," the sporting rights would no doubt fall again to their original estimate.

On the Durham moor "driving" had been practised in very early times, though it fell into disuse again for a short time. Horsley belonged originally to the Bishop of Durham, and the present "drives" were laid out by his keeper so long ago as 1803, some of the butts being in exactly the same state as when made by him. The pattern of them is very primitive, being simply a straight

short turf wall, without any "wings," or other later improvements, but they are most interesting, as being probably quite the earliest that were ever constructed. The Bishop of Durham was one of those Prince Bishops who ruled over a See as large as a small kingdom, and reigned over it with almost a regal sway. Colonel Hildyard, to whom Horsley afterwards belonged, continued to "drive," but when his nephew succeeded at his decease in 1854, the practice was discontinued until the "revival" that occurred some years later. Horsley seems to have been a famous sporting place, even in the times of the Romans, for quite recently a very perfect altar was unearthed in the vicinity, the inscription on which states that it was erected by the Pro-Consul on the occasion of killing a famous wild boar on these moors.

When we were there pole-cats were still quite common, and indeed their tracks could be seen in the snow every winter, in the low country, as far as Kirby Hall. A keeper on my father's estate captured one in the late "sixties," and thinking he would improve his strain of ferrets by a cross with it, he put the strap of a "ferret-band" round its neck and tied it to the leg of the table in his bedroom! The noise it made trying to escape kept him awake first of all, but at last he fell asleep, only to find, when he awoke in the morning, that the pole-cat had bitten through the string, and had then eaten a hole through the door and escaped.

As there were no hounds that hunted the moors at Horsley, Mr. Hildyard used to have the foxes caught alive in a box-trap, and sent down to his other place in the Bedale country, Hutton Bonville, near Northallerton. One old dog-fox was thus captured, and sent there no

less than three times. His "earth" was amongst rocks, so that he was obliged to come out and be caught, or be starved inside, for he could not possibly scratch his way out through the stony face of the cliff. Twice he found his way back to his old home, but after being sent away for the third time he returned no more.

There was formerly a very small plantation close to the Hall, in the park at Kirby, and every year there used to be a litter of cubs reared there. As it was scarcely a hundred yards from the windows of the house we saw them almost daily, and most interesting it was to watch their antics, running after one another and rolling each other over, just like so many puppies. In snow-time they would often come out of the earth about 2 P.M. and play about before going away to seek for their dinners. One afternoon whilst we were watching, two that were gambolling about suddenly stopped and apparently held a conference. One of them then cantered off while the other went into the plantation and lay down just behind the hedge, where we could just dimly make out its form. In about ten minutes' time we descried a hare coming across the park, more than a quarter of a mile away, and following behind it came the other fox. The hare went first of all into a plantation by the stables, but being driven out of this shelter by her pursuer, she at length was manœuvred by it to enter the other plantation, from whence it never again emerged. We could not actually see the fox that was in waiting make its spring, but as the one that was pursuing galloped up at once, as soon as the hare had gone through the hedge, no doubt it was aware that its comrade had carried out the programme correctly. Unfortunately it proved to be too troublesome

to keep them as such near neighbours, and they had to be "banished" and obliged to make their earth further off, so that a most interesting sight was lost.

After shooting at Horsley for two seasons, my father followed his friend, Mr. Hildyard, into Perthshire, being further tempted there, as his old college friend, Mr. John Dundas, the father of the present Marquis of Zetland, also had the adjoining moor of Glen Quaich. Auchnafree, the moor my father took, was at the head of Glen Almond, and besides joining Mr. Dundas's moor, it marched with Mr. Hildyard's at Corrie Muckloch, so that the three friends had three adjoining moors which fitted into each other like a puzzle. It was a very mountainous country, and golden eagles, peregrine falcons, and ravens were our daily companions. Mr. Dundas was a great lover of pointers, which he educated himself and took great pains with. He crossed his breed with a foxhound strain, to endeavour to increase their endurance and "staying powers." It certainly had this effect, and very good dogs they were, but the experiment had one drawback, the foxhound cross made them very prone to run hares and rabbits, and they were difficult to restrain. The most famous dog Mr. Dundas ever had he took out as a puppy one day after luncheon, just to shoot a few birds over him. Prince had never seen a gun fired, although he had been thoroughly trained up to that stage. It was a triumphant beginning, as the pair returned in the evening with more than fifty brace of grouse! The mountain on which this feat was performed has now become entirely clothed with grass, though formerly there was excellent heather upon it. At Auchnafree, too, a great deal of what used to be our best grouse ground, all heather, has now become

only grass. This is caused by burning "white ground" when sheep are thick upon the moor. Black peaty soil may be burned with impunity, for the heather will grow again, but if "white ground," *i.e.* loam or gravel, is burned, and sheep feed there, the grass will come up so luxuriantly as to partially choke the young heather. The sheep also being attracted by the grass keep nibbling the young shoots of the heather, and the latter never gets a chance of making any growth, so that it gradually disappears. With the great fall in the value of wool, sheep farming is not nearly so paying an industry as it formerly was, and in some cases, where moors are particularly favourable for grouse, the value of the shooting may be double the rent of the sheep farm. It is then wiser to make every effort to preserve the shooting at its best rather than to sacrifice it for the sheep, for the area of first-rate grouse ground is very limited, and from various causes tends to diminish every year.

A very curious cross—at least it was believed to be so—was one between a grouse and a hen, that lived with the rest of the poultry at the farmer's house adjoining the shooting lodge at Auchnafree. M'Diarmid, the farmer, felt no doubt on the point, and called attention to the fact that the bird carried its tail down like a grouse instead of up like a hen, and it was very dark in colour. It unfortunately got destroyed before attaining its full growth, as we intended to present it to the York Museum.

The blue hares were then so numerous that it was necessary to resort to "driving" them to thin their numbers, and most charming mixed bags we used to make. The "stands" were generally on the highest tops, and

there ptarmigan, dunlin plover, golden plover, and an occasional grouse used to dash by and vary the monotony of "*toujours lievres.*" When stationed lower down we got more grouse and a few black cock. On one notable day as many as thirteen different kinds of game made a brave show when displayed on our return home. The blue hares were exceedingly easy to shoot, but we were very young boys then and preferred quantity to quality. Those were still the days of muzzle-loaders, or the bags would have been much heavier even than they were. Terribly sore the first joint of the forefinger of the right hand used to get from ramming down the wadding in such a hurry, and when the wads ran short all sorts of material had to be pressed into the service. Bits of paper, moss, the lining of an old hat, etc., had all to do duty on occasion, but much of the shooting was at a short distance, and the gun killed, if held straight, whatever the wadding might be. The largest score that I ever made in one "drive" was thirty-six hares, with a little 18-bore double-barrel gun by Purdey. A fox came along, scared by the "drivers," and sat up and looked at me, but although well within range I could not find it in my heart to shoot him, although there were no hounds within scores of miles, and foxes on a Scotch grouse moor are really nothing else but "vermin." Blue hares have a curious habit of standing up on their hind-legs to gain a better view of any object if they suspect danger, and they will frequently do so if you are well concealed and give a loud whistle. This was very tempting to boys, and I fear we often whistled loudly! As the hares hardly ever leave the "runs," which are well marked on the Arctic moss on the high "tops," it was quite an art to select a place of

concealment within range of as many "runs" as possible, generally where two or three crossed each other. Strangers who came to shoot were not always very clever in selecting the right spot, and chose a convenient resting-place for themselves instead of noting the trend of the paths, so that every hare would pass at such a distance as gave them a long shot instead of a close one; hares, too, look much nearer than they really are, as one sees every inch of them on the moss, so that at first the distance is apt to be very much miscalculated. Sometimes from these causes the guests were apt to be a little sore at the end of a "drive," when we boys, always stationed on the flanks, produced more hares with our muzzle-loaders than they did, armed with the newest breech-loaders and placed in the best situations.

My eldest brother and I once had a very rough ride at night which, together with other experiences, helps to confirm my belief that horses see fairly well on the very darkest of nights. We had ridden two moor ponies over the hill to fish in Loch Tay, accompanied by one of the gillies, whose house was on the shore of the lake, and when we were about to return home Duncan requested leave to stay for the night, the next day being Sunday. Thinking that we had daylight enough to reach the boundary of the moor before it became dark we consented, but before long a storm burst upon us, and our progress was much slower than we had expected. As we neared a shepherd's cottage, not far from the march, it was almost dark, and the Marquis of Breadalbane having recently erected a wire deer fence along the boundary, in which was only a small gate that gave ingress to the Auchnafree Moor, we decided to seek the aid of the shepherd, for fear we should not

find the portal in the gloom. We had just light enough to reach the cottage, and the shepherd at once started to guide us, assuring us there would be no difficulty whatever in finding the way. It was pouring with rain, however, and had become terribly dark, so dark indeed that it was quite impossible to detect the form of the man as he led the pony, or to see my own hand when held up to the sky. The path lay for some distance along a rocky cliff above the Almond, which was a raging torrent, and before we had gone 200 yards from the man's own house we suddenly heard him exclaim: "I'm no very sure of the way," when at the next step he fell headlong into the river below. He gathered himself up, however, and succeeded at last in finding the gate, but nothing would induce him to come any further. We were left to make the best of our way home down what was now a rapid stream, though generally dry, and the only path for some distance over the moor. We were six miles from home, and except when coming in the morning, had never been over that part of the ground before. We left the reins entirely to the ponies, and, rough as the ground was, being nothing but a succession of big rocks and waterfalls, neither of the animals made any mistake, and when we reached the flat ground at the bottom of the hill they trotted gaily away, as if it was broad daylight.

Another experience of the faculty possessed by horses of seeing at night, was once when I was on guard in the North Camp at Aldershot. We were camped at that time on Cove Common, and alongside of the Rifle Brigade was a Battery of Horse Artillery, commanded by Captain Chichester. Someone in authority objected to heel-ropes, so all the horses of the battery were simply tied by their

halters to long ropes, which was the only fastening they had. A terrific thunderstorm came on, and, frightened by the peals of thunder and flashes of lightning, the horses broke one of the ropes, and all galloped right through our lines. It was so dark that the sentry at the guard-room door challenged twice as two horses galloped down the road past him, he being utterly unable to see that they were only loose horses. When a third horse was heard also approaching at full speed, the sentry rushed out to stop him, but this happened to be ridden by an artilleryman in the pursuit of others, who explained what had occurred. Yet none of the horses that galloped through our camp came to grief over the ropes or fell foul over the tents, though they were invisible to our eyes, for the rain that was falling in torrents made a darkness that could almost be felt. I am sure that though horses may not see as well as habitually nocturnal animals, yet that they see at night a great deal better than we can.

On joining the Rifle Brigade I was sent to the depôt at Winchester to wait until my battalion returned from India. In the autumn before its arrival H.R.H. the Duke of Cambridge came down to inspect the Rifle Depôt, and on the conclusion of the drill, wishing to light a cigar, he asked Colonel M'Donald, who commanded, for a light, but none of the field-officers on parade had one with him. The colonel accordingly called to the rest of the officers as they were leaving the parade to know if any of us had one, and happening to have a Vesuvian in the pouch of my cross-belt, I took it up to the Duke. Having thanked me for it, he said, "Going on leave my lad, I suppose now, eh?" "No, sir," I said, "my leave has just been refused."

“How is that,” said H.R.H., turning to the colonel, who was looking away, “does he not do his work well.” “Oh, he works well enough,” he replied; and seeing a chance I chimed in, “Please, sir, my leave has been refused because I have been made over to another battalion’s depôt instead of my own.” “I don’t understand this,” said the Duke, “if he is entitled to his leave he should have it. Let me hear about it in the orderly-room.” The fact was, that instead of keeping the officers of each depôt intact, and letting them take leave in turns amongst themselves, a system had grown up of treating all the depôts as one battalion, and shifting subaltern officers from the depôt of their own battalion to the depôt of another, as the commanding-officer pleased. By this arrangement the junior officers came off badly in the way of leave. It was important to the officers of the Second Battalion Rifle Brigade, to which I belonged, to get our leave before the battalion returned from India, when all those who returned with it would naturally want to get home, and we should have to do the duty. Having applied and been refused, I should never have thought of taking any further steps if it had not been for the opening afforded by the lucky cigar-light; and after the Duke had been to the orderly-room I received a message, to say I was to send in an application at once for what leave I required. It was little incidents like the above that so endeared the Duke to the army; he was so thoroughly just, and so patient in investigating anything that looked like a grievance whether of an officer or a private. Everyone was willing also to accept his decision, whichever way it might be, for they felt sure that there had been a thorough investigation into their case. It was with universal sorrow that the army heard of H.R.H.’s

enforced retirement from the post he had so honourably filled for so many years.

The leave did not last very long, however, when it was obtained. I had only been a short time at home when a sudden telegram recalled me to Winchester, to proceed at once to Devonport, owing to the Bread Riots that were occurring in Devonshire. Luckily our services were not required. The battalion shortly arrived from India, and it was, indeed, a pity that it was not photographed at once, for few regiments in the service could have shown such a display. The ranks were filled with the men who had gone through the Crimean War and the Indian Mutiny, some of them also having taken part in the Boer and Kaffir Wars, and in the Chinese War under Gordon. There was not a single front-rank man in any company with less than three medals, most of them had four, while very few in the rear ranks,—being those who had only lately joined,—had none. All the men wore beards, some of them nearly to their waists; and curious as it might look now, when no whiskers are worn, at that time it gave the men a very fine appearance. I regret so much that I did not make notes of the many thrilling stories I heard the men relate of their war experiences, which now have long been forgotten. One sergeant related how, at the attack on the Malakhoff Tower, he had just fired his rifle, when he caught sight of a Russian standing at a breach made in the wall, who had also just fired his rifle. Catching each other's eyes, they both proceeded to load with all the haste they possibly could. Our sergeant was lying on the ground, and, having loaded the first, he proceeded to make particularly sure of his aim, knowing that if he missed he probably would never

have another chance of firing a rifle again. Just as he had the Russian well covered, the latter finished his loading, and, seeing it was his only chance, fired a snapshot at the sergeant, hitting him on his left arm as he was leaning on it, and breaking it in two.

Another sergeant mentioned how he was one day wandering about the huts, on the chance of finding some provisions somehow, when he espied a chicken, and though there were very stringent orders against looting, the prize was too great a one to be missed, and he essayed to capture it. He was in full chase when, in turning the corner of a hut, he almost ran into the very arms of the General and his staff, who were drawn up in consultation at the other side. If he had run as fast after the chicken as he did to get away from it, he averred he should have secured it without difficulty.

Many interesting stories also have been related to me, at different times, that now, alas, have passed, with their narrators, into oblivion for ever. The late Major Brett won his commission in the Crimea for having done much good work there, as well as in the Boer War. The particular act for which he was promoted was that, when carrying a keg of powder on his back to the front, after all the transport had broken down, a round shot came and carried the barrel away, knocking Sergeant Brett over and badly bruising him. Everyone thought he was killed, but he picked himself up, and as soon as he got his breath went back and fetched another keg, as if nothing had happened.

CHAPTER VI.

SIRES AND BROOD MARES.

It was in the autumn of "Hermit's Year" that we went to Plymouth, and in connection with that world-famous Derby I had a dream, by which I ought to have profited, but did not do so. I saw as plainly as possible a chestnut horse, ridden in a crimson jacket, come away from the others and win easily, but so utterly hopeless was "Hermit's" chance considered to be, that none of us ever connected the winner of the dream with him. There happened to be another chestnut horse running, also ridden in a red jacket, and just on the off-chance of my dream coming true, he carried my small investment. It was with great chagrin that I saw the vision realised, but by the wrong horse, as far as I was concerned! There probably never was a race in which more people were unwilling winners than in that Derby. When "Hermit" was supposed to have gone utterly to the bad, it was perfectly impossible to hedge any money that had been invested upon him earlier in the spring, and so many persons most unexpectedly found themselves winners in the end, as it were, in spite of themselves! "Lord Clifden's" sensational St. Leger was the first that I ever saw, and he was afterwards for many years at the stud at Moorlands before he was sold to Mr. Gee, of Dewhurst Lodge. He was a magnificent horse, very handsome, a bay, with jet-black legs and "hammer-marks"

all over his quarters. At first he was said to be "coachy," but he had great length, with immense reach, and when he had been at the stud some time, and attained his full maturity, he lost the rather leggy appearance that he had when he first came out of training. His son "Hampton" has carried on this best strain of the famous "Touchstone" line, and "Ayrshire" now seems destined to keep the breed still in great prominence.

"Thormanby" was another grand racehorse who also held court at Moorlands. His celebrated dam, "Alice Hawthorn," was foaled not far off, at the old hunting lodge of James I., now turned into a farmhouse, which stands close to Blue Bridge, upon the Easingwold road.

"Thormanby" was a splendid specimen of the massive thoroughbred in its highest form. No one could have applied the epithet of "coachy" to him. He was built more upon the lines of the highest type of weight-carrying hunter, and looked the thorough gentleman that he was,—a long, low horse, with a beautifully-turned head, neck, and quarters, and great muscular development. Quite a different type was "Scottish Chief," a most restless horse, ever with his head aloft tramping round his box. The chief points that struck the observer were his very powerful quarters and immense development of the second thighs, whilst his shoulders, too, were very good. He was also extremely lengthy from his hips to his hocks, and remarkably short from there to the ground; in fact, his quarters were fashioned more like a greyhound than those of any great horse that I can remember.

Two totally different kinds of horses of extraordinary power were "Knight of the Garter" and "Vanderdecken." Both of them were over 17 hands in height, black browns,

and might have carried 18 stone to hounds, being "built that way." They neither of them, however, achieved much success as stallions, though the "Knights" were very docile horses, and the line of "Prime Minister" is valuable as one of the few direct lines from Melbourne.

The sire, however, that got the largest number of winners was "Speculum," by "Vedette," every one of his stock being able to win some kind of race. He was dark bay in colour, and an extraordinary stout horse himself, winning the City and Suburban as a three-year-old, and running third for the Derby and second for the Ascot Cup, besides winning the Brighton and Goodwood Cups. He only sired one Derby winner, "Sefton," but his winners were legion, and "Hesper," "Advance," "Kaleidoscope," "Castlereagh" (sire of "Why Not," winner of the Liverpool Steeplechase, and of "Clorane," winner of the Lincolnshire Handicap, under 9 stone, 4 lb. the heaviest weight ever carried to victory in it), and "Rosebery" (the first dual winner of the Cæsarewitch and Cambridgeshire) are only a few names of the great horses that called him sire. All his stock could jump, too, and had very hardy constitutions, while he invariably transmitted to them his great muscular power and his charming "quality." Though standing 16 hands, he scarcely looked the height, as he was of the compact order and very sturdy, while his vigour was extraordinary. "Crowberry," his grandson, a horse perhaps unlucky to lose the Derby, has given us already some good horses, and with him and the flying "Amphion," both sons of "Rosebery," to represent the line, the name of "Speculum" seems likely to live in pedigrees for a long time to come.

It was rather a noteworthy circumstance that the late Lord Falmouth never sent any of his splendid mares to "Speculum," although he had a liking for the horse. First-rate alliances are half the battle for a stallion, and if "Speculum" had had mates with such running blood in their veins, it may have been that his success would have been still greater than it was. It was remarkable that though Lord Falmouth never bred a foal from "Speculum," he once bought a daughter of his, "Rada," and with her won the only Goodwood Cup that he ever obtained during his racing career.

How often stud farms that have great reputations are not deserving of them—at least have a loose screw somewhere—is only known to those who are really behind the scenes. Unless the manager is thoroughly up to his work in every detail—active, energetic, constantly present, and ever poking into every nook and corner—men are sure to become slack. Even with the best intentions, few servants are capable of looking far ahead and reasoning on cause and effect. One of the chief reasons why the stud farm at Moorlands became such a success was that the management was very careful and efficient, with commonsense shown in the working of every department. No one ever had two more trustworthy, capable men, to whom he could entrust the carrying out of his arrangements, than Mr. G. S. Thompson had in the well-known father and son, Huby, senior and junior. The latter has now perhaps the most important position at the stud in the world, having under his charge the breeding establishment of the Duke of Portland at Welbeck Abbey, at the head of which are the justly celebrated stallions, "St. Simon," "Donovan," "Ayrshire," and "St. Serf." The

disappearance of the mysterious disease that so long held sway, attacking the brood mares and foals, and rendering the stallions almost sterile, has quite disappeared under John Huby's intelligent management, and there are no stallions now more fruitful than the same animals that were such a failure before he took up the duties of stud groom. His father, I believe, during almost the whole of the foaling season never used to go to bed at night, but just took snatches of rest as occasion served. With all his watchfulness he was never "fussy," and to his alertness in taking the proverbial "stitch-in-time," and knowledge of the right thing to do at the right time, may be attributed the very rare occurrence of a fatality happening to a mare or foal. Experience shows that real "accidents" very seldom happen, and the cause of those so-called has been either the carelessness, laziness, or want of judgment on the part of someone who has neglected to do what he should have done. It is easy, no doubt, to be wise after an event, but the thoroughly capable man is wise before the event, and his price may be said to be above rubies in any walk of life! Tested by the touchstone of success or failure, the standard of "cleverness" is often shown to be false as awarded by examinations. Though a candidate may pass every one with brilliancy, in the ordinary affairs of life he may be the greatest dunce. When nothing succeeds in his hands can that man be called clever? Another may take a poor place in the examination, and yet everything he takes up is sure to succeed, and his advice is sought by everyone on every subject. Is not he really the clever man, and far the superior of the other? Occasionally a man is found who can combine success in examinations with cleverness in practical life,

and then you have found a diamond of the first water ; but I fear it is generally the case of the exception proving the rule !

To show the possibilities that may occur, I will relate an experience during the latter days of that mismanaged concern, the old Rawcliffe Stud Company. Two of their stallions, with the mares and foals, were standing, for convenience sake, at Fairfield, which was close by, and then belonged to the executors of the late Mr. John Jackson, the well-known bookmaker. My cousin, the late Captain Frederick Thompson, was living at Poppleton at that time, where he bred that good but unlucky horse "Robbie Burns," and we walked over together one morning to go and see the breeding stock, but without having intimated that we were coming. We crossed the Ouse by the railway bridge, and on entering the first paddock we were startled by finding the leg of a foal lying on the ground. As we went through the fields, we saw here and there other limbs, and portions of dead foals, and were utterly at a loss to account for such a thing until the manager came up to us. We at once mentioned what we had seen, when he coolly remarked, "Oh, yes, I keep a lot of fowls for 'showing,' and the foals when they die, breed a lot of insects for them. I always have them left for the chickens !" No wonder that complaints had been rife of barren mares, and misfortunes amongst them, and that breeders fought shy of sending their animals there. The company was soon afterwards wound up, and the manager's services were eagerly secured by a new company that had lately arisen. It need hardly be said that before many seasons were over, that company also found it necessary

to wind up its affairs, and many were the theories to account for its non-success, but after that little experience at Fairfield, I think the cause might be summed up in one word—"mismanagement."

There is often much discussion as to whether racing injures mares for breeding or not, and much can be said on both sides. Many famous breeders have held that it does so, while others, equally famous, hold the contrary opinion. Undoubtedly a prolonged course of training and racing must be injurious, for, as was pointed out at the end of the last century by the celebrated breeder, Sir Charles Monck, just when the fillies should be growing and maturing their internal organs, every effort is made to subordinate all other considerations to the excessive development of their muscles. The late Sir Tatton Sykes was firmly convinced of the injury resulting from overwork, but he carried it rather to the other extreme, for in his day many mares at Sledmere, even eight or nine years old, had never had a bridle on in their lives. His plan was to keep troops of young horses together in very large pastures, and the stallions had each a good-sized paddock, in which they could exercise themselves at all times, in all weathers, with a shed to retire into for shelter, whenever they liked. Certainly in this practice he was very sound. One of the finest sights I ever saw was at Sledmere, when a troop of three-year-olds—there were more than sixty of them—were taken down a lane to a field, the man in front leading one with a halter, and the others following behind. When the gate was opened, the moment they got through they thundered along at the top of their speed, sometime wheeling, and again galloping on, very much like the gyrations of a flock of starlings in the autumn. With manes and tails flying,

and their scarlet nostrils widely distended, it was a sight to be ever remembered, so picturesque, and yet so full of life. Still, for the number then bred at Sledmere, the winners, if numerous, seemed scarcely proportionate, although undoubtedly the animals nurtured there were sound, and hardy to a degree. From a racing point of view, the success could not be compared to that achieved by the late Lord Falmouth with a stud of mares, very small indeed in comparison with the huge one at the Yorkshire Wolds. It was, I believe, Lord Falmouth's theory, that to get the best results from mares, they should not be raced for more than two seasons, and though he occasionally kept an exceptionally good mare in training during her four-year-old season, he invariably relegated her to the stud at the end of it. He preferred to try his mares on the racecourse, and to breed from those who came out of the ordeal successfully, but then his racehorses were never abused, and they were trained by that prince of trainers, Matthew Dawson. In thus breeding from mares of proved merit, his practice accorded with the theory, published by Count Lehndorf, that it is not wise to breed from any mare who has not distinguished herself on the racecourse. This, however, may be undoubtedly carried too far, for Count Lehndorf appears to think that every thoroughbred mare in England is trained for racing unless there is something to prevent it, while in all parts of England and Ireland I have met with both gentlemen and farmers in possession of animals of the highest lineage, which have accidentally come into their hands, that have never been trained. Sometimes they have bought them at a yearling sale, or perhaps taken them as a bad debt. There has never been any idea of racing them, and they have passed their lives—and

frequently their progeny as well—as hunters, hacks, or mayhap between the shafts of a dogcart. If the history of such is accurately known, it would be a mistake not to breed from them, because of a hard-and-fast rule that they have not shown winning form on a racecourse. Many an animal has been rescued from oblivion by the accidental chance of one of its offspring entering a training stable, where its merit has been discovered. Then, too, there are the numerous cases of well-bred mares, that, from some defect of conformation or for some other good reason, have been debarred from being trained. When visiting stud farms I have frequently found that the mare who is the greatest star of that stud has been untrained from some cause or other, while mares that have been famous winners themselves have only produced very moderate racehorses. Two mares that occur to me are “Suicide,” who could not be ridden owing to having a deformed hind leg, but who was the dam of that sterling good horse, “Amphion”; and “Auchnafree,” who was unable to be worked owing to a club foot, and who produced a very smart horse in “Robbie Burns.” No doubt in this, as in other things, “*Medio tutissimus ibis*,” and the breeder who has judgment—backed up by the essential concomitant of wealth, so that he can afford to follow out his ideas—will not fail to produce excellent racers.

CHAPTER VII.

ANECDOTES OF RACEHORSES.

A VERY beautiful horse, and a far better racehorse than the public were aware of was "Camballo," who passed his stud life at Moorlands, but who was not the success as a sire that he should have been from his appearance and his merits. Perhaps he was too inbred—by "Cambuscan" by "Newminster" (by "Touchstone"), out of "Little Lady" by "Orlando" (by "Touchstone"), as the "Touchstone" line does not seem to bear inbreeding to itself, especially its two most delicate lines, of "Newminster" and "Orlando." These horses were both out of mares that had very hard work on the turf, and perhaps their constitutions suffered accordingly. "Camballo" was a lovely, long, low, thick bay horse, with most perfect quality, a thorough gentleman from head to heel, but he lacked one trait that was conspicuous in "Speculum," and that was energy. Undoubtedly a stallion must be full of nervous energy if he is to impart vigour to his stock. The Spaniards used to have a proverb that "a stallion, a gamecock, and a lover must have fire," and there is much truth in it. I never remember a very quiet horse, with the docility of a lady's hack, producing high-couraged progeny, however good he may have been himself.

After showing excellent form as a two-year-old, "Camballo" was tried in the autumn with "Thunder," then four

years old, and a winner of seven races that season at a difference of only 21 lb., and "Camballo" won by three lengths. The following spring, before the Two Thousand Guineas, the pair were again tried together, this time at 13 lb., and again "Camballo" won by about the same distance; as "Thunder" had just won the Great Warwickshire Handicap, he was evidently in "form," and it shows what a great horse "Camballo" must then have been. He won the Two Thousand Guineas in a canter, with Johnny Osborne on his back, and that was the last time he came to the post fit to run, for on his subsequent appearances he was far from being up to the mark.

He was coughing badly before the Derby, and had no business to be on a racecourse at all, but his owner had made some very big bets, and did not like to let them go without at least an effort to win them. "Camballo" ran as might have been expected, and then was sent over to Paris to run for the Grand Prix, still coughing almost as badly as ever. He came back and ran again at Ascot, but of course he was utterly unfit, and after that was sent to Newby Park in Yorkshire, where he was turned into a loose box with a yard to it, while "Conductor" was in a similar one at the back, built originally, I believe, for fattening two bullocks. I happened to be at Newby in the following February, riding some of Mr. Vyner's steeplechase horses in their work, and one morning when we were looking at the two horses in their boxes, I asked him what he intended to do with them. "Run them at Ascot," he replied. I then asked how long they had been in the boxes, and he replied, "Since last Ascot," whereupon I remarked it was an impossibility to get them fit in the time. He did not think so, and made an endeavour to

train them for Ascot, but "Camballo" never started again.

If these horses had been simply turned out into a bare grass field and allowed to exercise themselves, there would have been every chance of their being trained in time, but shut up as they were like fattening bullocks, with every muscle and sinew in a state of flaccidity, it would have taken a year at least to get them back into racing trim.

"Conductor," instead of being ready for Ascot, did not appear on a racecourse until August 9th at Redcar, when he ran nowhere, and after starting twice more unsuccessfully, also retired to stud life. As a hunter sire, he has been of the utmost value, having sired innumerable weight-carrying hunters, who take naturally to jumping, and boast excellent tempers, though a drawback to their appearance has generally been a too liberal an allowance of white. On his first appearance in the Trial Stakes at Ascot, "Conductor" won, carrying 7 st. 9 lb., being then three years old. "Thunder" was second with 10 st. 2 lb., with several others also behind them, and Mr. Clare Vyner thought he had made a good bargain when he claimed the winner for £1000, but the latter never was first past the judge's box again.

"Thunder," by "Thunderbolt," was a wiry bay horse, all "whipcord and wire," as the saying is, and was extraordinarily smart, his best performance probably being the winning the City and Suburban, with the heavy weight of 9 st. 4 lb. from the capital field of twenty-three starters. No doubt he owed his victory a good deal to the wonderful nerve and dash of poor Fred Archer, who hugged the rails at Tottenham corner so closely, that he had to ride with his left leg on the horse's neck, for fear of coming in contact

with the posts. After winning seven races in 1874 for his then owner, Mr. Matthew Dawson, he passed into Mr. Vyner's hands, and won four races for him in 1875, and six races in 1876, and yet Mr. C. Vyner was wont to remark that he was more out of pocket by him than by any other horse that he ever had, for he had always won when there was no money on him, and invariably lost when he was heavily backed. Unfortunately he had but a short career at the stud, as a very fatal epidemic made its appearance in Yorkshire, to which both "Thunder" and that grand mare "Apology" succumbed. The dam of the latter, "Mandragora" by "Rataplan," out of "Manganese" by "Birdcatcher," looked for all the world like a rough shooting pony when seen in her winter dress, being of very low stature, but with an immense barrel. There was nothing whatever about her to indicate that she should have produced such "fliers" as "Napsbury," "Apology," "Agility," and "The Miner," the latter being the only horse that ever had the distinction of beating "Blair Athol." Their first owner's dignified reply to his bishop's querulous complaint, when he won the St. Leger with "Apology," earned the approbation of all sensible persons. No remonstrance was made as to his continuing to race the old family breed of horses, which he unexpectedly inherited, for some years, but when at length he won the great Doncaster race, his diocesan found fault apparently with his winning, and not with his racing. The old man took him at his word, and showed that at least he was not ashamed of what he had done, by resigning the family living and retaining the family horses. At his death, which occurred at a ripe old age, Mr. Clare Vyner bought the two mares, "Agility" and "Apology," and from the former he bred

“Lizzie Lindsay,” the dam of “Crowberry,” while the latter became the dam of “Esterling.”

Mr. Clare Vyner was one of the very best judges of racing I ever met; he was a very close observer of what took place in a race or trial, was very clever at weighing in his mind all the pros and cons, without suffering himself to be misled through partiality, and formed very shrewd judgments. On one occasion, when “Ironstone” was competing against “Kaleidoscope”—who had won the Lincolnshire Handicap—at Hampton Court he said to me, “I just make out that the two horses should run a dead heat at the weights, but Archer rides for me, and I think he will beat Wood. I shall have a ‘monkey’ on.” He did back “Ironstone” for £500, and Archer just won by a head.

“Ironstone” was a beautiful black horse by “The Miner,” but had not the very best of tempers, and he was once the innocent cause of my having a very rough ride indeed on Mr. Vyner’s “Trespasser.” This was a very fine chestnut, by “Thormanby,” out of “Bumblekite,” who had lately been taught to jump hurdles, and as he was fond of jumping, we were told to lead the others in the gallop. I had never been on his back before, and just as we were going to start, Viney, who was then the private trainer to Mr. Vyner, rode up to me and said: “You had better touch him up with the spurs before you come at the first hurdle. ‘Ironstone’ is very shifty, and if ‘Trespasser’ hesitates he will swerve.” We started, and, according to the directions, I gave “Trespasser” a couple of digs with the spurs, but the result was certainly startling! He happened to be a very free-goer, and the moment he felt the prick of the

spur he became almost wild, and completely ran away with me. In vain Viney held up his hat as a hint to stop the pace, and galloped forward shouting, "Steady him, steady him," for I might as well have tried to steady a steam-engine with a bridle. Fortunately he knew the track, and I was just able to steer him, but I was not sorry to get to the end of the two miles, by which time he had steadied down, and was content to be stopped. Mr. Vyner galloped up to inquire why the horse had been allowed to come at such a pace, and was not at all pleased with Viney when he learned the cause. The latter, I believe, had only given those directions for the sake of something to say. He was very fond of talking, and did not always stop to think before speaking, but he was an excellent trainer.

A fox was in the habit, at that time, of living among the branches of a very tall elm tree in the park, and as the stable lads used to amuse themselves by throwing stones at him he used to get so high up that they could not reach him. The trunk of the tree was perfectly erect, and he had nothing whatever to assist him in ascending except the roughness of the bark, but he was there almost every day, and took up his quarters in the elm for a long time.

Fred Archer was always credited with being a very shrewd judge of everything connected with racehorses, and yet his usual accurate judgment was at fault when Mr. R. Vyner's great horse "Minting" first went to Matthew Dawson to be trained as a two-year-old. He was already 16 hands high and very unfurnished, and Archer, when he gave him his first canter, is reported to have inquired, "What they had sent this lumbering brute here for." It

did not take long, however, to make him change his opinion, and big horse as "Minting" was, he could jump off the mark as quickly as anything, and was going his best in a very few strides. When people talk about "Ormonde" being the "horse of the century," those who are well acquainted with the history of "Minting" are apt to be dubious. This much at anyrate may be stated, and that is, that "Minting" and "Ormonde" NEVER MET WHEN "MINTING" WAS AT HIS BEST, neither in the Two Thousand Guineas nor the Prince of Wales' Stake at Ascot, which were the only two occasions of their meeting each other. I know which horse would have carried my money if both had been thoroughly fit and met in a match, with Fred Archer on the back of "Minting."

When "Minting's" leg so mysteriously filled, and he was supposed to have broken down, Matthew Dawson always maintained that it was the effect of a blow, and not a strain of the sinews. I remember meeting Mr. Vyner in the train on the way back from Catterick races in the following spring, when it was still doubtful whether the leg would stand training again or not. I made the remark that if the swelling had been caused by a blow a few white hairs should have appeared on the spot when the summer coat was assumed, and Mr. Vyner at once replied, "They have just come there." After that statement I felt certain that the horse could be trained again, as proved to be the case. The culprit who struck the blow was subsequently discovered, though no proceedings were ever taken against him, partly for the want of sufficient evidence, I believe. He was supposed to have put a thick bandage round the leg, so that the skin should not be broken, and then struck it with a hammer.

Mr. Vyner's good mare, "Fabiola," the dam of "Cunctator," and winner herself of many races, used to have, it was said, one extraordinary peculiarity, and that was that she never could win unless she was in foal; and she never became in foal unless she was in training. This awkward combination necessitated a constant change from the racing-stable to the harem, and *vice versa*. At one time it used to be considered fatal to a mare's chance of winning if she had ever been at the stud, and this used constantly to be told me in the days of my youth. Like many other superstitions it has been exploded long ago, and I find I have passed much of my life in discovering to be fallacies some of the most cherished truths taught to me in early days.

I was once riding a three-year-old mare, "Sorris," at Southampton in the Welter Race, which was won by a mare called "La Sorrentina," ridden by Mr. Arthur Yates. After the race the trainer of "Sorris" said to me, "There now, here's a go! That mare belonged to me till the other day, when I found out that she had had a foal, so I never rested till I got rid of her. I thought she could never be any good, and here she has come and beaten us." That was the first rude shock given to that false belief, which further experience has only confirmed. In later years I ran a mare—"Camaltha"—in a mile and three-quarter's race at Derby; she was third, and was very fit to run on that occasion. I had a foal from her the following year, and, after it was weaned, put her into training again. She was getting very fit, and was entered for the same race at Derby again, when, unfortunately, she ran a stake deeply into her chest, exactly seven weeks before the day of the race. For a whole month she was in

a loose box, without being able even to walk out of it, and exactly three weeks before the race the late Mr. Egremont Lascelles came to see her. She was in the box, with a rough unkempt coat, and I said to him, "I am going to run this mare at Derby to-day three weeks, as she is now sound again, and she will begin work to-morrow morning." He stared with astonishment, and replied, "Is it possible?" I answered, "Yes, it's possible, and what is more, the mare will run well." She went on perfectly right, and I rode her myself, when she ran second after a capital race, and the horse that had been second when she was third—and had missed the intervening year—was this time only third, the places being reversed. I am quite sure that if I could have had her for four weeks in training, and three weeks in the box, out of the seven weeks that had elapsed since the accident, instead of the longer period in the stable and the shorter time on the training ground, we should have won. The reason of this was that she was very fit when the accident happened, and had no time to get fat in the interval, the pain of the wound, and the inflammation attending it, also helping to prevent the accumulation of flesh. It was just long enough interval, however, to get the muscles and sinews sufficiently hard to last through the race without collapsing, though it is not pretended for one moment that she was nearly as fit as she could have been made if she had had no accident. She afterwards was the winner of eight races on the flat.

It was a secret I had learned many years before, from a remarkably observant trainer, that if a horse has done plenty of strong work he can be thrown up entirely for a short period, and if there has not been

time enough for inside fat to accumulate, he will require very little galloping before he is again ready to race. My teacher even occasionally carried out his theory so far that he would buy a horse that had been much over-trained, but still showed "form," and throw it up in a loose box for three weeks—the maximum of time that he allowed—"to get juice into it," as he phrased it. He would then put it into training again for another three or four weeks, and by that time it would show very great improvement when it was again tried. In this way he bought "Rose Blush," by "Commotion," who had won a selling race at Stockbridge (winner to be sold for £30), and afterwards the Trial Stakes at Southampton on 16th July, when she was sold for the paltry sum of 65 guineas. He told me what he intended to do with her, and recommended me to buy her, as just then I was in want of an animal to take to Spain. I was very sorry afterwards that I had not taken his advice, although I had no reason to complain of the luck that I had with the horse that I bought in preference. "Rose Blush" was very poor in flesh, and "dried-up" when she was bought, but after three weeks' rest in a loose box, where I saw her daily, without her shoes, and fed with plenty of grass, she had got quite loose in her skin, and must have been at least two stones heavier in weight. After a few gallops she was taken to Plymouth, and on the 25th August ran third in the Tradesman's Plate of one mile, and later in the afternoon won the Hurdle Race Handicap of one and a half miles. The next day she won the Plymouth Plate of one mile by a length, and on the same afternoon another handicap hurdle race, one and a half miles, by a head.

She ran once more that autumn, fourteen days afterwards, when she won the Borough Members' Handicap, one and a quarter miles, at Tiverton. This was an extraordinary instance of what judicious management could do, and few trainers would have dared to throw up a horse for three weeks, within less than five weeks of running, and with only ten days remaining in which to gallop her again, and yet in two days she secured three races, and finished third in a fourth.

In the following spring she ran but once before going to the stud. She was then seven years old, and though she had been running in many races, ever since she was three years, yet her last performance was decidedly the best in her whole career. Starting in the Metropolitan Handicap at Epsom, she finished third, carrying 6 st. 11 lb., the race being won by that good horse "Hampton," three years, 6 st. 3 lb.; "Templebar," three years, 5 st. 12 lb., being second; while unplaced were those grand stayers, "Trent," "Scamp," and "Bugle March," with four others of less celebrity. This was rising to a very much higher level than selling races, "winner to be sold for 30 guineas!"

I can give yet another instance of how short a preparation may suffice to bring a horse out at his very best, after being eased in his work when getting stale. During my absence at the Ashanti War, in 1873-74, a horse of mine, "Fortal," had done a very great deal of work, he being a very hot-headed animal, very difficult to catch at his best. I returned to England on the 26th March, and after giving the horse only one six-furlong gallop every other day—when he always ran away from start to finish—I won a Hunter's two-mile hurdle

race on him at Abbotstone Down, on 25th April. I then threw him out of fast work, riding him quietly every day on parade as Adjutant of the Rifle Brigade, for I did not intend to run him again that summer. One evening, however, when travelling by railway, I noticed in *Bell's Life* that I should be eligible to run him for the hurdle race at the Aldershot Summer Meeting, and finding that there were still exactly three weeks in which to train the horse, I resolved to have a try for the race. Pursuing the same tactics as before, the horse was galloped six furlongs every other day, occasionally jumping a few hurdles instead of doing all his work on the flat; and on the days he did not gallop, I continued to ride him on parade. All horses get to like parade work, and wild as he was on other occasions, he was a charming charger, never pulling at all, but cantering down the line and taking up positions as if he had done nothing else all his life. Only once was he allowed to exceed his six-furlong gallop, and then I took him to Winchester racecourse, and let him cover the full distance of two miles. He used to be so fretful when going to gallop that I always walked by his side till nearing the place of starting, and then got on to his back, while I took the precaution of never starting him twice from the same identical place, so that he never quite knew when he was going to be jumped off.

It was a very good field of horses that came to the post, there being eight starters, seven of whom were winners that season, and my hopes fell when I first read the list of entries. We had to jump a hurdle in the canter, opposite to the stand, so I sent his lad some distance to the other side of it, and the moment I could get him

steadied I jumped off, handed him over to the lad, and walked down to the starting post, to which he was led. When all were assembled I remounted, and the moment I joined the others the flag fell, and we were off. "Fortal" was many lengths ahead at the first hurdle, and was fairly running away, but the moment we were over and had gained a lead of some thirty yards, I pursued a method I had used with him before, and which was again successful. This was to sit down in my saddle and speak to him as if going to pull up, at the same time completely loosening the reins. As soon as ever he found nothing to pull at he would slacken his speed of his own accord, unless another horse got too near him, when he would at once start off again as wild as ever. On approaching a hurdle, it was necessary to take tighter hold of the reins, or he would gallop into them, and he was not a very comfortable mount, for he judged his distance badly, trusting to his immense leaping powers to get over safely. One time he would take off far too soon, and almost land on the top of the fence; while perhaps at the next one he would get too close, and then go flying into space. It seemed, sometimes, as if he must catch his knees as he rose to the jump from being so near to it before he made his spring. I several times measured the distance that he covered when practising, and found that he usually cleared from 27 ft. to 30 ft. over the first few hurdles. By loosening the reins again after landing, he was coaxed into galloping at a steadier pace, and we won both of the two hurdle races in which I rode him. Nothing ever got near me in this Aldershot race until rising the hill on the Queen's Parade, about a quarter of a mile

from the winning post, and as by that time he had begun to sober down, I was able to take a steady pull at him between the two last hurdles. Half-way between them, Captain Knox, 14th Hussars, on "Cruiskeen," who had already won twice that spring, at length got up to me, but I had command over "Fortal" at last, was able to hold him back to his stride, and kept him back alongside the other. Together we rose at the jump, but Captain Knox had been driving his mare hard to reach us, while the timely pull I had been able to take at "Fortal" had allowed him to recover himself. We were quickest away from the hurdle, and won by three-quarters of a length. Before I could stop him, moreover, he galloped on, and ran into the bushes at the Queen's Hotel, a considerable distance beyond the grand stand. On returning to weigh-in, poor little "Driver" Browne was waiting to lead the horse into the paddock. He was a great friend, and having had very bad luck for some time in betting, was most anxious for something really good on which to recover his losses. I had recommended him to back "Fortal," knowing how well the horse was, but he had demurred for a long time, saying that though he liked the horse, he had been told he could not stay. "Can he stay, 'Driver'?" I asked, bending over as he took the bridle. "Yes, yes," he replied; "I put £200 on him!" but I fear he did not get very long odds, for the horse started a hot favourite at 6 to 4 against him. I sold "Fortal," and he never won again. Soon afterwards poor Captain Browne was, alas! the victim of a fatal accident at Esher Station, to the sad regret of all who knew him.

Browne and I were once journeying together to Dover Races, he to ride "Wildflower," and I to have the

mount on "St. Magnus," in the same race. When the train drew up at Woolwich Station, several of his friends had come down to have a chat with him, and he got out of the carriage to converse with them. From some wild whim, they seized hold of him as the train was just going to start, and then three or four of them, after swinging him backwards and forwards two or three times, with one big heave pitched him up on to the roof of the carriage whilst it was going on. The "Driver" clutched hold, and there he had to remain till the next station was reached. It was a foolish thing to do on the part of his comrades, for if he had missed catching hold of something he must have been killed; but you cannot put old heads on to young shoulders. The sequel was that he won the race, and I was second to him, beaten by half-a-length.

CHAPTER VIII.

SOME STEEPLECHASE HORSES.

ON another occasion, Captain Browne and I went to the Grand Military Races, when they were held at Windsor on a course which has long ago been built over, but the same one on which poor Lord Rossmore was killed a few years afterwards. It was a very big course, of the old-fashioned type, with a post and rail to jump; a very high, strong, quickset hedge, on the far side of which was "the town drain"—a wide, deep, natural ditch, the approach being over ridge and furrow, downhill; and a lane to go in and out of twice.

We had neither of us been engaged for the Gold Cup, though we were both of us riding in minor races; but as soon as we got on to the course, we were very soon asked to ride in the big race. A short time before starting, the "Driver" came to me with a long face, to say that a match had been made between our mounts, wherever we finished, and that, in consequence, we were to ride the race out, wherever we might be. We had no idea of figuring for the amusement of the multitude, but there was no time for remonstrance; so I replied that I did not think it would matter, if we made it generally known beforehand, adding that he had better tell all his friends about it, and that I would do the same with mine.

As this seemed to be the only feasible plan, we at once set about executing it; as there were several high-priced horses running, we expected to figure far behind at the finish.

Browne was to ride Captain Turner's "David," a horse that had been an ordinary trooper, but was reclaimed from the ranks. He was a very good horse, though a difficult one to steer, owing to carrying his head on one side and having no feeling on that side of his mouth. I was to ride Mr. Truman's "Vauban," an excellent galloping hunter, but deficient in speed when competing with racehorses.

Amongst the runners were "Fervacques," winner of the Northumberland Plate and Gold Vase at Ascot; "Q. C.," a well-known good horse; "Little Rogue," for whom a very large sum had just been paid, on purpose to win this race; "Donato," winner of some hunters' flat races; and six others. But we need not have troubled ourselves much about the match, for "David" ran second and "Vauban" ran fourth, the race being won by "Donato." We were much relieved at the favourable termination to our anxieties.

In 1870 I very narrowly missed becoming possessor of that afterwards famous horse, "Chimney Sweep," who so often ran second for the Liverpool Grand National for Lord Marcus Beresford. At the Aldershot Summer Meeting, I was riding a three-year-old filly, by "Lord Clifden," in the Flying Stakes, and we fancied our chance very much; but there was one horse in the race that we could find out nothing about, of the name of "Meteor." On going into the dressing-room, I found Mr. Hope-Johnstone putting on his racing things, and, on asking what he was

going to ride, found that it was this very horse. I told him we had a good thing if "Meteor" was of no account, and, being assured that we need not be in the least afraid of him, we accordingly backed "Affable." Going down to the post I cantered down with "Meteor," and felt anything but reassured when I noticed his easy swing and wiry appearance; but Hope-Johnstone again repeated that no danger need be anticipated from him, and added that he had backed my mount himself. When the flag fell "Affable" jumped off with the lead, and the last thing I saw, as we left the post, was "Meteor" rearing straight up on end. "That is all right," I said to myself, and soon began to look on the race as won, for the mare was swinging along easily with the lead, and I saw that we had the pace of everything there. Just when we were about approaching the distance post I suddenly became aware of something coming up very quick, and I at once began to urge the mare to her utmost speed. It was not of the slightest use, for, galloping past me with ease, the despised "Meteor" sailed in an easy winner. The crowd became very demonstrative against me, for they are prone to consider they have been robbed when their "fancy" has been beaten, and I was quite chagrined enough without having to bear the brunt of angry looks and remarks. However, I knew well enough that we had been beaten easily on our merits by what must be a good horse, and, therefore, sought to buy him. His owner was willing to sell, and the price was arranged, when, just then, Mr. Clare Vyner offered to send a four-year-old filly, "Ella," to me to train, that had cost 1100 guineas as a yearling, and, as I had no room for another, the purchase of "Meteor" was not concluded. How he afterwards was

bought by Lord Marcus Beresford, who changed his name to "Chimney Sweep," is well known in racing history, for the gallant efforts of the horse to win the Grand National made him the popular favourite of the day.¹

"Ella" was one of the most charming animals in the world to ride—so sweet-tempered, a perfect jumper, with great staying power. She would have made a name for herself if she had not met with an accident that necessitated her retiring to the stud. On the first occasion that she ran she was beaten by a good horse in "Jolly Marine," who had won the United Stakes at Punchestown, as a five-year-old, and run second there in the Conyngham Cup, and third in the Downshire Plate, as a six-year-old. "Ella" next ran at Hastings, in a two miles steeplechase, and just before we were going to mount, a bookmaker came up to me and said, "I beg your pardon, sir, but that horse" (pointing to one near) "is started to knock you down. I've backed you, and so I thought I would tell you." This was pleasant hearing, but the mare was very well, a certain fencer, and I determined, the moment I got the chance, to try and slip the field, and not to be caught again if I could help it.

At the start I purposely kept the mare behind, trusting to the chapter of accidents for an opening, which came before long, for the leaders raced against each other so hard for a sharp turn, that they all ran out very wide, and I saw my opportunity. Urging "Ella" on, I hugged the post, and having now four or five lengths' lead, proceeded to try to cut the others down, if we possibly could do so. The mare ran very kindly, but we had a steep

¹ Through some accident, "Affable" is not even put down in the Racing Calendar as a starter in the above race.

little hill to descend, at the bottom of which was a dammed-up water-jump, with the water towards us, on the take-off side. The sun happened to be shining very brightly, and the glitter on the water caused the mare to begin to "prop" coming down the hill, and take the pace off. Do what I would I could not keep up the speed, and up alongside me came the horse that I had been cautioned to be beware of. The rider instantly began to try and ride me outside the left-hand flag, necessitating my keeping a very tight hold of the right rein, whilst remonstrating in very forcible language. Down we came to the water, and down we came on the farther side, for neither of the horses made an effort to jump, being so hampered by each other, and the water being deep close to the fence they went in right up to their shoulders, and fell head over heels. The next three horses were close behind, and down they came too, and I never saw so many rolling bodies and struggling limbs about me either before or since. Just as I had extricated the mare, and was putting my foot into the stirrup, "Havelock" came over the water, having been tailed off by the pace, and I went on after him; but poor "Ella" was very lame, and, refusing the next three fences one after the other, I pulled her up and walked her back,—and she never started again. At the stud she was unlucky, more than one of her foals meeting with fatal accidents, and the best she bred was "Kneller," by "Knight of the Garter," though he was only a moderate handicap horse at his best.

It may be a surprise to some to know that the late Duke of Hamilton ever figured in a racing saddle, and yet he did so on more than one occasion. He rode a magnificent black horse, "The Vet," in a match of £200,

catch weights, two miles on the flat, at the Donington Hunt Meeting, on 6th December 1866. What is more, he won by twenty lengths, and upset a tremendous "pot," for his opponent, "Shooting Star," started a very hot favourite, 3 to 1 being betted on him, the famous gentleman-rider, Mr. H. Coventry, being his jockey. The Duke rode the same horse again in another match at the Warwick Spring Meeting in the same year, but this time he was not so fortunate, "The Guide," carrying 14 st., and ridden by Mr. F. Rowlands, beating "The Vet," 15 st., in a race for two miles. The following spring the poor "Vet" came to an untimely end. I had gone to Aldershot to ride him at the Steeplechase Meeting, but was prevented from doing so—fortunately, perhaps, for myself—on the ground that I did not then belong to the Aldershot Division. The steeplechase course was not quite the same at that time as it is now, and there was an awkward fence at the top of the hill, after passing the grand stand which was near Cocked Hat Wood. Captain Papillon had the mount, and being interested in the running of the horse, I watched them very closely. The fence mentioned above was exactly on the sky line, so that persons below saw the horses clearly defined against the horizon when they rose at the jump. As "The Vet" did so, I saw his head and limbs collapse, and he fell a helpless mass on the ground. We rushed up as fast as we could, and found his jockey lying under him in a most dangerous position. His head was exactly between the four-hoofs of the horse, and the slightest struggle on the part of "The Vet" must have resulted in very serious injury to his rider, who was in such a position under the carcass that he could neither move hand nor foot. "The Vet" had burst the main

artery close to the heart, and his death very luckily was so instantaneous that he had never made the slightest movement of any sort after he had fallen, and Captain Papillon was very little the worse for the accident.

It was at Aldershot that I had my first winning mount in an important steeplechase, and as it never rains but it pours, the day was a fortunate one for me. I won two races, and very nearly was successful in a third. When in my hut in the North Camp one spring morning, I was told that a gentleman wished to speak to me, and on going out found a stranger waiting, who said he had come to ask me to ride a horse for him, adding "that he did not wish to mention the horse's name, as he wanted to keep it dark." In the course of further conversation it transpired that the horse had been sold for 1800 guineas as a yearling, and had run in the Middle Park Plate. I was only too glad of a good mount, and closed at once with the offer, only stipulating that I should have an opportunity of riding him over some fences, to which he at once agreed, saying that he really much wished I should do so. Before parting I found out that the visitor's name was Captain Milligan, and it was settled that I should ride the horse over the practice steeplechase course before breakfast the next morning. It did not take me many minutes after his departure to find out from *Ruff's Guide* that the only yearling sold in that particular year for 1800 guineas was "Leading Suit," and that he had subsequently run for the Middle Park Plate for Sir Frederick Johnston, so I felt satisfied I had ferreted out the identity of my mount. On arriving on the ground the next day I found Captain Milligan and Goddard, the brother of the trainer, waiting for me, while a fine long,

low, powerful bay horse was being led about. On looking at him I said to Captain Milligan, "Why, that is 'Leading Suit,'" and received the answer, "How did you know? for I don't believe a soul here knows the horse is in Aldershot." I did not think it necessary to enlighten him, carelessly remarking, "I thought it must be him, it is so very like him," and then received a fresh caution to be careful not to divulge the name.

On mounting, another horse was sent to go with me, but when we got near the first fence "Leading Suit" suddenly tried hard to bolt, and though I prevented him from doing that, he stuck his toes in the ground and refused to jump. Turning him round, I tried again to get him over but he would not have it, and then proceeded to kick and rear. I soon saw that either he was to be the master or I, so riding up to the little group who were watching, I said to Captain Milligan, "Do you mind his having punishment?" and he having replied, "No, do what you like," I turned away from the fences and proceeded to use the whip vigorously. At first the horse plunged and kicked in every direction, but I still kept applying the whip, and after eight or ten strokes he gave up fighting and tried to bolt. I knew he was conquered then, but, to make assurance doubly sure, hit him three or four times more as he was galloping, and then gradually getting his head in a line for the first fence, allowed him to race at it; when within a short distance of the jump I hit him again as a reminder, but he never offered to swerve, and taking it in his stride he rattled along straight for the next one. As I passed the little band I heard one of them say to the others, "He'll do," but the meaning of the observation was lost upon me, and it was years before I knew the

explanation of it. The horse was now going as willingly as possible, and after taking him once round the course and over the jump again that he had refused at first, I pulled him up, and from that time to the end of his training he never gave the slightest trouble. On the first day of the races he ran third to "Chaddington," the recent winner of the Erdington Plate at Birmingham, "Aurifera," who a few days afterwards won the Grand Stand Plate at Cork, beating us a head for second place, and the next day he won the Light Division Steeplechase. Being pulled out yet again for the Cup, he was sailing in a gallant winner, when he fell heavily at the last fence but two. From most of the horses having jumped at the same spot it had become very weak at this place, and not having then learned that a tired horse always "runs through" a gap, I put him at it, thinking to save him exertion by so doing. The next moment we were rolling over and over as if we were never going to stop. There was a ditch on the far side, and as "Leading Suit" did not rise at the jump, he put both feet into the ditch and over we went.

Some years afterwards I was an A.D.C. in Dublin, when a man, who was a small horse dealer, called at my quarters in the Royal Barracks. He introduced himself as having been the means of obtaining "Leading Suit" for Captain Milligan, and stated that it was he who was leading the horse about on the occasion of my first ride upon him. It flashed across my mind to ask him the explanation of the remark I had heard made when the horse had given up plunging, viz., "He'll do," and asked him to what it referred; he then told me the following story:—It appeared that a rider of much repute had been engaged, a

winner of many races, and that he had ridden the horse several times, but that "Leading Suit" had gradually become the master, and utterly refused to jump for him. At last he had thrown the mount up. When it became known that —— had refused a mount on Milligan's horse, on account of its temper, no one else would ride it, and they were at their wits' end for a jockey. This man had proposed to give me the chance, for he had often seen me ride "Kettle-Holder," an excellent hunter, and own brother to "Ella," but a very bad-tempered horse. If I rode one bad-tempered horse for myself, why should I not ride another for them seemed a natural question, and hence they applied to me. He said they were watching with the greatest anxiety when the horse refused, and their relief was intense when I rode up and asked permission to administer the whip, and it was when they saw the horse was conquered that they made use of the words that so puzzled me.

The fence that is now known as the "Regulation Ditch" was just then (1870), though not compulsory, being introduced on some of the "made" steeplechase courses, and we were racing over one for the first time at Aldershot. On the opening day I had noticed "Tilbury Nogo" refuse this fence and then bolt up a lane to the left, disappearing from view altogether. When I was proceeding to don my racing things, on the second day, I was surprised to see his owner, an officer in the 42nd Highlanders, pulling on his boots, with a very dismal face. He came from my part of Yorkshire, being the son of a banker at Harrogate, and knowing that he never rode in steeple-chases I expressed my surprise to find him dressing. He informed me that his jockey of the previous

day had declined to ride his horse again, and as he knew no one else, he was going to ride it himself. Suddenly a gleam of hope shot across his face, and he exclaimed eagerly, "Oh, are you engaged for it? Oh, do ride for me." It had not occurred to me that he would offer me the mount, and I was a little taken aback as all I knew of the horse was from seeing him bolt, and I wished, too, to keep fresh enough to ride "Leading Suit" in both his races. I replied that I would see how I got on in the first race, and would let him know after that was over whether I would ride "Tilbury Nogo" or not. Instantly he began to undress, so that I exclaimed, "Wait a bit, it is not certain yet that I can ride for you." "Oh, yes it is," he replied, "it is sure to be all right," and off came one boot, much to my amusement, and off came the other boot, in much greater haste than they had been put on. His face was beaming again with relief, so it was evident there was no help for it, and it was arranged that he should go down to the fence, where the horse had bolted before, and be ready with a hunting whip in case of accidents. When we started, "Tilbury Nogo" ran straight enough at first, and we came at the objectionable fence just behind the leaders, as it seemed advisable that he should have a lead over. The moment he saw it, however, he stuck his toes into the ground, sliding right up to the rail and nearly falling over it into the ditch from the impetus. I had just turned him round to put him at it again when up rushed Harrison with the hunting whip. In his zeal he never looked to see where he hit, and the blows came fast on my legs, on my hands, and on my body, as well as on the horse. In vain did I shout at him to be careful, he only redoubled his blows, and as the horse was plunging

heavily, and his tail was still towards the fence, I had no chance of letting him go. At last I was able to put his head straight for the jump, and such a lesson had he had that he went as straight as an arrow and soon caught up the others. In fact it was all I could do to hold him, and in the end he won in a canter. I rode him twice afterwards on the flat and won both times, but on the first occasion we never got the race. The judge had just had an excellent luncheon and somehow mistook the colours. I won easily, and was chatting to the rider of the second as we were going back to scale, when I caught sight of the numbers, and said to him, "Is not that your number they've put up as the winner." We naturally concluded it was a mistake, but the judge maintained he was right, in spite of the testimony of both of us and of several people stationed near his box. On being questioned he described the race in exactly the reverse way to which it was run, saying that I had made the running and that my opponent had caught me inside the distance and beaten me, which was just contrary to the actual fact. Anyhow we lost the stakes and our bets, and felt very angry.

CHAPTER IX.

DEVONSHIRE.

THE winter of 1869-70 was a very severe one, occasioning much discomfort to all who were quartered in the old wooden huts at Aldershot. We had, however, as compensation, a great deal of skating, though it was occasionally rather dangerous, as places here and there did not freeze as soon as the rest, and when covered over afterwards by a thin skin of ice, were undistinguishable from the sound ice. In this way one of my brother officers was very nearly drowned. He had only just begun to skate, and to keep himself warm was wearing a long thick greatcoat, while mastering the difficulty of keeping on an "edge." He was plodding along by himself, when he got on to some of the thin ice, which at once gave way with him. Weighted as he was by his greatcoat, it was all that he could do to keep his mouth above water, holding on to a large piece of broken ice, for his struggles at first had broken up the ice in every direction round him. There was a great cry for ladders and ropes, and several well-meaning individuals started off to skate to Aldershot for them, a distance of two miles, and long before they could have returned our comrade must have disappeared. Fortunately I was wearing a very long woollen comforter, so long, indeed, that the ends nearly touched the ground

on either side when I stood upright. This was quickly tied to my stick, and two or three pocket-handkerchiefs added to the comforter, made a sufficiently long rope. Getting on to a large piece of ice I cast the line, as if I was using a rod, and fortunately succeeded the first throw in hitting him in the face. He clutched hold, and by turning my skates broadside I got a good purchase, sufficient to prevent being dragged in. Plenty of willing hands knotted another rope, which was thrown to me, and we were both speedily hauled on to the firm ice.

In this same frost a terrible accident happened at Bearwood, not far distant from Aldershot. One of the young Walters broke through, and a brother endeavoured to save him by lying down on the ice and holding out his hands. He had no purchase, however, and was speedily pulled in also, thus making the misfortune still worse. A third brother rushed up, and unfortunately repeated the same manœuvre, and he, too, was pulled in, there being then three that had to be extricated instead of only one. Eventually two were saved, I think the first and the third that were immersed, but one poor fellow was drowned, and it threw a gloom over all the district.

It is lamentable how many lives are yearly lost which might be saved, if those who are present but keep cool enough to think how a rope can be quickly made. A few years ago poor old Holmes—so well-known to everyone quartered at Gibraltar at that time—was drowned in trying to ford a torrent, on the way home from hunting. He had companions with him, and was whirled by the current almost within arm's length of the shore, and yet no endeavour was made to construct a rope, though hunting whips, stirrup-leathers, and reins, were all at

hand. Just at the time I am writing these words, two men have been drowned, one at Malton, and the other at York, and each of them were within five or six yards of the bank, with several spectators looking on. One man who was bathing at the same spot, did indeed go to assist the poor fellow who was drowned at York, who had fallen out of a boat, fully dressed, and yet instead of seizing him from behind by his coat-collar, or his arm above the elbow, he actually swam up in front and took hold of *his beard*. The natural consequence was that the drowning man endeavoured to clutch hold of his would-be rescuer, who promptly let him go, and left him to his fate. It is difficult to get a good hold of an absolutely naked person in the water, so that he cannot turn round upon the person who has come to his help, but it can be done by getting a grip of his arm from behind, close up to the armpit. It is possible then to keep him at arm's length, and to push him away whenever he tries to turn round. Everyone should know how to make a rope out of ordinary wearing material, such as pocket handkerchiefs, braces, long stockings, neckties, etc., and which are sure to be on the spot. It is easy to tie them together so that they shall not slip, by tying each material *on itself*, in the same way as fishermen tie gut of different sizes, to make an ordinary casting line.

While we were quartered at Plymouth we had many experiences of strange steeplechase courses, for in that sporting county they love to see horses race over a natural country, the same that is crossed when hunting, for they wish to test the handiness of the competitors, as well as their speed and stoutness. There was a well-known course at Roborough Down, which would have

astonished a horse schooled over nothing but flying fences ; and an up-country jockey would have been puzzled to make his way over it, without some previous local practice. One principle seemed to have been followed by the management when laying out the course, which was never to let two fences succeed each other in a straight line, but always at once to make a turning to the right or the left, as soon as a fence had been jumped. In fact the letter Z gives a fair idea of the plan on which they had proceeded. Added to this inconvenient idea, there was a road to jump into, from the top of a bank 7 ft. 6 in. high, and the bank out of it, though a comparatively low one, was only distant about the width of a cart. At one meeting there, one of my brother officers, Mr. E. W. Dunn, a remarkably fine rider, was piloting "Top Sawyer," by the "Flying Dutchman," when the latter took it into his head to refuse, while at the same time one of the stirrup-leathers unfortunately broke. Slipping his left arm through the stirrup, so as not to lose it altogether, as he had weighed out rather fine, Mr. Dunn resolutely battled with the horse, who was showing temper, and rearing badly in the vain attempt to get rid of his rider. I had been riding in a previous race, and was going to ride again subsequently, so I still had on my boots and breeches, and, borrowing a hunting whip from a bystander, I ran down just as I was to try and assist in conquering the wilful brute. Many others had also assembled to watch the fight, and when I arrived there, a farmer on a tiny Exmoor pony jumped off it, and saying to me, "Here sir, give him a lead over," gave me a "leg up" on the mite he had been riding. The animal was so small that my feet nearly touched the ground on each side, and the

crowd forming a lane, I got in front of "Top Sawyer," and set the pony going at the fence, amidst the cheers of the spectators. There is but little, we are told, between the sublime and the ridiculous, and the cheering speedily ended in laughter, as the pony stuck his toes in the ground and absolutely refused to move. However help was at hand, for the owner rushing up, gave the pony such a cut over his quarters that it speedily changed its mind, and crawled up the bank, like a mouse running up a wall, closely followed by "Top Sawyer." There were but two more fences to jump before landing on to the flat for the run in. The pony gallantly jumped them, with "Top Sawyer" following meekly behind, and then the latter made the best of his way to the winning-post, and secured the money given to the second horse. Of all the curious courses, however, in that country, none can equal Totnes. Modbury required a little nerve to ride over, as, in the course of the race, a good-sized ordinary gate had to be jumped, and then after slithering down a very steep descent into a trout stream, and floundering across the rocks, it was necessary to hold tight on to the mane, and stand in the stirrups, to get up the opposite side. Totnes, however, is quite unique. Imagine galloping up to a high railway embankment, then turning at right angles to the right for a few yards, and then sharp to the left, underneath the railway bridge, which crosses the river. As soon as you have emerged from the bridge, you must drop down into the river and wade across, up to your saddle-flaps, and then come back under the railway bridge, turn to the left, and proceed over several fair banks to a flag in the distance. After turning this, the next thing is to take a line back for the river, at a

different place from the former crossing, but before reaching it you have to gallop a quarter of a mile, down hill, along a turnpike road. That tries unsound legs and feet, with a vengeance! Afterwards you drop into the river again, crawl up the opposite bank, jump a hurdle as soon as ever you reach *terra firma*, and find you are at the winning post. Certainly it is productive of much fun and merriment, and yet it requires a good horse to win, and a bold rider, for they breed some good horses in Devonshire, and ride them well into the bargain!

An extremely good horse was a frequent winner at this epoch, belonging to a miller, "Barumite," by "Gemma di Vergy," a son of "Sir Hercules." This horse had been at the stud ever since he was two years old, and being an aged horse at this time was very often competing against his own stock. It was said that his owner had refused a thousand guineas for him, a very great price in those days for a steeplechase horse, but he must have made a great deal of money by him, for, if report spoke truly, sometimes more was made by his losing than when he won. Whenever his long flowing tail was seen floating out proudly as he galloped, it was safe to back him; but if his tail was tied up in a club, it was wiser to back the second favourite!! I once went to Torquay to ride him, but almost at the very last moment it was intimated to me that the miller wished to ride him himself—the only time I ever knew him do so. There was but just time to tie his tail up, and I watched the proceeding rather mournfully, for I should have dearly liked the mount. "Barumite" "refused" before he had gone half a mile, and was pulled up. The public took it rather badly on that occasion, and rather forcibly desired an explanation, but the jockey did not

see the necessity of returning to weigh in, and maybe all's well that end's well. "Barumite" was more than "useful." He could win a two-mile flat race one day, and another over hurdles the next. Then he would journey into the Midlands, or the Metropolitan district, and after winning at Warwick, or Croydon, would return to his beloved banks again. He was an extremely sure fencer, a beautiful, compact, muscular horse to look at, and reminded one very much of an enlarged Arab, and from his docility he might well have been one. His constant attendant was a tall, old man, whose hair was verging on white, and who never got on to his back. This man was perfectly devoted to his charge, and would walk for hours by his side when doing walking exercise. When "Barumite" was ten years old he was bought for a large sum by the late Major-General Seymour, who was in hopes of winning the Grand Military with him, but for some reason the horse did not run up to his old form, and he was defeated easily.

There was a little meeting in Cornwall, at Landrake, and Mr. Dunn once sent a good old Irish horse of his own to run there. As the racecourse was sixteen miles from our barracks, the horse was sent over early in the morning, and we started at a later hour to drive there in a pony-cart. When we arrived, however, at Saltash, the floating ferry-boat had broken down, and there was no apparent means of crossing, although "Kildare" had got safely over before the accident had occurred. It seemed, however, that if we could get a couple of fishing-boats it might be possible to get the little cart conveyed in one, and the pony, with ourselves, in the other. The boats were obtained, and we essayed to cross, devoutly hoping that the owner of the pony-cart might not

be looking out of the train, which was then passing over Brunel's famous viaduct, and in which we expected that he was travelling. The cart was soon got on board, but in vain did we try every means in our power to get the pony into the other boat, for nothing would induce it to embark. At last, in despair, I suggested that we should swim the pony over behind our boat, and after some demur it was acceded to, as no other means of crossing presented itself. To our surprise the pony offered no resistance, and as soon as the boat began to recede from the shore it followed us without any difficulty and swam beside us, while we guided it by the harness reins attached to the bridle. The three-quarters of a mile were soon passed over, and we were quickly *en route* again for Landrake, but so much time had been lost that we feared we should never reach the course in time. Fortunately, our race was fixed for one of the last events, and we arrived on the scene while the preceding one was being run. Our difficulties, however, were not yet over, for we were immediately met by the lad who had gone with "Kildare" in the morning, saying that he had lost his way and had only just arrived, while "Kildare" had had nothing to eat since he had left his stable at 7 A.M. This was cheerful news, for it would never have done to have fed him within a few minutes of his race, so we procured a bottle of ale and poured it down his throat. He seemed rather to like it, and the effect it speedily had upon him was almost magical. Instead of looking rather weary and jaded, he became almost playful, and stepped out as proudly as if he had just come out of his stable. He ran, too, as well as he looked, and taking the lead about half-way, he was never again approached, and won easily by several lengths. Our return home was

a triumphant one. The ferry-boat had been repaired, and was ready to receive us, but all the population of the village turned out to do honour to the pony that had swam across in the morning.

The history of that pony was rather remarkable, for one of our subalterns—the present Sir Thomas Fermor-Hesketh—put into a raffle for him, and tied with another man for first prize. The day and hour were fixed for the “tie” to be decided by the throw of dice, but, unfortunately, it was Hesketh’s turn to go on guard, and he was consequently unable to be present. He therefore requested me to go in his stead, and at the appointed time I presented myself at the rendezvous, the back parlour of Jackman, the horsedealer’s house, which was crowded with spectators. We were to have three throws of three dice each time out of a teacup! We threw in turns, and I made an extremely good score, getting 18, 17, and 13. My opponent was beaten easily, but then objected to the decision on the ground that he had never thrown dice out of a teacup before! I promptly responded by announcing that not only had I never thrown out of a teacup, but, in addition, I had never thrown three dice before! The objection was therefore overruled, and the pony came into the possession of Mr. Hesketh. He was an Exmoor, nearly white in colour, between 12 and 13 hands high, and one of the fastest and gamest ponies in the world; and before being raffled for had been matched to trot sixteen miles in the hour in an ordinary pony-trap.

Plymouth was a charming quarter, and with hunting and shooting in the winter, and cricket, steeplechasing, fishing, and otter-hunting in the summer, there was always some exciting amusement on hand. A piece of luck befell

me the very first time I ever saw an otter hunt. I dined the night before with Captain J. Ruck-Keene, who commanded a battery of artillery there, and he said in joke, "If you want to distinguish yourself to-morrow, you must tail the otter the first time you go out." It was a curious fact that I did do so, and I have never again had another chance of repeating the feat. We had been hunting the otter for some time, and came to a long shallow with only one more pool and shallow before reaching a very deep mill-dam. If the otter once got into the latter, it was almost impossible to capture him, as the banks were lined with numbers of old willow trees, whose submerged roots gave it impregnable hiding-places. The command was issued to line the shallow and prevent the otter passing it, so a number of us stood nearly knee deep in the water, and so close together that we almost touched each other. The water had got too muddy to see the otter, nor could he see us, and several times he bumped against our legs and then turned back. At length, however, he got through the line and was well up the pool above before it was discovered he had escaped. It seemed there might be just a chance of heading him at the next shallow, the one below the mill-dam, and climbing up the bank I ran as fast as I could to get there before him. Just as the head of the "stickle" was reached, the otter was floundering up it on the far side, as it was of such a depth that he could neither swim nor yet run; he had but a few yards to go, and though I jumped into the water and rushed at him, to my chagrin I was just too late, and as I approached he got into deeper water and disappeared from sight. Partly from vexation, I think, I threw myself flat into the water and made a grab, and, feel-

ing something furry, closed my hand. To my joy I had caught him by the extreme tip of his tail, and rose up with the otter struggling hard for his liberty. Although I had been well used to handling live foxes when Whip to the beagles at Eton, I had never been in such a predicament as now, for the stream came up to the top of my calves, and having only hold of the end of the tail, I could not lift the otter clear of the water. After a very narrow escape of having his teeth fixed in my leg, it seemed that the best way would be to keep him swinging, so turning round and round like a teetotum, a good rotary motion was kept on the otter until the shore was reached, when he was flung up to the expectant hounds.

Old Mr. Trelawney, of Coldrennick, was then the Master of the Foxhounds, and hunted otters in the summer with a portion of the pack. He much preferred them to the rough hounds, as he maintained that the latter were so fond of throwing their tongues, that they would open on the scent when it was many hours old, for it lies for a long time in the damp, shady ground near the river. Foxhounds, he used to say, had just as good noses, but would not speak to the scent unless the otter was close before them. When they gave tongue it was certain the otter was there, whereas the rough hounds might keep the "field" expectant for half the day, while the otter was snugly ensconced in another river three or four miles off. Still, Mr. Trelawney liked to have one or two rough hounds in the pack, as their musical voices served to keep up the interest, and were an additional charm as they resounded through a wild, rocky dell, though till the foxhounds chimed in no real work could be anticipated. It was only certain families of foxhounds that cared for the

scent of an otter, and others would never enter to it, but those that did so got very fond of it and became very keen. The constant wet, however, tried their feet very much, and they got footsore if they had to travel far by road to reach their kennel.

One day when otter-hunting, someone further down the stream raised the cry, "The eels are coming," and in a few minutes a black, wriggling mass appeared, looking at first sight as if the bed of the river had suddenly become covered by a huge bed of weeds.

It is a curious sight to watch the ascent of these tiny eels when they leave the sea and fill the rivers in the spring, literally in myriads. The life history of eels has yet to be discovered, though much has been found out of late years that was never before suspected. It seems certain that they never breed in fresh water, and that after staying there for a period, they descend to the sea in the autumn months, from which they never again return. Their breeding-places may be in very deep water, as is now very generally believed, but surely they cannot be a very long way from the shore, for when the eel-fry seek the rivers they are very tiny little things, and would scarcely make a very long journey in the sea to look for their country residences. Still, they are most persevering when once in fresh water, and not only force their way up waterfalls and weirs, but ascend also field drain pipes, thus gaining access to remote ponds, and even the metal pipes of water mains. They grow to an immense size in New Zealand rivers, eels of from 20 lb. to 30 lb. in weight being quite common, and the Maoris are very clever in catching them. One of their practices is to take advantage of their migrating habits, and choosing a bend

of a river where there is a rapid descent, they cut a sluice into a field at the upper part, and back into the river again at the lower part. Then they guide the eels to the sluice by making across the stream a slanting fence of thorns, which does not stop the flow of the water altogether, though the eels do not pass through on meeting it, but coast along till they come to the sluice. Down they go into the field, and when the Maoris think that the time has come, they stop the upper sluice and open the lower one, which until then has been kept closed. The water soon runs off, and the eels being left in the mud in the field are speedily caught and preserved for future use. Eels of great size are a very formidable danger when bathing, and at one favourite bathing-place in the Upper Island, so many first-rate swimmers were drowned at one particular spot, that many theories were started to account for the cramp which was supposed to attack them there. Each used to throw up his arms and shriek, and disappear, and notices were posted up warning people against bathing there. At last it was discovered that the unfortunate swimmers were seized by gigantic eels, who used to come behind them when battling against the strong current, and drag them down.

The late Mr. Rochfort Boyd used to relate an amusing story of some tenants of his near the River Brosna in Westmeath. The land was very swampy, and when the rent day came the tenants invariably pulled long faces and declared they could pay no rent, as their lands had all been overflowed and the crops spoilt. This happened so often that at last Mr. Rochfort Boyd and a neighbouring landlord combined to drain this land, and he gleefully rubbed his hands on the next rent day, as now the old

reason was gone for paying no rent. An Irishman has a wonderful knack of finding excuses, and when the first tenant presented himself he pulled a longer face than ever, declaring that now it was *quite* impossible to pay a bit of rent at all. "Why, how is this," said his landlord, "have not I drained all the land for you, and made it sound." "Shure, your honour," replied Pat, "and that's the rason of it. Begorra the eels paid the rint before, and now your honour has drained the land, sorra an eel is ivir seen!"

Devonshire was a great country for vipers, and they were particularly fond of lying coiled up on a bank sunning themselves, just where there was a weak place in the fence, at the very spot most convenient for getting over. It was necessary, therefore, before laying a hand upon the bank to look closely, lest a viper should be there, for they did not always move away when approached. It was quite a common thing to shoot them, when thus taking a siesta. I once saw two coiled in an embrace, when walking over to Maristow from Staddon Heights, on a Sunday afternoon. Unfortunately we had some terriers with us, and when they saw my companion and me stop, they rushed up to see what was going on, and we were obliged to kill the snakes to save the dogs. The navvies were then still engaged in building the fort at Staddon, and a camp was pitched there every summer for musketry. Our only water supply was from a well, and as the water began to be very disagreeable, an investigation was made, when it was discovered that one of the navvies had thrown a dead duck into the well some time before. Though they had all been aware of it, they had still continued to use the water, and had

not mentioned the fact for fear of being prevented from doing so. A sentry, of course, was at once placed over the well until it could be cleansed, and his forcible prevention of the navvies' wives from obtaining the water for tea, very nearly ended in a general row.

We played a great many cricket matches in all parts of Devonshire, and though I was a very humble member of the regimental eleven, I could generally get into double figures, if I was only allowed to hit as I pleased. If I was told to play steady and keep up my wicket, I was sure to be out at once. We were playing once at Torquay, where the ground was rather confined, so there was a rule in force that a ball hit over the fence counted six, and one into it was four. It was very nearly time to draw the stumps, and when twenty minutes to six arrived, I had taken off my pads and gloves to stow them away, for at a quarter to six we were to leave to catch the train. Just then a wicket was bowled, and being the next to bat, I ran down just as I was. Fortescue, who had an extremely fast delivery, was bowling, and had only the week before got rid of Cambridge for a very small score, when playing for Oxford. He was very much incensed at anyone coming in without pads to oppose his bowling, and he sent the first ball straight at my legs. It was pitched up a little too far, and seeing it was a beautiful half-volley, I drove it hard over his head and out of the field for six. It took some time to get the ball back again, and Fortescue sent the next ball harder than ever at my legs again. It was another half-volley, but that time stuck in the hedge instead of going over, and so only counted four. The third ball, the last of the over, went to square-leg for three, and then the

stumps were drawn, and I retired with thirteen to my credit for three balls.

Some years afterwards I had a very triumphant moment when playing at Gibraltar. We had been to Ireland since the Devonshire days, and to the Ashanti War, and I had not had a bat in my hand for years. The whole battalion almost had changed, and none of the privates had ever seen me play at all. A match was got up, the officers against the men, and being so utterly out of practice, I requested Captain Slade, the captain of our team, to put me in the last man. When it came to my turn to bat, ten runs were still wanted to equal the men's score, and on approaching the wicket, someone of the opposite side called out, "Come and catch him off his bat." The idea was popular, and I smiled inwardly to myself as they crowded close around. A slow, well-pitched-up ball was bowled, and the thrill that went through the faces, I often think of, as I took a step forward and lifted my bat for a real drive. They had no time to move, but were just able to grasp the mistake they had made as I caught the ball fair, and it fortunately went through their midst without touching anyone. The next moment they were all retiring to the uttermost parts of the field with great celerity, and after making the necessary eleven to win the match, I carried my bat out in triumph.

CHAPTER X.

IRELAND.

IN the days when we were first quartered in Ireland, no blight of legalised robbery had fallen upon it. The landlords mostly lived in their demesnes, and spent their money among their own people. There was fun and merriment everywhere, and thorough loyalty and reciprocity of feeling between the peasantry and the "ould gintry."

I was there when the first shadow of the Land League appeared, rousing the demon of cupidity; and how was it met by the authorities? The Government was warned repeatedly by generals, police officers, and magistrates that they *must not* allow the open-air meetings to take place; that banners, bands, and wild speeches would so inflame the excitable population that no one could foresee where the spirit they were raising might lead them. It was all to no purpose. Gladstone desired an Irish cry, and by coquetting with Home Rule wrecked the great Liberal party,—a blessing in disguise, perhaps, to the nation, for since the formation of the Unionist party, the imperial instincts of Britain have once more sprung into prominence, and a repetition of the shameful episode that followed the disastrous "Majuba Hill" would surely now be impossible.

Yet all through that time of violence and murder, when a man's life was not worth a day's purchase, if he had been known to pay his rent, hundreds of thousands of the tenants stood gallantly by their landlords; often they paid secretly, and in innumerable cases placed the rent in the bank, to the landlord's account, without mentioning names, and taking no receipts, so that the transactions could not be traced. At the bank I was in the habit of using, the manager informed me that nearly £400,000 had been so paid into their different branches, and I can well believe it. The old peasantry were perfectly honest, and had no wish whatever to defraud any one of their just rights, but it was the vast class of "corner-boys" and the young men who had nothing to lose that composed the lawless crowds, and did most of the mischief. At the same time, Ireland differs so essentially from England in its habits and thoughts that scarcely any man was bold enough to act contrary to the public opinion of his district. Englishmen cannot understand how lightly life is held in the sister island; or that, whatever the crime is, the instinct of the populace is to shelter the criminal, instead of as in England to aid the law. There is no horror of a blood-stained murderer; but on the contrary he is rather looked upon in the light of a hero if he has shot a landlord, or an agent, or some one who has paid his rent when he has received warning not to do so.

Englishmen, too, cannot believe the working of the Land Bill that they themselves passed into law, to be in truth what it really is, simple stealing from the unfortunate landowner. No one in England will believe, however plainly they are told, that if a tenant

disagrees about the rent, he can go to the Land Commissioners and have an arbitrary rent—always less than it was before—fixed for fifteen years; that so long as this rent is paid, there is no power whatever of turning him out, so that practically he has become the owner of his holding. At the conclusion of the fifteen years, he can again go to the Land Commissioners, and say he is dissatisfied with the rent as last fixed. *In every case* these said Commissioners have reduced the rents again—in most cases 30 per cent. under what they themselves fixed before,—although every description of marketable produce has risen in value since the rent was first settled. Thousands of landowners have been reduced to absolute beggary by this confiscation of their property without compensation—as well might they live under Turkish or Moorish rule, where the Sultans make no scruple of seizing property and no man dares to be accounted passing rich, as live under the rule of the Land Commissioners.

Ireland has long been the battle-ground of political parties, but it is a country easily governed by just laws, firmly administered. There is no nation, however, more given to “trying it on,” when they think that their rulers are weak, and afraid to put the law into force. Hence the continued agrarian murders, which will be ever cropping up, if the perpetrators think that they will escape from paying the penalties of their crime. A very plucky feat was performed during the troublous times that preceded the days of the Land League, when that grand specimen of the Church militant, Dean Holmes, aided by Mr. Richard Bayley, agent of Mr. Stafford O’Brien, near Nenagh, in County Limerick, captured by themselves a

man who was "wanted." He was suspected of murder, was known to be hiding in the mountains, and at length sure information was brought to the Dean that he was concealed in a certain cottage. A consultation was at once held with Mr. Bayley, and the co-operation of a search party of cavalry was secured for the following morning. When, at daybreak, the rendezvous was reached, no cavalry made their appearance, so after waiting a considerable time, without any signs of their approach, it was determined that the agent should reconnoitre the cottage, and see if the man sought for was there, while the Dean kept a look-out for the soldiers.

On reaching the cabin, Mr. Bayley saw the man through the window, but he was surrounded by several others, who were holding an animated conversation. While watching them, they suddenly rose and came out, barely allowing sufficient time for the observer to conceal himself behind the turf stack. None of them came his way, fortunately, and they all departed except the man who was sought, who returned into the cottage.

As several dogs belonging to the house had run out when the men left the dwelling, it was remarkable that none of them challenged Mr. Bayley in his hiding-place, but the reason would seem to be that so many strangers to them were present, they took no notice of an extra person outside.

Mr. Bayley returned to Dean Holmes, and as there was still no cavalry to be descried, it was resolved by the two friends to try and take the man themselves.

Being both powerful, active men, they soon overcame his resistance, and made him a prisoner. Mr. Bayley then mounted his horse, and the Dean lifting the captive behind

the rider, bound him to his back. They thus proceeded towards Nenagh, and on their way met the cavalry, who had made a mistake as to the time, and delivered the prisoner into their charge.

Some years after this Mr. Bayley was the victim of a dastardly outrage. He was leaving Nenagh in company with Mr. Michael Head, when a shot was fired, and he fell to the ground with one side of his face and jaw blown completely away. He was carried into a cottage close by, and so effectual did the shot appear to have been, that when the man who had fired came to the door a few minutes afterwards and levelled his gun to "finish him off," he took it down again without pulling the trigger, remarking "that it was no use to shoot a dead man." This crime was committed because the tenants thought that Mr. Bayley was standing in the way of their receiving a reduction of rent, whereas, in reality, it was the landlord who was opposed to the reduction, but sheltered himself behind the agent's name. Mrs. Bayley was soon informed of the accident to her husband, and quickly arriving took her place by his side, stanching the flow of blood by compressing the severed blood vessels with her fingers.

Mr. Head galloped off to catch the night train at Portarlinton, a distance of about forty miles, and on arriving in Dublin went straight to the residence of Sir Philip Crampton, the celebrated surgeon. They returned by the next train to Portarlinton, from whence they proceeded by car to Nenagh, arriving some twenty-four hours after the outrage had been committed.

For the whole of this time the heroic wife had sat compressing the great veins of the shattered neck, and deservedly reaped her reward by saving the life of her

husband. The skill of the great surgeon, aided by a powerful constitution, enabled Mr. Bayley eventually to recover, though terribly disfigured, and he lived for many years afterwards. A feeling of satisfaction cannot be repressed that the ruffian who fired the shot was captured, convicted, and hanged on the charge of "attempted murder."

In the early days of the Land League the Peace Preservation Act was still in force, and in consequence there were no arms in the hands of the peasantry. When Mr. Gladstone, however, came into power in 1880, he allowed the Act to lapse in spite of a letter from the Duke of Marlborough, who was just then vacating the office of Lord Lieutenant, and who strongly urged the extreme importance of maintaining it. I was aide-de-camp to the General commanding the Dublin district at the time, and when on a visit of inspection at Athlone we were informed that 20,000 arms were withdrawn from that armoury alone within a few days of the Act being withdrawn. It must be borne in mind, too, that nearly the whole of these arms had been taken at different times by the police in the course of years, during the periods in which various districts had been proclaimed for disaffection and exceptional crime. People being again entitled to possess arms, everyone who could show any title to them had them at once restored to them, to become ready tools of oppression against anyone who dared to pay his just rent or his just debts.

Before this, from the want of firearms, the land-leaguers had recourse to the system of "carding," a fearful form of torture, and almost as deadly in its effects as shooting. There was perhaps little to choose between either method of striking terror into the hearts of their

victims. Perhaps it may be forgotten what the meaning of "carding" is. It is this. If a man was suspected of having paid his rent, some ten or a dozen of his neighbours paid him a visit at night; he was then stripped naked, and held down by three or four men. Other fiends in human form then tore every strip of skin and the quivering flesh off his back, and frequently off his stomach also, with a wooden board about a foot long studded with large nails, and they did not leave their wretched victim, writhing in his agony, until he was almost dead. Even women, the wives and daughters of honest tenants, were sometimes subjected to this torture! A person who had been thoroughly carded never really recovered from the ferocious treatment to which he had been subjected, even though he might escape with life at the time. Perhaps it was more humane, after the peasants had regained possession of arms, to shoot a man dead on the spot, though in many cases they only mangled their victims, shooting them in the limbs instead of in a vital place. When I was living in Mullingar a tenant was shot in his cottage in the main street of a town containing 8000 inhabitants, only a few doors from the house I was inhabiting. He was suspected of having paid his rent, and though he strenuously denied the charge, he was made to hold out his right arm, and the muzzle of a revolver was placed against it, the trigger pulled, and the limb shattered to pieces. Another afternoon, when a fair was being held, the bailiff of Mr. Smythe, of Gaybrook, was shot dead, while hundreds of people were only a few yards distant. The murderer was seen waiting behind a short piece of wall in the churchyard by numbers of people, who, though they knew the object for which he was there, neither

dared to warn the victim or give notice to the police. The poor man was killed the moment he passed the shelter of the wall, when he got opposite the iron railings that guarded the entrance to the church; and no one ventured to lay a hand upon the wretch who committed the deed. Armenian atrocities caused a just thrill to sweep through England, and yet crimes every whit as savage were daily being committed within almost a stone's throw of England, and actually under her Government! Let it not be forgotten that it was the publication of the "No Rent Manifesto," issued on 19th October 1881, and signed by Mr. Parnell, Mr. Kettle, Mr. Davitt, Mr. Brennan, Mr. John Dillon, Mr. Sexton, and Mr. Patrick Egan, that at long last led to the suppression of the Land League on 21st October. But the mischief had long been growing up under the very noses of the Government, and was already done; and, phoenix-like, the National League sprang from the ashes of the Land League, and carried on its career of crime and misery. The Catholic Archbishop of Cashel, Dr. Croke, all honour to him, hastened to issue a pastoral on 20th October, repudiating the teaching of this manifesto, but it fell on the unheeding ears of men tempted by the greed of gain. The Archbishop of Dublin took even more vigorous measures to enforce his prohibition of clerical interference in favour of the Land League, and when one curate in the diocese of Dublin ventured to defy the archiepiscopal orders, he was promptly suspended from his clerical functions. The moment the Government at last showed a resolve to enforce its authority, the great bulk of the people, landlords and peasants alike, were only too glad to rally around it, but up to this point Gladstone had only coquetted with

“Coercion,” and “listened and heard the voice of Ireland calling to him,” through the speeches and acts of the “patriots” and their allies.

Fancy the fear and trembling in which the unhappy people were living. Picture in your own mind the lone cabin on the hillside, where the poor tenant is living in his one room, far removed from any human being to help him in his extremity—for everyone in the country side is leagued together against him. Some night a knock comes at the door, and he is ordered to get up and open it. God have mercy on him then, for the men who enter, with blackened faces, will have none! The terrified wife and children may weep, and in agonising tones beg for forgiveness for his great crime. “Have mercy on him, your honours, an’ by the blessed Virgin he’ll nivir pay the rint again!” But mercy is unknown to these miscreants. His misdeeds are laid before him in pitiless tones. “He has paid his rent!” “He has helped a neighbour, who was boycotted, with his praties!” “He has voted against a Parnellite” (as for the secrecy of the ballot, that is mere nonsense, for how everyone has voted is well known to everyone else, and woe betide the man who does not vote as he is ordered, or who refuses to vote at all); and then a gun is produced, and with a “One, two, three!” the tragedy is enacted, as it has been scores of times, that have never been reported in the English papers at all. The poor wife is left alone with her orphans, until the morning light enables her to communicate with the nearest police, who are alone her friends in her extremity, no one else daring to come to her assistance.

Such is a true picture of the state of anarchy that Ireland had been allowed to drift into. One bright spot

was the loyalty and courage shown by that splendid force, the Royal Irish Constabulary. Drawn from among the very people they were called upon to act against, and tempting as it must have been to assist in sharing the plunder, which the people universally thought, from the supineness of the Government, was going to be theirs, the Constabulary yet remained faithful to their order. They were called upon to undergo privations of every kind,—hunger, fatigue, and violence,—ever fighting against their own kith and kin; but their conduct was the admiration of everyone, and they were never known to fail in their duty. They are undoubtedly one of the finest bodies of men in the world, and much resemble in every way that famous corps, the *Guarda Civilia* of Spain.

There were many brilliant deeds of heroism performed in these unhappy times by all classes, and often by delicately nurtured ladies, as well as by humble peasant women, that deserved a lasting record, instead of sinking into oblivion, as has too often been the case.

An instance occurred near Mallow in 1881 that may well be narrated, showing how the courage of a wife saved her husband's life. A widower named Hanlon was about to be married again, when the family of his bride-elect became boycotted, and, of course, the marriage was thereby prevented from taking place. Hanlon himself was then boycotted also, and as no person in the neighbourhood dared to work for him, an old pensioner of the 20th Regiment, named Thomas Keefe, who lost an arm at the battle of Inkermann, allowed his eldest daughter, a young girl, to go and help in Hanlon's house. Keefe himself was the tenant of a small farm and house at Nursetown, not far from the other place, where he lived with his wife and

children. One night he and his wife were awakened between two and three o'clock in the morning by loud talking outside. The voices then called him by name, after which several shots were fired through the window of the bedroom, the inmates being most lucky to escape unhurt, as the bed in which they lay was directly opposite the muzzles of the guns. The window was then forced in and more shots were fired, while at the same time an attempt was made to burst in the kitchen door. This succeeded at last, and a large party rushed in, and then calling out for "the ould pensioner," proceeded to break open the bedroom door.

Keefe had been prevented by his wife from getting out of bed, and having hidden him under the clothes, she and her little child then sat down upon him. When the men rushed into the room they inquired where her husband was, and she told them "he had gone to Cork." One of them seized her by the hand, and was on the point of pulling her off the bed, when another pointed a gun at her, whereupon the one who had seized her hand dropped it to make his companion put down the gun. In all probability this circumstance prevented the discovery of Keefe, as the attention of the men was distracted from the bed to the altercation about the gun. After saying "that it was well for him that he was away, as they had come to pay him off for allowing his daughter to work for Hanlon," the party proceeded to break all the crockery and furniture in the kitchen, and after remaining about half an hour in the house, they took their departure, warning Mrs. Keefe not to report their visit to the Constabulary. As soon as it was daylight the family fled for protection to the Constabulary barracks, Keefe taking with him three bullets

that had fallen on the bed, after being flattened against the wall.

It was not long after this occurrence that the world was startled by the terrible murder of Lord Frederick Cavendish and Mr. Burke in the Phoenix Park. I may have had a lucky escape from not having been with them that evening, for Mr. Burke had kindly invited my wife and myself to stay with him to meet Lord Frederick on his arrival, and if we had gone it is probable that I should have accompanied them home. An attack of malarial fever prevented me from going there, just at the last moment. It may be in the memory of some people that the same assassins who accomplished these murders had on a great many occasions attempted previously the murder of Mr. Forster, whom Lord Frederick was succeeding, but had invariably been frustrated in their attempts. Perhaps no statesman has ever been more disillusioned than was Mr. Forster. He had been employed to administer the dole in the great famine of 1847-48, and in his simplicity he believed that the Irish had ever retained great gratitude for him, and that his very presence would pacify Ireland. He was rewarded by receiving the nickname of "Buckshot," and he felt this very keenly; but the bitterest blow was to find how near he had been to assassination. To his credit, be it said, that he was a clear-headed man, and when he once grasped the fact that Ireland was practically in open rebellion, he did his very utmost to use the forces that were at his disposal, and to seek greater powers than Gladstone was willing to concede. He was very fortunate, indeed, in returning to England alive, for luck could not have befriended him much longer. Another friend of ours, poor

Mrs. Smythe, of Barbavilla, was shot when returning in her carriage from church on Christmas Day. Her death was not intended, the shot being aimed at her husband, who was sitting by her side. The murder took place in the middle of the day in their own park, and it had been remarked that something must be going to happen, for the country-people had not gone away at once on coming out from the service, but were standing about in groups, as if waiting for something to happen. They were, in truth, waiting to hear the report of the gun, for they were well aware that Mr. Smythe was to be shot on the way home,—and yet no one would warn him! A rather curious circumstance was that a visitor had intended to stay for the Holy Sacrament, and to drive back in the carriage with his host and hostess. Had he done so he would have been sitting in the front seat of the brougham, and received the charge of the shot instead of Mrs. Smythe. She had, however, herself requested him to alter his mind, and to walk home with her two young daughters, as she did not like them to go home by themselves in those disturbed times.

No one, at that period, ever ventured out of doors in Westmeath without carrying loaded arms. Even when hunting, or riding about, it was usual to have a loaded pistol in one's pocket. No one ever thought of sitting in a room at night with the shutters unclosed, or of opening the front door with a light behind one. It was the usual thing, when dining out, for all the revolvers of the guests to be put into one room on arrival, when the host would lock the door and keep the key in his pocket until the time arrived for departure. Most persons, too, kept a loaded revolver in some secret place,

in different rooms in the house, where they could be got at a minute's notice in case of need. People very soon got used to such a state of things, and lawn-tennis parties, cricket matches, etc., went on just the same as if Westmeath were in the heart of England. A sharp watch was ever kept all the same; and there were few people who would not have fired at sight, if a man had been seen skulking suspiciously behind a wall on the way home.

CHAPTER XI.

IRISH HUMOUR.

IN the disturbed state of the country the Westmeath Rifles, of which I was then Adjutant, were not called out for training for two years, it not being considered safe to do so. On being asked, however, whether I was willing to train them when the third season came round, I replied that I was quite ready, and the recruits were accordingly called up to learn their drill some weeks before the regiment came up. When I was calling the roll it happened to be raining heavily, and we were consequently crowded together for shelter inside a passage. A man, sheltered behind others in front, suddenly spat at me, hitting me on the breast, but fortunately I just then happened to look up from the paper in my hand, and caught sight of him in the act. Keeping him in view, I went for him through the crowd, and though he tried hard to get away he was caught at last, and dragged triumphantly back. Having the powers of a commanding-officer for the time being I at once tried him, and sentenced him to "cells," and then went on with calling the roll. As soon as finished I went to the orderly-room to sign the committal, and found my staff looking very solemn. "You'll be shot, sir," said the sergeant-major, "if you send the man to cells"; but I told him I was there to keep up discipline, and I intended to do it.

“I’m afraid you’ll be shot, sir,” said the orderly-room clerk, and I gave him the same answer. The man never gave any further trouble, and the militiamen in general were as quiet a lot of men as I ever had to do with. It is my belief that I should have been much more likely to have been shot if I had not been firm and sentenced the man to the punishment he deserved. Shortly before I went to Mullingar, the stationmaster was shot dead by a discharged porter on the platform of the station. The crime was said to have been committed with a twelve-chambered revolver, which was also the weapon, it was currently reported, that was used for most of the murders in the district. And yet it had never been seen by the police, and, in fact, no one reliable had ever seen a twelve-chambered revolver there in their lives. However, some years afterwards, a man was “out for a job” in the main street of Mullingar, and, by way of bravado, as he could not find his victim, he had a shot at a sergeant who was proceeding quietly home to barracks. He missed the sergeant, but he had not reckoned on the fact that following just behind him when he fired were a couple of privates also going home. They promptly seized him, and, helped by the sergeant, dragged their prisoner across the Fair Green, and the regimental guard, seeing the struggle, quickly appearing with fixed bayonets, they safely lodged the man in the guardroom. They were only just in time, for the “corner-boys” were bent on rescuing their “pal,” but as the distance to be traversed was only a short one, for once they were defeated. To the surprise of everyone, including the police, the weapon found on the prisoner turned out to be the long-sought for, supposed to be mythical, twelve-chambered revolver.

Another very sensational and rather unusual crime, for Ireland, also took place during my residence in Westmeath. A young man named Croghan had just succeeded to a small freehold farm, left him by his father, about half a mile from Mullingar, and resided there with his mother and his two sisters. After a short time, he came to lay information before the magistrates that he believed his sisters were trying to poison him, alleging that they put some poison into his tea. They were bound over to keep the peace; yet, within a year, the man died, although nothing was ever proved against the young women. There was a considerable difference in their ages—the elder having seen more than thirty summers, while the younger, the acknowledged belle of the town, was scarcely twenty, and the favourite of her mother. The manager of the bank informed me that the moment the brother had died, before even his death had become known, the elder sister drove up to the bank on a car, and demanded that all the money at her brother's credit should be at once handed over to her. She was informed, however, that she must wait until his will had been proved, and that if she was the heiress she would then be able to claim the money. She had hardly left before the mother and the other sister appeared and made the same request, but, of course, received the same answer. Eventually it was found that everything had been left to the mother, and she accordingly was placed in full possession of her son's effects.

Shortly afterwards the elder sister, Anne, suspected that her mother was making her will, and believing that she would leave everything to her sister, she hired a ruffian to shoot the latter for the magnificent sum of seven shillings

and sixpence. Although the man received four shillings and sixpence in advance, he could not make up his mind to carry out the deed and earn the remainder of the blood-money, and six months passed without his attempting to carry out the bargain. Anne then began to reproach him, even publicly, for his dilatoriness, so that at last it was arranged between them that the bloody deed should be accomplished on the following morning. At 8 A.M. he accordingly presented himself at the cottage, Anne then being still in bed in the front room. On seeing the man enter her nerve failed her, and she began to shriek, whereupon, just to quiet her, he took a shot at her, the ball lodging in her shoulder. In the meantime the mother and younger daughter had rushed into the inner room, and set their backs against the door, when the ruffian, after making out the position of the poor girl, shot her through the thin door and killed her.

The whole tragedy was over by a quarter past eight, and happening to go into my garden about that time for a few minutes' stroll before breakfast, an old man who worked for me, after furtively looking round to see if we were observed, told me of the murder that was to take place at 8 A.M. He had hardly finished speaking when some of the other gardeners rushed in, exclaiming that the deed had been done. Anne Croghan had to be removed into hospital for her wound to be attended to, and when she was recovered she was transferred to Dublin, to be tried at the Assizes for the murder of her sister—it being thought by the authorities that there would be no chance of a conviction if the trial took place at Mullingar. Notorious as the facts connected with the crime were, to the astonishment of everyone, the judge who tried the

case, in his charge to the jury, stated his opinion that such a story was simply incredible, and directed them to return a verdict of "Not Guilty," which they most gladly did.

A few days after the acquittal of Anne the local hairdresser in Mullingar came to my house to cut my hair, and the conversation naturally turned on the exciting trial that had just taken place. I could scarcely believe my ears when he began, "An' wasn't it a shame that Anne Croghan should have got off; shure if she had been tried at Mullingar, there wasn't a man that wouldn't have found her guilty." Such unaccustomed language astounded me, so that I could scarcely ask, "Why, how was that? for I thought they would never have found her guilty here." "Och, indeed an' they would," he replied; "shure it was a cruel murder! and didn't Anne apply for COMPENSATION FOR THE LOSS OF HER SISTER!" The reason was out then, with a vengeance, for the sudden change of public opinion. Anne had actually applied for "compensation," which would have to be levied on the district by County Cess; and the authorities might safely have allowed the trial to take place at Mullingar, if only they had understood the working of the mind of the Irish peasant.

Only one case of murder for the sake of robbery ever came to my knowledge in Ireland, for this is not a form of crime which is common there. In this case a Lieutenant Clutterbuck was quartered at Birr, in King's County, and had engaged a "sportsman"—*i.e.* a general loafer and, maybe, poacher—to accompany him out shooting one day. Before starting, Mr. Clutterbuck went to the bank to cash a cheque, and King observed him putting a five-pound note into his breast pocket. They then went to shoot snipe, and

when Mr. Clutterbuck, in order to jump a ditch, handed his loaded gun to King, the latter shot him, and buried him in a bog hole. Fortunately, for the sake of justice, a little girl was going home, unobserved by King, who watched the proceedings and gave evidence, and on her testimony he was duly convicted and hanged.

Birr was our first quarter in Ireland, and we had a most thoroughly enjoyable time, for the snipe-shooting was excellent; the foxhunting with the "Ormonde" and King's County Hounds under Lord Hastings was very good; and there was capital sport also with the Kilmaine Harriers, under the able mastership of Mr. Joseph Studholme. We could often reach also the meets of the far-famed Galway Blazers, who were then hunted by one of the best huntsmen I have ever seen, Mr. Burton Perse of Moyode Castle. We usually had to go long distances when we hunted with the Blazers, but Galway is proverbial for hospitality, and many kind hosts vied with each other in making things easy for us. There was one house that received us more often within its hospitable doors than any other, and there was ever a merry welcome awaiting us from the pretty daughters of the house, who were famous for their comeliness. One of the quaintest scenes it was ever my lot to witness took place there one winter's afternoon as we stopped for a few minutes rest and refreshment. A famous "character," a former M.F.H. of the Blazers, accompanied us, and took his seat by the fireside with a glass of toddy in his hand. Observing that he was toying with his glass, and knowing full well the frolicsome nature of her guest, our hostess addressed him with the remark, "Now, Johnny, finish up your whisky like a good man, and get home. It's getting late!"

Johnny Mahon began, stroking his long grey beard, and then replied, "I'm not going — until every lady in the room has given me a kiss!" This speech was received with much merriment, but in vain did the hostess try to induce her guest to retire. He would do nothing but sit by the fire and repeat his formula, and though the shades of night were fast falling—of course we all stayed to see the fun. At last, in despair, the lady of the house said to one of her younger daughters, "Oh, do go and give the man a kiss, or we shall never get rid of him all night." Thoroughly entering into the joke, the girl approached him and gave him a kiss, but he only remarked, "That's one! and now for the next," which raised the excitement to a higher pitch than ever. Having broken the ice, our hostess sent each of her daughters in turn, and at last kissed him herself, and then said, "Now, Johnny, we've had enough of this, you must have done with it and go home," but again she only received in reply the little sentence that he had so often repeated. The only other lady in the room was an English girl, arrived from England only the day before for her first visit to Ireland. She was perfectly shocked at the proceedings, and it was really for her benefit Johnny Mahon was exhibiting Irish humour. As red as a peony, she made a bolt for the door, but the other girls had kept an eye upon her, and long before she could reach it one of them had turned the lock and put the key into her pocket. In vain did the visitor declare that nothing should induce her to comply, for the other ladies, having suffered themselves, were thoroughly determined that she should go through the same ordeal also. She had not a chance of escape, for now they had all turned allies of Johnny Mahon, and after much

vehement expostulation she at last ventured up and gave the required kiss. "That's on my beard," said Johnny Mahon; "I must have one on my lips." Whereupon, without further ado, she gave him another most hearty kiss on the lips, and thus ended a thoroughly Irish scene.

At that time Birr was the home of Major Trocke, that most eminent of Irish amateur jockeys, who, for more than thirty years, continued to ride with much success over the glorious Punchestown Course. The very last time he rode there he won the great handicap, the Prince of Wales' Plate, on his own mare "Countess," and has ever since been known as the G.O.M. of Ireland. When we were hunting at Birr he was riding to hounds a charming little horse, by a thoroughbred out of a Connemara pony, and that horse has often been in my mind as the type of the improvement to be aimed at in the ponies of the congested district, instead of the animal they are likely to produce by the use of hackney stallions. Here, in Yorkshire, may be seen any number of horses, by hackneys, that are utterly unsaleable, and these too are bred from larger mares than are available in Connemara. My experience has been a varied one, and I have always found that the Arab and the thoroughbred improve any breed they are mated with, but that the hackney cross is a dangerous one to meddle with. With the former stallions all the qualities desired in a horse are obtainable, especially hardihood, stoutness, and courage; while the produce also possesses the length requisite in a riding horse. With the hackney, a little short animal is certain to be produced, and this shortness continues for generations, and is most difficult to eradicate. If he has not extravagant action—which is quite

exceptional except in pure bred hackneys—he is both unsaleable and of very little use for farm work. He will not make a hunter, and no one would care to ride him as a hack who has been used to the springy smoothness of a well-bred horse. He has not power to pull a cart, or a plough, and often not pluck enough to go far, or for many hours together. The well-bred horse would kill him in a short time, if both had to do the same amount of work. That there are good hackneys, exceptional animals, is quite true, but then they are invariably well bred, and the excellence is due to the thoroughbred blood in their veins and not to the hackney strain. If, then, a hackney to be of use must be well bred, why not go to the fountain-head at once and use the thoroughbred himself. I am convinced that a hackney cross will only spoil the magnificent breed of Irish hunters, if it once obtains a footing in the island, without any compensating advantages, and the Irish hunter is too valuable an animal to run the risk of contamination. A cross of Arab blood is ever valued where it has been tried, but to get the best results it is necessary to have patience and to put the daughters to a thoroughbred horse again. Though the produce of the Arab are usually small compared with English hunters, this is only the case for that generation, and the very next one regains the size and length that has been temporarily lost, together with an amount of nervous energy and symmetry that makes them exceedingly valuable. In 1883 one of the chief Irish dealers said to me, “Three or four years ago — brought a little Arab horse into my part of the country, and I said to him, ‘you are going to poison the country with that horse,’ and now here’s the winner of the hunter class at the Dublin Show by that same horse. All my

ideas about Arabs have been clean knocked on the head." The famous white hunter that carried Charles Davis so many seasons with the Queen's Staghounds was half Arab, and many other good hunters might be mentioned that were bred in the same way.

A hunter sire that produced many good horses in Yorkshire was bred thus, though probably few of those who purchased his produce were aware how near to the Arab he was in descent. This was "Duc de Beaufort," who was by "Ventre St. Gris," out of "Dame d'Honneur" by the "Baron." "Ventre St. Gris" was by "Gladiator," out of "Belle de Mint" by "Karchane" (Arab), out of "Misère" by "Bagdali" (Arab). Thus the grandmother and great-grandmother of "Duc de Beaufort" were each daughters of an Arabian.

He was a very useful horse himself, and was brought over as a two-year-old, with many others, from France, at the time when the Prussians were investing Paris, who very nearly succeeded in capturing them as spoils of war. He won on the flat, over hurdles, and over steeplechase courses, capturing the Sefton Steeplechase at Liverpool, and running fourth for the Grand National Steeplechase itself. Not bad work for a horse with so much Arabian blood in his veins.

The Spaniards and Portuguese are particularly fond of an Arab cross, and breed many excellent racehorses in this way. What they preferred was to cross their country mares with the Arabian, and then to follow with the thoroughbred. To reverse this, and begin with the thoroughbred, did not produce such satisfactory results. The Arab cross at once knocked out the ungainly points of the "jaca," and in place of the ungainly head, ewe

neck, and low croup of the dam, the foal inherited invariably the style of the sire, and a handsome animal was the result.

One of my early acquaintances at the Curragh was that ancient jockey, the most celebrated of his day, poor old Johnny Doyle. He was terribly rheumatic at the time of our acquaintanceship, which was scarcely to be wondered at when he related that "for forty years I never went to bed sober one single night, and very seldom knew how I got there. One day the taste for drink suddenly left me, and I have never tasted a drop since, and that is nearly thirty years ago now." He was fond of sitting in the sun and chatting over his racing career, and, as our camp was pitched close to his cottage, I often strolled down for a chat with him. He told me that he rode his first race in 1803, at a meeting held in Sharavogue Park, near Birr, now the property of the Earl of Huntingdon. The earliest racehorses he looked after and rode were mostly the grandsons of "Eclipse," but though he had often seen sons of "Eclipse," he had never ridden any of them. His opinion—like that of the late Colonel Hon. J. Westenra, the grandfather of Lord Huntingdon (who then owned Sharavogue Park), and of Mr. Richard Johnston (whose memory did not go further back than 1819, when he saw "Blacklock" win at York)—was that the racehorses of that day were much stouter and hardier than those of the present day, though undoubtedly not so speedy. At the same time, he said that sixteen-hand horses were quite common in his early days, and he did not see very much increase in actual height. The shape and appearance, though, had very much changed, and the older horses were, as a rule, much deeper-bodied, and shorter-legged

and—as he described them—“more hunter-like,” than they are now.

Colonel Westenra was a great friend of mine, devoted to breeding racehorses, and was never tired of talking of his famous horse “Freney,” by “Roller,” the great four-miler of his day. He bred “Whim,” by “Drone,” out of “Kiss,” by “Waxy Pope,” the dam of “Chanticleer,” and a picture of her hung in the dining-room at Sharavogue. It represented a dark grey, charming mare, of great quality, with a capital back and quarters, and—just as Doyle described—“short-legged and hunter-like.” He was a great believer in the value of the “Sweetmeat” blood, and in consequence was very partial to “Plum Pudding,” by whom he had several promising young ones in his paddocks, though he had then given up the active pursuit of racing.

CHAPTER XII.

REGIMENTAL PRISONERS.

WHILE we were at Birr, a deserter was brought back to us, who had been absent for a long time, and who furnished me with a very curious statement of his life. He was a highly intelligent man, quite young, and his history was remarkable. His father was a reporter in the House of Lords, and he himself had been a reporter in the House of Commons, but such a life was far too monotonous for him, and he joined a gang of pickpockets in London. He very soon became the head of the gang, and after a more than usually daring robbery, the police got upon his track, so to avoid detection he enlisted into our battalion. From his abilities and quiet conduct he was speedily promoted, and for the time being was quite satisfied with his life, till one day, when he was on the barrack square, a man in plain clothes entered the gate, and he speedily recognised the familiar face of a detective from London, whom he guessed was upon his track. Whilst the latter was making his inquiries, the other effected his escape, and getting safe to one of the northern ports, embarked as a sailor on board a whaler, which was just then starting for the Arctic Seas. After spending nearly two years there the vessel returned, and he had made all arrangements to ship on board another vessel without landing, and return a second time for a whaling voyage,

when who should come on board with the pilot but a detective, who promptly arrested him and took him on shore. This, he thought, was especially hard upon him. It appeared from subsequent information that the police had traced him to the port he had sailed from, and expecting that he had gone on board a whaling vessel, had kept a watch on the arrival of the ships that had left about that period, and so at length ran down their man.

For three or four years previously, we had been troubled with some very undesirable characters in the ranks, for, with one of the usual fits of economy, the Government had allowed us to get far below our proper strength, until the French and Prussian war broke out. Then, of course, we were hurriedly raised to a war footing, and every man that could pass muster was enlisted, and sent to us. Amongst others was one of most violent character, who caused great trouble when being tried by court-martial at Dover for some offence. Private Brown was a very powerfully framed man, and his trial had only just commenced when he put an abrupt stop to the proceedings by knocking down both the riflemen who constituted the escort, and the non-commissioned officer in charge of them. They were so completely taken by surprise that they were unable to offer any resistance, and the prisoner escaped through the door, and bolted down the staircase. The court-martial room happened to be above the guard-room, and fortunately the sentry at the door was a rifleman of some years' experience, and thoroughly wide awake. Riflemen do not fix swords when on sentry duty, but hearing the row upstairs, the sentry promptly fixed his sword, and stood "on guard" at

the foot of the stairs, with the weapon pointing directly up. There was no help for it; the prisoner was obliged to stop, or he would have impaled himself on the sword, and he was promptly made a prisoner by the guard and handcuffed. Being sentenced to imprisonment, he did not rejoin us till we had left Dover and transferred our quarters to Shorncliffe, shortly before which I had been appointed adjutant of the battalion. Soon after rejoining, Private Brown happened to be passing along the cliff walk between Sandgate and Folkestone, and meeting a well-dressed civilian at a very narrow part, where there was only room for one at a time, as the other did not make way for him, Brown threw him over the cliff. It is very precipitous, and it was fortunate indeed that there happened to be a ledge, on which the gentleman fell, or he would have been dashed to pieces at the bottom. When arrested Private Brown was almost like a wild beast. He had an admirer in the regiment, a Private Thomas, and the two resisted the escort sent to arrest Brown, and a desperate fight ensued before they were mastered, and dragged face downwards to the guard-room. When there they acted like furies, breaking all the glass, and yelling at the top of their voices. When food was given to them they broke the plates, and when water was brought they smashed the tin vessels also. After warning them more than once that if they did not become quiet strong measures would be used, to which they paid no heed, we proceeded to carry out the plan I had devised, telling them at the same time that they would be released again the moment they agreed to behave themselves.

Their arms were tied together behind their backs, and their legs above their knees, so that they could not walk

about. The handle of a broom-stick was put into their mouths as a gag, and fastened behind their heads, and this was not removed except to give them food and drink, and then replaced. They were constantly visited, and asked if they would agree to be quiet, but Thomas held out for twelve hours before he gave in; and Brown did not succumb until twenty-four hours had elapsed. When, however, they had once passed their word to be quiet, they gave no further trouble whatever; and the discipline they had been subjected to had a most excellent effect upon the wild spirits we were inundated with.

When Brown came up for trial before the court-martial, warned by previous experience, I took especial precautions, for I felt sure that if he had a chance he would "go for" the officers composing the court. Selecting four of the biggest privates in the regiment, men of known determined character, for the escort, and placing two on each side, I gave them orders that when the command was given to halt, the two men on the flanks were to take a pace forward, and then to face inwards. A lane was thus formed through which the prisoner must pass before he could attack the court, and all had orders to knock him down at once if he moved. Behind him a picked sergeant was stationed with similar orders, and guarded thus in every direction, he remained as peaceable as a lamb. He was sentenced to be dismissed from the service at the end of his punishment, and we saw him no more; but before his departure he said that an unfair advantage had been taken of him, for he had fully made up his mind to attack the court until he saw that it was absolutely useless for him to make the attempt.

After the severe lesson he had received, and deprived of the companionship of Brown, Private Thomas became a steady, respectable soldier, and eventually a lance-corporal. He accompanied us to the Ashanti War, but I do not remember further details of his career.

The French proverb that "it is ridicule that kills" should ever be borne in mind by an adjutant, for often some ludicrous punishment will be far more effectual than constant parading again, drill, or confinement to barracks. This last punishment is useful, however, for one particular offence, that of cutting off a moustache, which is sometimes done for "cheek." The obvious way to meet this is to confine the man to barracks until the moustache is grown again. For spitting in the ranks on parade, I always had one remedy. As soon as the parade was over, the offender was marched to the guard-room, placed under the charge of the sergeant of the guard, told to stand at ease, and ordered to spit for five minutes by the watch. He came in for much rude chaff from the men, who thought it a capital opportunity to exercise their wit upon him, but it was curious what a deterrent effect it had. If two men were caught talking when at "Attention," they were similarly taken to the sergeant of the guard, marching side by side. They were then halted, ordered to turn inwards, so that their faces were almost touching each other, told to stand-at-ease, and then commanded to talk for a quarter of an hour. They were not allowed to change their position in any way, and what they *said* would probably not be worth repeating! but the punishment was very effectual. If a man was brought up for not saluting an officer, it availed him nothing to plead that he did not know him by sight; his punishment was to be placed over

the officers' mess-room door, under the charge of a corporal and to salute every officer as he passed in and out, until he did know them all by sight! A rather funny answer, though, was made by a young Irish soldier when we were quartered at Plymouth. The officers' guard-room was exactly opposite to the gate of the private approach, leading up to the houses of the General commanding the Division, and of the Admiral commanding the port. Each of these officers was entitled to the compliment of the guard being turned out to them, but as naval officers of all sorts in undress uniforms were constantly passing to the Admiralty House, and at first sight there is no great distinction between the different ranks, it was very necessary to make certain that the sentry knew who was who. When hearing him repeat his orders, it was always the custom when he got to the words, "Turn out the guard to the General and the Admiral," to inquire if he knew them by sight, and if he was not acquainted with the latter to ask him if he knew the different naval ranks by their uniform. On this occasion the sentry had got a little mixed, and on being asked how he would know the Admiral, the reply came, "Begorra, I'd know him by his *spurs!*"

At one period quite an epidemic broke out of men tearing up their regimental clothing when brought back for some crime coupled with desertion, for which they were likely to be dismissed the service. This pressed particularly hard upon the unfortunate captains, for the *modus operandi* that was pursued when a man deserted was to hold an auction of his regimental effects, after the usual Board had been held, and the proceeds were credited to the Government. After twenty-one days' absence a

Regimental Board was always assembled, and, after hearing the evidence, the man was duly declared to be a deserter, when he was struck off the strength of the battalion and became a civilian until he had been captured, tried by a court-martial, and sentenced. An anomaly of the service was that between the man's apprehension and his sentence the Government refused to clothe him, so the captain of his company was obliged to see that he was decently clothed. During this period, however, he received no pay, out of which stoppages could have been made to recover the cost of what was supplied to him, so that the captain had to advance the money out of his own pocket, and ran the risk of losing it altogether if the man destroyed the clothing. Otherwise he received the suit back when the man received prison garments, and could recover any loss he had sustained when the man returned to duty and again received pay, perhaps in a year or eighteen months' time. If, however, the man was sentenced to be discharged, the captain could only receive back the clothes, and must then be at any loss there might happen to be.

Fashions hold good in regiments just as they do in polite society, and the popular fad of the moment was to destroy the clothing that was issued, and sometimes more than once. The unfortunate captains were being heavily mulcted, for there was also a "fad" at headquarters at that period—started by some foolish Member of Parliament in the House of Commons—that most deserters should be dismissed from the service, as being unworthy to follow the colours they had voluntarily deserted.

Being determined to put a stop to this practice, the next man that tore up his clothing was duly measured by

the regimental tailor, and a nice suit of dittoes provided for him, made out of the very thick brown paper in which the regimental clothing is annually forwarded from Pimlico. It is extremely strong, rather shiny, and, I feel sure, is very warm. It happened to be a hard frost at the time, and though the prisoner refused at first to wear the clothing provided—I suppose because it was not fashionable enough for him—he was stripped naked, and left with nothing else to put on, and when he was visited again in about an hour's time it was found he had overcome his scruples, and was comfortably dressed. It did not matter how many times he destroyed such suits, for others could be supplied at short notice, but somehow he seemed to have lost the desire to do so. At first he had been very riotous, smashing the window-panes, and kicking at the guard-room door, so that the riflemen on duty complained that they could get no rest. Arguing that a horse tears his clothing because he is too hot in his skin, I presumed that the man broke the glass because he also was too hot, and therefore the windows were left unmended, with the broken pieces on the floor. We took his boots off so that he would not be able to make so much noise in his stockings, but he gave up kicking altogether! He got rather cautious, too, about walking, as he said he was afraid of cutting his feet, having no boots on; but I pointed out to him that as he had put the glass on the floor himself, no doubt he had some good reason for doing so, and we did not wish to interfere. The colonel got rather uneasy lest the man should take cold, but an old great-coat was given to him, and he really enjoyed excellent health. He lived in his brown paper for some time, and wore it at his trial by the court-martial, and nearly every

man off duty came to see him marched to and fro amidst a running fire of chaff.

It proved an excellent remedy against the practice that had been carried on, for we never had another case of tearing up clothing in the guard-room, so long as I remained with the battalion.

CHAPTER XIII.

WAR.

WHEN the 2nd Battalion Rifle Brigade was selected to go to the Ashanti Campaign in 1873, it was a fortunate choice, for probably no battalion in the service was at that time more fitted for bush fighting than that particular corps. This was due to the excellent training they had received under that first-rate Light Infantry soldier who then commanded them, now General Sir Julius Glyn, K.C.B. He was the best skirmishing drill that I have ever seen, and I have never met with any regiment so mobile, or so quick in its movements as the battalion he commanded. And here I must remark that after nine years' experience of skirmishing as adjutant of the Rifle Brigade, and five years' experience of the present "attack" as a commanding officer, I unhesitatingly give my opinion that for light infantry work the present system cannot compare with the old. The "attack" may be all very well for advancing formed bodies, but it does not take the place of skirmishing, and should be supplementary to it. The functions of the two are quite distinct, and should be kept quite separate from each other and not allowed to interfere with each other. Look at a change of front, for example. See the lightning rapidity with which it can be done by skirmishers, and the cumbrous movement it is with the

“attack.” The enemy will not always do what is expected of them, or play the game as has been arranged, and if the system is not capable of sudden changes without confusion, it cannot be a reliable one.

Our chief had been trained in the very best of schools, that of actual warfare, and few officers have seen more of real work than he has. His first experience was gained in African bush fighting against the Kaffirs and the Boers, than which there could be no better teaching for skirmishing. He then served all through the Crimean War; and this was followed by the Indian Mutiny. From the lessons he had learned, he was thoroughly convinced that no battalion was properly trained unless they were at home when skirmishing in thick covert. Wherever we were quartered he used to practise us in extended order through plantations and woods, and hot enough work it was, struggling along on a summer's day, losing the “pompons” out of our shakoes and the ramrods out of the rifles, and very frequently our tempers also! A battalion trained under such auspices was invaluable for bush fighting, and though rewards were bestowed elsewhere, I unhesitatingly say that, if that battalion had not happened to have been present, the course of the war must have been much altered, and the result might have been very different. The true history of that war has yet to be published.

In the course of the voyage out a most remarkable instance of courage and *sang froid* was displayed by one of our subaltern officers, the Hon. E. Noel. We were drifting in the “Doldrums,” without steaming, waiting until the time arrived for us to be landed at Cape Coast Castle, and the *Himalaya* was rolling heavily. Noel had never ascended the rigging in his life, but he never stopped

until he had reached the "truck" on the top of the main-mast, on which he settled himself comfortably, while three sailors started after him to tie him up. Noel never took the slightest notice until the first man was "swarming" up close to him, and then getting off the truck he let himself slide down right upon the shoulders of the sailor below. The latter saw him coming, and had to hug the mast with all his strength to prevent being knocked off, and calmly clambering over his back, Noel got below him and proceeded on his downward journey. The other two sailors were waiting at the cross-trees to catch him when he reached them, but Noel was not going to be so easily caught. He had espied a loose rope, and catching it as the roll of the ship brought it within his reach, he swung out far over the sea with the return roll, and, sliding down well below the would-be captors, got into the rigging, when the ship swung back again. He had thus beaten all three sailors, but a fourth sailor, seeing that his manœuvre was likely to succeed, started from the deck and caught him just as he landed safe into the rigging. This was scarcely fair play, and the honours undoubtedly remained with the plucky subaltern.

After we had landed we marched up the country for 100 miles to Prahue, situated on the river Prah, the boundary of Ashanti land. Every store-box had to be carried here on the heads of native carriers, and for this purpose each box was made to weigh just 56 lb. when full. The best carriers, as a rule, were the women, who were always willing and cheerful, often with a baby slung behind their back, in addition to their load. After an eighteen mile march, as soon as they arrived in camp, the women would set to work, make fires, and cook their

provisions, while the men would idle and loll about. These latter are an extraordinary race. They seem to obey nothing but "stick." Their own headmen use it freely; and it was absolutely necessary to use it sometimes, or they had no respect for you at all. I had charge at one time of about 3000 carriers, and the same scene used to be repeated every morning. They would be squatting in long rows, each with his load before him, and intently watching the regiment moving off. They were perfectly well aware that when the last company started on its march they had to follow, but they never made the slightest effort to do so, looking first at one another, and then at me. In vain did I point towards the vanishing battalion with my stick, and give them the order to move; they only looked at me and at each other. Then I used to run down a few paces, hitting right and left indiscriminately, when all would jump up, seize their loads and march off, as if that had been the signal that they were waiting for.

When some had to be flogged their behaviour was very curious. The batch of prisoners would walk gaily up to the triangles, as if nothing was the matter, laughing and joking together. While one was being operated upon the others would scream with laughter, the tears rolling down their cheeks at the cries and contortions of the victim, although their own turn was to come immediately after. Then when the next was tied up, the one who had just been flogged quite forgot his own sufferings in the intense amusement that the new-comer afforded him. Verily, they are not to be judged by the standard of Europeans.

That perfection had not been arrived at in the

provision of stores, the following extract from my diary will show :—

“ *Wednesday, 21st January (1874).*—As an instance of the way things have been managed, only twenty boxes of medical comforts have been as yet sent up to Prahsee. When these came to be opened, the first twelve boxes that were opened contained nothing but certain utensils, usually considered as necessary articles in a bedroom ! Of the remaining eight boxes, when those that were marked brandy (six boxes) were opened, they were found to contain brandy bottles filled with sawdust. The P. M. O., on our leaving, ordered our surgeon to take some port wine with him, but on opening the cases they were found to contain but three bottles.”

These medical boxes had been for some weeks at Prahsee, and yet no one had taken the trouble to examine them ; and it was not till we arrived and required to replenish our stores, that the discovery of their contents was made. Yet no inquiry was instituted. The boxes had not been tampered with on the voyage, but were exactly as they had been forwarded from Woolwich.

Another entry from the diary gives :—“ *12th January.* Broke into a grave in the floor when stepping out of bed. Went in up to my knee !” This was rather gruesome. We were sleeping in a native hut, and they have a custom of burying their dead under the floors, which is decidedly a trap for the unwary.

“ *Monday, 14th January.*—Make a lamp out of a large snail shell.”

On my return home to England, an old shepherd of my father's made a very *à propos* remark. He said, “They tell me, Master Richard, that them parts is all forest, and that nothing else grows there. What do

the natives live on?" I satisfied his curiosity by telling him that he was perfectly right about it being all forest, but that huge snails lived on the leaves and the natives lived on them. This is literally true to a great extent, and I have seen snails brought to the market weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ lb. I never could bring myself to eat one of them, but those who did so said they were very good, and that they also made a capital white soup, similar to *Potage à la Reine*. The natives dry them in the sun as well as eating them fresh, and bring them to the market strung on a stick like sweetmeats on a straw in a confectioner's shop. When our few candles were exhausted I obtained a good-sized snail shell—there were plenty to be got—and by filling it with the grease skimmed off the pot when boiling salt pork, with some cotton waste for a wick, produced quite a useful light. A split bamboo made a capital lamp-stand, not easily overturned when fixed into the ground.

On 31st January the first great fight took place at Egginassie, which ended in the capture of the town of Amoafu. On entering the place, one of the first sights to attract attention were two large piles of iron as big as small haystacks. On examination these proved to be entirely composed of leg shackles, for so certain were the Ashantis of winning the day, they had brought these in advance to take us all prisoners back to Coomassie. A pleasant time we should probably have had there, as their custom is to parade their victims up and down the chief street with a skewer thrust behind each shoulder-blade, and another through the cheeks; and they do not decapitate them until the sun sets. Fortunately for us our endurance of torture had not to be put to the test. The fight was a very severe one, and lasted from 8.30 A.M. till 12

noon without ceasing. It recommenced shortly afterwards, and continued with greater fury than ever till 2 P.M., when it gradually slackened. At 3 P.M. it was nearly over, and we then sent all the wounded—about 200—back to a small village called Quahman, about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile to the rear. This was only defended by a small stockade, hurriedly constructed on a very low bank, with a shallow ditch, and guarded by thirty West Indian soldiers.

Referring again to the diary, I take the following extract:—"1st February.—During the course of yesterday's engagement, after the firing was over, at 3.30 I was ordered to call in the skirmishers from the hill on the right of Egginassie. I went through the huts, and just as I was stepping into the bush, a chicken ran out before me. Thinking it would give me a meal—all our baggage was miles in the rear—I ran after it, striking at it with my sword, as I feared to fire my revolver, being afraid the report would create an alarm. The bush was so thick that I could not hit the chicken, and I had pursued it nearly to the top of the hill, when I suddenly heard firing break out heavily in the rear. Feeling sure that the Ashanti army was attacking the fort at Quahman, where the wounded are, I ran straight back to Sir Garnet in the middle of the village and told him about it. At first he would not believe me, but I said, 'If Colonel Graves will accompany me up the road at the back, he will see if I am right.' Colonel Graves said, 'Perhaps I had better go, sir'; and, as Sir Garnet assented, we started off. I said to him, 'We had better double, sir; there's no time to lose,' so we ran on. Before we got half-way up, he said, 'By George, you are right! Now, what men have you got.' I said, 'F Company and D Company are on the road,

they have not been in action to-day.' He answered, 'Send them at once, and tell them to double.' I did so, and when I returned he said, 'Who else can you send?' I said, 'This is G Company here, cutting the bush.' He said, 'Send them too.' They fell in and reinforced the others. They were only just in time, as there was a very slight stockade, and all the enemy were there. The garrison was only thirty West Indian soldiers." Such is the record of how all our wounded, stores, and reserve ammunition were saved through the instrumentality of a chicken.

The diary has some other interesting incidents also at the same battle.

"During the fight I was talking to an officer in the Naval Brigade, when he suddenly stopped speaking, coughed a good deal, fumbled in his necktie, and produced a slug out of it. He was wearing a tie with a gold ring, and the slug had hit the ring and then buried itself in his tie, without doing further harm." This was a pretty narrow escape, for after the slug had glanced off the ring it had cut the necktie to pieces, and but for the resistance presented by the gold, would have made a very awkward wound in the throat.

The fighting was very difficult, for the bush was so intensely thick that it was impossible to see the enemy, who lay flat down and crawled through it. One soldier had his arm blown off in my presence, having touched the barrel of an Ashanti just as the latter fired, and who had been invisible until then. Thanks to the training under Sir Julius Glyn, the Rifle Brigade were as much at home in the bush as the niggers themselves, though the latter had the advantage of being able to get about more easily, owing to being stark naked.

“A bullet entered into the rifle of a 42nd Highlander as he held it at the ‘present’ preparatory to firing, and bent the rifle upwards about a foot from the muzzle.”

“Many Ashantis were shot out of trees.”

“A shell from Rait’s battery fell amongst a party of ten who were carrying off another, and killed all the eleven persons. One was a woman.”

“1st February—Sunday.—Burial party buried 1150 Ashantis.” On the second of February we led the advance, but the enemy made no stand, and we pushed on for eight miles. The next day we paraded at 5.30 A.M., being again in the front. “A most obstinate fight took place, beginning at 8.45 A.M., and continuing without intermission till noon, when a flag of truce came in; the Ashantis soon began to fire, so the fight went on, though it now became more of a running fight. A second flag of truce came in, but left again almost immediately. I received these flags of truce, blindfolded the bearers, and passed them on to Sir Garnet. One was the same chief who came to Foomanah, and had the same gold ornament on. When he returned I walked out with him beyond our lines for curiosity, an unwise thing to do, for heads popped up everywhere, and I saw I was in the middle of them. He kept calling out ‘As-hanti fo, As-hanti fo,’ and they at once sank back into covert, and I returned as quickly as I could. They did not fire, however, till I reached our lines again.”

They evidently were puzzled by my presence with their envoy, and thought I was under his ægis, or I should never have got back, as I was within arm’s-length of some of them. The gold ornament referred to was a splendid large plate of gold, about nine inches square, with a great many figures

on it, and depending from it were a quantity of elephants' tails. It nearly covered the chief's breast. While we were halted at a previous station, Foomanah, the same chief, came there as an envoy and spent some hours, and on leaving the whole army were formed in two lines on each side of the road through which he passed, the regiments presenting arms to him. His gold ornament was the envy of all, and the subject of much conversation.

"Finding they could not meet us in the bush, they took to ambuscades, by which we quickly lost five scouts. Drove the enemy back to the river Dah, there about 3 ft. deep and 40 yards wide. Until dark the Ashantis kept creeping up and firing a shot or two at the sentries, etc. Learning from some prisoners that nearly 10,000 Ashantis were all round us, a chain of sentries, about twenty yards apart, supported by picquets, were put out about a hundred yards from and all round the camp. A thunder-storm came on just at dark, and lasted without intermission till 2 A.M. Our baggage had all been left behind at Aggamamu."

That was indeed an awful night, which can only be imagined by those who know what a tropical storm is like. We had only arrived at the river's bank a short time before dark, and a staff-officer came and gave me orders to throw out the chain of sentries from the river's bank, through the bush, and to join on to the West Indian Regiment, about a quarter of a mile off. All that he could tell me was that their left sentry would be found by a very tall tree that we could just see towering above its fellows; a few minutes afterwards daylight had gone, and it became pitch dark. If it had not been for the vivid

flashes of lightning it would have been impossible to have found our way, as the bush, through which we slashed a path as we went, was full of fallen trees in addition to the usual thick growth. It took a long time to get the sentries posted, but the lightning was very frequent, and at each flash we gained a few yards, and then halted for the next, ever keeping a sharp look-out for the tall tree which was our goal. At length I had the satisfaction of hearing the challenge of the West Indian sentry, and the task was complete. Twice during the night I had to visit the sentries, on one occasion being accompanied by Colonel Warren, and this time, thinking that my clothes might be less soaking, if I left them under shelter, I rolled them up, and placed the bundle under a tree I was sheltering under, and proceeded only in my flannel shirt. When I returned, however, it was to find that the downpour had at length got through the almost impenetrable leaves of my tree, making a large pool of water at the foot, and floating in the middle of which was my bundle of clothes!

“A cask of rum arrived at 3 A.M., which was at once distributed.” Never was anything more welcome! We had had no food since breakfast the previous morning, and soaked as we were to the skin, that tot of rum was most vivifying. It was strictly impartially distributed amongst the officers and men, and it was only a tiny drop that fell to the lot of each, but how welcome!

At the same time when I received the orders to place the sentries, the staff-officer also handed over to me an Ashanti prisoner who had just been captured, with orders that I was responsible for his safe keeping. I am afraid

we had some altercation about that prisoner, for we were dead tired. This was the 3rd February. I had been up day and night ever since the 30th, and for the two previous nights had never had time to lie down at all, so it is scarcely to be wondered at that the additional charge of a naked, slippery prisoner was not very welcome. In vain did I suggest that those who had caught him should keep him. My superior officer did not see that at all, as he wished to rid himself of him as soon as possible, and retire to the hampers of refreshments that accompanied the staff. "Well, sir," I said, "if I am to take care of him, I'll take good care he doesn't escape"—and I did so. Before starting off with the sentries I saw him securely tied to a sapling, under the charge of the sergeant of the guard that was placed over the ammunition in the middle of the camp, and I gave orders to the sentry to shoot him on the spot if he endeavoured to make his escape. We chose a thin, young tree, and bringing his elbows behind it, tied them securely together, so that he could vary his position by standing up or sitting down. All that night the rain pelted down on the unfortunate prisoner, and the next morning as we were marching off I told the sergeant of the guard to release him and bring him on. Directly afterwards I was hailed with the shout of "Sir." "Well, what is it?" I replied. "Please, sir, the prisoner can't move," was the answer. I went up, and, sure enough, he was so stiff with cold and wet, and the cramped position, that though the cords had been removed he could not stir. "Take a couple of men, and run him up and down till his circulation comes back," was my order. This was promptly done, and it had its humorous side, to see two riflemen trotting backwards and forwards with the naked

savage between them. He was all right directly, and very grateful for a little ship's biscuit, which arrived at our first halt.

"4th February, Wednesday.—The engineers and sailors built a narrow bridge across the Dah last night, which we crossed at 7 A.M., and immediately became engaged with the enemy."

A very hard day it was, too, for us. We were in front as before, and were engaged directly we were over the bridge. We had flattered ourselves that the heavy rain might have rendered their powder damp, or prevented their guns from working freely, but they had very simple covers made of antelope skins, that were perfectly water-proof, and that answered their purpose admirably. There was one position that was held by one of our companies for more than an hour, and which was desperately attacked by masses of the enemy.

"Before reaching Ordahsu, we were a long time halted at one place, as the Ashantis made a most determined attack on Lieutenant Taylor's Company, on the right flank. A thickly wooded valley ran up to the top of the ridge, and the Ashantis came up in masses for a long time. Our men were lying down on the crest of the ridge, firing down upon them, and we did not get a man hit, although their fire was very heavy and continuous. All their shots went over our heads. The men fired their seventy rounds away, and I brought up a fresh supply, and they fired most of them too. Their shoulders and cheeks were very much knocked about by the recoil."

"Fired 20,000 rounds to-day."

"My pony was struck on the saddle-flaps by a bullet."

"Sergeant Armstrong, the master cook, was following

in rear with the bearers, who were carrying the camp kettles, Sergeant Armstrong being the only armed man amongst them. They were attacked by three Ashantis, who commenced firing at them, so the sergeant proceeded to make the natives lie down between the kettles (which formed a sort of barricade), and then shot two of the Ashantis with his rifle, on which the third bolted into the bush."

For this feat the sergeant cook was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. He was a remarkably good shot, and a few years afterwards was the best shot in the army, winning the gold medal and £20 that is annually awarded to the winner of this distinction.

"When engaged in cutting the bush with his company on the left front of the village of Ordahsu, the enemy at the same time keeping up a hot fire about seventy yards off, Private Taylor suddenly saw three Ashantis some fifteen yards off in a tree, about three feet from the ground; Taylor shot one, and one of the others then ran away, but the third, thinking Taylor did not see him, covered himself with some banana leaves, and proceeded to load his rifle; Taylor then rushed at him with his cutlass, and when he got near, the Ashanti, who proved to be a chief, turned round to fire at him, but Taylor being too quick for him, ran him right through and killed him."

Private Taylor was recommended for the Victoria Cross for his gallantry, and was awarded the Distinguished Service Medal. That evening we captured Coomassie, and we looked forward to a well-earned rest. It was not to be, however, for about 10.30 P.M. the town was set on fire, and we did not get it under until 4 A.M.

In Coomassie I saw the same chief with the gold ornament that had come down as envoy to Foomanah, and afterwards with the flag of truce.

“I saw two Ashantis skulking in the high reed grass, and then come out into the road near where G Company’s arms were piled, and no sentry over them. I noticed that one of them had the well-known gold ornament on that he had at Foomanah. I accordingly stalked him, made a rush, and caught him by the right wrist with both hands. We had a tremendous struggle, but so long as I could hold his right wrist he could not draw his big knife from its sheath on his left side. The other man kept running round, and I had to keep the man I had hold of between me and the second, for fear he should stick me. They kept up a great jabbering, while I kept yelling for help, but the men were all inside the house and did not hear at first. Then a few ran out, and I handed over my prisoner to a guard, and sent him on to Sir Garnet Wolseley. A few minutes afterwards the guard returned without the prisoner. I asked them what had become of him. The corporal said that he had taken him to Sir Garnet, who made him a speech about the clemency of Queen Victoria, and then told them to let him go. I could scarcely believe it, and asked him if he knew Sir G. by sight. He said he did, and I made him describe him, and he did so all right. I was so sorry.”

We made a very hurried stay in Coomassie. The rains had begun, so the Palace was undermined and blown up, and the town set on fire and burned to the ground. “One place that we had passed dry-shod two days before we had to wade through up to our hips in water, and the

mules, horses, etc., who had to go by another path, were obliged to swim. When we reached the river Dah, where we halted for the night, the water had risen so high that it reached up to our knees in crossing the bridge, and the natives, who had to carry the loads through the river, were out of their depth in the middle of the river."

On Thursday, 12th February, my pony died. It was impossible to feed him during the five days' fighting, and he never recovered the effects of the enforced starvation. He was a great loss to me. As I was adjutant, and entitled to a charger, I applied for compensation for his loss on active service, and was refused, on the ground that he was not shot! How easily this could have been remedied if only I had known in time. In due time we arrived at Cape Coast Castle with 456 privates instead of 651, with which we started. Several died on their way home, and others during the course of the next twelve months, and in a very few years' time not a single soldier remained in the battalion who went through the hardships of that campaign. Such is the virulence of the West African malarial fever, and so long does it remain in the system that, after fighting against it for ten years, such a severe attack again prostrated me as to compel me to retire from the service, and seek convalescence in the South of France. It was remarkable, too, that during the war and the following summer I never had a single attack of fever, and imagined I had escaped altogether, and even rode the winners of two hurdle-races within one month of the day of landing in England. The poison was there, however, and when once it broke out it was constantly making its unwelcome appearance for years afterwards.

Before finally taking leave of the Ashanti War, mention must be made of the wonderful work performed by the "scouts." These were picked warriors from different tribes, but chiefly Houssas, and the tales of Fenimore Cooper anent the Red Indians did not exceed the performances of these trackers. Often the path was covered with dead leaves, or moss, that left not the slightest apparent trace, and yet a track never escaped their wonderful sight. I had been used all my life to trap vermin, and to fish for the keen-sighted trout of the Northern streams, and my eyes were young and quick to observe slight signs, and yet I could not always detect the imprint, even when pointed out to me. The moment the footstep was observed it was carefully examined, and in a few seconds the scout would be satisfied as to what the business had been of the person who had made that footprint. By the length of the stride, and the part of the foot that made the deepest impression, was he able to come to a correct judgment. Was the stride comparatively short, and did the heel and ball of the foot appear most marked, then the man had been carrying a load, and need not be considered. If the weight had been equally distributed over the whole foot, the track rather wandering, and the stride quite short, it had been made by a man who was just sauntering along without any special object. If, however, the strides varied and were rather long, the weight on the toes, with every here and there an especially deep mark on the toes, that man was on the war-path and on the alert, and must be accounted for. Sometimes the track would be followed into the bush for a few yards, and back again; or it might turn down another bush path, and finally approach a village; or, as

most frequently happened, the track got fresher, and as the sudden movement of the hidden warrior in taking aim at last betrayed him, the scout threw up his rifle and took a snap-shot at his adversary, the two weapons going off almost simultaneously. Sometimes one was shot, and sometimes the other. It was a service of the utmost danger, but the scouts took the keenest delight in it, and seldom failed to account for their man. I remember one occasion where, after following a track for about a hundred yards, the scout showed where the other had sat down on the bare spur of a cotton tree; a naked savage sitting upon a wooden Windsor chair would have almost left as much trace, but the tracker was satisfied that the other had then ceased to be "on duty," and was just resting preparatory to going home. He was quite right, and within two miles the Ashanti had gone into a village—presumably to breakfast, and nearly all the time I could see nothing. It was too disheartening that the scout could follow signs at almost a run, which I had nearly to go down upon my knees to discover at all. They were noble fellows, and knew not the meaning of fear, and, like all savages, uncontaminated by mixing with whites, had the most perfect, gentle manners, until roused by excitement.

There was one thing that struck me very much, and that was the cry of a baby was scarcely ever heard in the land, and even in their play the children were almost quite silent. Amongst our carriers tiny babies were very numerous; we also saw numbers in the villages, both of Fantees, Assins, and Ashantis, and yet it was a rare thing to hear a sound amongst them. If a child did make a whine it was instantly hushed by

the mother. This told its own tale of the constant fear of attack in which these tribes lived, and how their very existence must have often depended upon their powers of concealment. A child that was given to crying would, I suspect, have but very short shrift, and it was a striking example of the survival of the fittest.

CHAPTER XIV.

SPAIN.

IN racing, as in all other affairs of life, it is very needful to study the bearings in every direction, but it has one advantage, that there are rules and conditions very clearly laid down which govern most occasions. If any one is so careless as to neglect these, the penalty has to be paid to the benefit of the more careful. That genius, to be a success, must be painstaking, is one of the truest of proverbs. How necessary it is to leave no detail unnoticed, the following anecdote may help to point out:— In the summer of 1876, when travelling to some races in Spain with the late Lord Edward Somerset (the then most efficient starter to the Gibraltar Jockey Club) and some other friends, it was proposed that we should endeavour, on our return, to get up a summer meeting at Gibraltar. Two of us had each bought a young horse at the Easter fairs at Jerez and Seville the year before, and it was proposed that we should have a match between the colts, who had both recently been broken. Though mine had never had a gallop, I was glad to have a chance of trying his capabilities, and eagerly assenting, asked what weights the horses should carry. The reply was, “Let us have the lightest weight I can ride,” and so it was settled. The match was run off, each carrying 11 st. 11 lb., and I won easily by a neck on “Jerezano.” At the following autumn

meeting, my former opponent came up just before we started for the "Spanish Maiden," and said, "'Jerezano' is entered on the card as 'English and Spanish.'" "It is quite correct," I replied. "And I ran 'El Cid' against you at even weights in the match!" he rejoined. As his horse was Spanish and Arab, he ought, according to the Spanish Maiden weights—which were the usually accepted standard—to have received 14 lb. from "Jerezano." He, however, had suggested the lightest weight he could ride, and, having made no mention of an allowance for difference of breed, his proposal was duly accepted. It shows clearly, however, how necessary it is never to act without due thought. It was rather curious that it should be my fate to stand in the path of "El Cid." He changed hands afterwards, and was renamed "Saracen." One day, when out hunting the following spring, his new owner said to me, "Do you know the age of 'Saracen?'" I believe he is only five years old. Now it so happened that previous to buying "Jerezano," two years before, I had myself inspected "Saracen" amongst some other young horses of his owners—with a view to purchasing him. I passed him over, but had a pretty distinct recollection that he was then four years old. I replied, therefore, that I believed him to be six years. "I don't think he is," replied his owner, "but I wish you would look at his mouth, and tell me what you think." Information is never thrown away, so I jumped off my horse in an instant, and inspected the teeth of "Saracen." "He is six years," was my verdict. "I don't think he is," said my friend, "at anyrate I shall chance it." However, the horse changed hands again, and later in the spring was entered in the Spanish Maiden as "five years." "Jerezano" was also entered, and, in a desperate race

between the pair from the distance, "Saracen" won by half a length. I had ridden my best to win, as I particularly did not want to have to object if possible, but, of course, there was now no help for it, as the backers of "Jerezano" were very numerous. Mr. Prideaux-Brune, the then owner of "Jerezano" was much averse to lodging an objection, but he saw the necessity of it when it was pointed out to him that the claims of the backers must be considered. The stewards, therefore, telegraphed to the breeder of the horse at Seville to inquire the age, and before the meeting was over the answer was received, "six years." He was, therefore, at once disqualified, and "Jerezano" received the race.

This partly made up for bad luck with the latter horse at the steeplechase meeting in the spring. He was a fine fencer, but, as the riding was very wild, I was keeping a clear course on the extreme left, not having been able to get my favourite place on the right. It may, perhaps, here be mentioned that I always endeavoured, when riding "jump" races, to carry out some excellent hints from the celebrated Jem Mason, given when I was a beginner more than thirty years ago. They were very good, and often proved of invaluable benefit. "Always," said he, "if possible, take your place on the right of the horses, for nine horses out of ten swerve to the left, so if one does swerve, it will be away from you. Another thing is to jump off and make the running over the first three fences or so, till they have settled into their places. It ensures you being in a good position, and there is plenty of time afterwards to take a pull in a long steeplechase. If, however, you cannot get away in front, go steady at the start, and let them get over the first fence or two before you try

to take your place, for there may be a scrimmage at the jump, and you will probably be able to steer clear of it." Such advice was good, sound common sense, and founded on great experience.

On this occasion, however, there was one of the most dangerous "fields" in which any one can be called to ride. There were a number of youthful jockeys, quite unaccustomed to riding races of any kind, and with no practice at jumping fences at speed. They were highly excited, and mounted on horses as inexperienced as themselves in fencing at a fast pace. When horse and jockey are alike ignorant, they become a very dangerous pair, for the man never remembers that there is any one else in the race besides himself, and treats a fence as if it was as wide as a field when hunting. He will change the spot he has selected to jump half a dozen times before he reaches the fence, and every time he alters his mind, he crosses others, and throws them out of their stride. His hesitating style is certain to communicate itself to his "mount," which alters its pace, and this again upsets the horses immediately behind, who probably get over with a scramble, even if they avoid a collision. When travelling with the velocity of an express train—and this is the rate at which the fences are jumped—a very slight slackening of speed in front causes great confusion behind. In a small way this is shown by watching a column of troops on the march along a road. A very slight check to the leading "fours" rapidly augments as it affects those following; and long before it has reached the middle of the column, the men are brought to a complete halt.

Horses that have not been well schooled to jump at a fast pace, and in close company, also add to the risks

inseparable from steeplechasing, for unless they have been taught by an expert they try to stop their pace in the last few strides, and to lob over in the sticky way they have generally been accustomed to when hunting. One of the most dangerous mounts, as a rule, is a well-trained hunter that has not been ridden in a "grass" country, and has had no schooling for steeplechasing. He may be a most safe conveyance, if allowed to jump the fences in the careful way that he has been accustomed to. When asked to take them at his best pace he gets flustered, tries to steady himself, and generally ends by taking off either too soon or half a stride too late, and the result either way is the same if the fence is stiff. A bold, raw, natural jumper, with an experienced capable jockey on his back, is often a far safer mount than the steady hunter.

At the same time I do not want for one moment to decry the usefulness of the hunting field, in training steeplechase horses. On the contrary, I have the very highest opinion of its value, but then it must be supplemented by plenty of practice over steeplechase fences at a racing pace. In the hunting field they learn to jump all sorts of obstacles in all sorts of ground, and to rise at them when they are tired. They learn, too, to gallop in deep ground carrying a heavy weight, and not to "shut up" when leg-weary, for the excitement of the chase inspirits them to bear fatigue just as it does the riders. A horse should be perfect in jumping fences slowly before he is ever asked to go fast at them, for we all have to learn to walk before we can run. A steeplechase horse that began his education in the hunting field and perfected it over galloping fences is one of the safest mounts that a jockey can have, for he is never at a loss and can scarcely be trapped.

In the steeplechase referred to above, I had been able to keep clear of the confusion that reigned supreme at the first two jumps, but in approaching the third, an Irish bank, with apparently a clear course before us, "Jack o' Lantern," who was well in front on the right hand, suddenly swerved across and almost stopped. He took the fence very slowly indeed. I was jammed in on both sides and could not possibly pull outside him, and "Jerezano" had to dig his toes in the ground to prevent knocking the other horse head over heels. The bank was very narrow on the top, and though the horse made a gallant effort it was too much for him, and down we came. Having kept hold of the reins I was on him again almost directly, when the huntsman of the Calpe Hounds, Charles Payne, who was standing on the far side, held on to the bridle, begging me to wait and catch my breath. It was all done in the most good-natured way possible, but there the training of the hunting field appeared, for he never thought of the distance his delaying me was causing me to lose. At last he was induced to let go, but by that time the leaders were a long way ahead, and it appeared a very hopeless task to overhaul them. "Jerezano" stuck gamely to his work, and gradually overhauling the field one by one, he was almost at the quarters of the leader when the last fence had to be jumped. The bad luck, however, still continued. Half-way between the last fence and the winning-post I made my effort, and if we had had a straight run in, we should have won. There was an angle, however, to be turned, and "Jack o' Lantern"—the very horse that had caused the fall—was on the inside. "Jerezano" had almost drawn level with him, when in turning the flag "Jack o' Lantern" ran wide, boring us out, right

on to a large ant-hill, which caused my horse to blunder, and gave the other a length lead again. There were scarcely thirty yards further to go, and though we made up some of the ground lost, "*Ganado por un pescuezo*" (won by a neck), is the fiat recorded against "Jerezano" in the Spanish *Guide to the Turf*.

Another instance of the truth of the saying that "knowledge is power" occurred at an autumn meeting at Jerez-de-la Frontera—the Newmarket of Spain. Sr. F. R. da Cunha, a Portuguese gentleman, had been running some horses with great success until a short time previously, when they seemed to have somewhat lost their "form." His trainer and I were both staying for the meeting at the house of Mr. H. Davies, who possessed the most powerful racing stable in Spain, and who, with his brother, was mainly instrumental in making racing such a flourishing institution as it then was. Having nothing particular to do we strolled down in the afternoon to their *Bodéga*, and it was suggested that we should go and look at the horses from Portugal, who were close by. Their trainer was having some of them clipped, for they had grown shaggy winter coats, and he fancied, which was very probably true, that the loss of form was partly due to their heavy covering of hair. We idly watched a horse, "Gigante," being clipped, and then I sauntered into the stable to look at the others. In the far corner stood a box with a wooden partition about four feet high, and iron railings above. In this box was a very speedy horse, "Perchance," who had already had his coat removed. Whilst gazing at him he made a little run at me across the box, laying back his ears and drawing back his lips as he made a bite in the air. Without thinking of anything particular I put the palm of my

hand against the railing, and he repeated the bite, and this time I happened to catch sight of his open mouth. Instantly I saw he was a five-year-old, and it flashed across me that he was entered for the races next day as a four-year-old, and had been so running all that year. To make perfectly certain I was right I put up my hand again, and the horse repeated the "snap" as before, and then in a state of excitement I sought my host, who was standing just outside. Slipping my arm in his, and drawing him on one side, he was made acquainted with the startling discovery, and very speedily we returned to the box to verify the fact. "What shall we do?" said Davies. "Let us call your brother," was my reply, he being also present, and the secretary of the race meeting. "Dolly" Davies was quickly called, and we gazed at one another in dumfounded silence, feeling very like a band of conspirators. In the meantime the trainer and both jockeys belonging to the stable, Alfred Wood and Harry Adams, were superintending the clipping, in happy ignorance of what was going on in their stable a few yards only from them. We all agreed that as the trainer was also a guest of Davies, we must give him a hint of the discovery, and then leave him to act as he thought best. But how could we best do this was the question? We could hardly believe that he was unaware of the real age of the horse, but under the circumstances it would be most unpleasant to have an *exposé*, and if he really did not know about it, it was only kind to give him a loophole of escape. A happy thought suddenly occurred to me. There had quite lately been a considerable scandal about a prominent owner who had knowingly run a horse of wrong age, had been found out, and warned off the turf. "Suppose we

bring this incident up," I suggested, "and then say how unfortunate it would be if any of our horses turned out to be improperly described. Then we can propose to go and look at them. We can begin with yours, Davies, and then come here."

The idea was approved of and promptly carried out. Davies skilfully introduced the subject, and the trainer so eagerly caught at it, in such an unembarrassed way, that we were staggered in our belief of his complicity in a fraud.

When we reached Davies's stable, Everett, his very clever trainer-jockey, was just giving them their evening feed, and his look of surprise, when we said we had come to look at their mouths, remains in my mind as vividly as ever. However, when he was reminded of the recent disqualification and "warning off," he took great interest in the proceedings. The horses were soon gone through and found to be all right, and then we started off for the Portuguese stable. Just before leaving, Davies said in a very low voice to Everett, "Meysey-Thompson has just found out that 'Perchance' is five years old instead of four years. Do you think they know anything about it?" The look of keen intelligence that swept across his face struck me as one of the most remarkable that I ever saw. "No," he replied, after a moment's thought, "I hardly think they do, but one can never tell." On arriving at the other stable we first inspected "Gigante." "All right, four years," was the verdict. The next horse to come out was "Perchance." The instant the trainer opened his mouth a shock seemed to strike him, and dropping the horse's jaw, he turned to us with a scared look, exclaiming: "Oh, gracious! I knew nothing of it." "Why," what is the

matter?" we all exclaimed at once. "See for yourselves," he said. "Is he the wrong age?" we queried. Then Davies spoke up. "Well, I will tell you the truth. The fact is we found out just now, while the horses were being clipped, that 'Perchance' had the teeth of a five-year-old, so we planned this inspection to give you a chance. Do you mean to say that you did not know anything about it?" "I'll swear I did not," he replied; and knowing him very intimately, and that his word was thoroughly to be relied upon, we were perfectly satisfied as to his innocence. "Do the lads know about it?" we then asked him. "I don't know, I am sure," was his reply; "but we will soon find out." Alfred Wood, the head jockey, was then called up, and the question put to him: "How old is 'Perchance'?" "Four years," he replied, with a look of amazement; "why, he is in the colt race" (which was for three-year-olds and four-year-olds only). "Look at his mouth," said the trainer. Wood did so, and then turning round with a grin, he said, "Why, he is five years old." "Yes," replied the other; "did you not know?" "No," returned Wood, "we bought him last year as a three-year-old, and I never looked in his mouth since." "Does Adams know?" queried the trainer. "I doubt it," replied Wood. "Here, Adams!" he shouted; "how old is 'Perchance'?" "Four years," was his reply. "Well, see his mouth," said Wood. "He is five," remarked the other, after a lengthened examination. "Did you know before now?" was then put to him; but just as his brother-jockey had stated, he also had never thought of looking at the colt's mouth. On further inquiry into the matter, it turned out that a mistake had been unintentionally made in the age of the colt in the certificate that had been then given, for his

breeder, who was an honourable man, had offered him openly for sale as a four-year-old in the previous year, and I had myself then gone to look at him as one of that age. Of course the case had to be brought before the notice of the Jockey Club, and though everyone was exonerated from blame in the matter, he was disqualified for all the races that he had won that year, which, with the bets, came to a very considerable sum. What his owner felt the most was having to return a very coveted trophy, the Jockey Club Cup, which he had won, and on the strength of which win he had just given a very large dinner party to the chief patrons of racing. The cup had then been a very conspicuous ornament in the dining-room, and been very much admired.

Poor "Perchance's" misfortunes, however, were not yet over. He was destined to lose the chief prize of the ensuing meeting, for which he was properly entered at last, as the entries did not close till the day after the discovery of his right age. This was the *Premio del Rey*—"The King's Prize"—a race that was very much sought after and valued.

CHAPTER XV.

HOW RACES WERE WON AND LOST.

THE last meeting held before this had been the Autumn Meeting at Seville. We had here run a three-year-old colt, "Solitario," who had lately made a most sensational début at the Cadiz Autumn Meeting. His owner, Don Thomas Heredia, had shown this colt to me in the previous June when stopping at Malaga, *en route* to Gibraltar, from the races at Granada. He was then just being handled, and though Heredia had written to say he should like to run him in the autumn, I begged him not to do so, thinking there was no time to get him ready, and that he had better be kept until the following spring. For this reason he had not come with the rest of Heredia's horses to the earlier autumn meetings. Later on, however, he again wrote and said he would send him to Cadiz, and hoped I would ride him there, if I did not mind doing so. It had never occurred to me that a colt, brought up all his life on hard food, and never getting any grass, would take a shorter time in getting "fit" than a young horse in England, who has been living in a grass field. The consequence was, that when we arrived at Cadiz, a few days before the races, and took the horses out to work, I did not think a great deal about the colt, having many others to see after, and imagined that his chance of winning a race was *nil*.

If I had not been so certain of there not having been time enough to prepare "Solitario," I ought to have been impressed with the style in which he kept up with a very fast thoroughbred mare, "Lady Elizabeth," when we rattled them along in a five-furlongs spin. I was thinking of other matters, however, and, though I noticed how well he moved and how gallantly he took hold of his bit to the end, I thought no more about him, and pulling up "Lady Elizabeth," returned to superintend the work of the remainder. I did not even get on to "Solitario's" back until I weighed out for his race, which was for maidens only. Both Heredia and I each had a "pony" on a horse called "The Rush," who had just previously been beaten by a head for the Spanish Maiden at Gibraltar, finishing in front of "Jerezano," on whom I had had the mount, and we had not a single penny on "Solitario." The latter ran extremely raw in his race, "yawing" all over the course, and before we had reached the first turn we were the absolute last. Half-way down the course, on the far side, we were several lengths behind, and I could see "The Rush" making the running in front, and going quite at his ease. "Just what was to be expected," was my thought. However, it came into my mind that Heredia had told me that "Solitario" was very much afraid of the whip, so just to see what effect it had I commenced to "threaten" him with it, and almost instantly he shot up to the rearmost horses.

"Hulloh," I said to myself, "let me see what you can do," and sitting down on him commenced to "drive" him in earnest. He very soon worked his way through the rearmost horses, and when we turned into the straight only "The Rush" and "Aquila" were in front, ridden by two

professionals, of whom the jockey of the former was going at his ease, and holding the latter on the rails. "Solitario" was coming up fast, hand-over-hand, and when well inside the "distance" we were level with the others, though Blanchard, on "The Rush," was so busy in watching the other that he never noticed us draw up. "Look out for Mr. Thompson," yelled the jockey of "Aquila," and, glancing over his shoulder, Blanchard began driving his horse to the utmost; but "Solitario" won by a length, with a length and a half between second and third. The rest of the field were beaten off. Yet it was an unsatisfactory win after all! All our money was on the second horse, and how easy it would have been to have lost the race! "Solitario" proceeded to win a match the same afternoon, in which I rode him again, and the following afternoon won two more races, though, as the weights were too low to allow me to ride, Adams had the "mounts" on him. From Cadiz we travelled to Seville, and as the races at the former place had been postponed for a few days, on account of bad weather, we had to leave by the late train, after the races were finished, in order to get to Seville in time. We were travelling a considerable party of friends — about sixteen in all — consisting of married couples, young ladies, and officers from Gibraltar, besides jockeys. Our rooms had been ordered beforehand, and when we arrived at Seville Station, at 2.30 A.M., we anticipated no difficulty, as arrangements had been made for conveyances to meet us. On arriving at the private lodgings, however, we were very much taken aback by finding one long room set apart for us, with sixteen beds side by side, and no screens whatever between them! Such was the difference between Spanish and English customs. It had especially

been mentioned what the party consisted of, and that we were all "Ingleses," for, knowing the country well, we knew the sort of accommodation that might be prepared for us if we were thought to be natives of Spain. To go out to look for lodgings, when very sleepy, at 3 A.M. in a Spanish town, is not a very pleasant proceeding; but we young men of the party were ruthlessly turned out, and had to make the best arrangements we could!

"Solitario" was engaged, on the first day, in the great three-year-old race; but as he had to meet, at only 6 lb. difference, a remarkably good colt, "Il Barbieri," who was not only the best of his year, but the best that had been seen for many years, we knew that there was no chance of winning the race. I was not anxious to run him at all for it, but Heredia wished to start, so Adams received the strictest orders not to make a race of it, and, the moment the colt had had enough, to stop riding him, and let the others fight it out for second place. Even then no one had the slightest inkling, except our own stable, how good "Solitario" really was, for he had been running in very moderate company, and when he had met a pretty good horse he had always had a considerable allowance of weight. Nor had he ever been allowed to win by very much distance. The weight was again too light for me to get to, for it was hard work to waste sufficiently to ride 9 st. 10 lb., and now "Solitario" only carried 9 st. 2 lb. Adams, therefore, had the mount, but we had confidence that he would ride to orders. What was our horror, however, to see him jump off, and try to cut "Il Barbieri" down from the start! Forcing the pace he kept him at it, and the pair were lengths away in front of every other horse, "Il Barbieri" finally winning by a length and a

half, all out, after a very severely fought finish. Very blue were our looks when we met afterwards, and very much ashamed of himself was the jockey, who, it is scarcely needless to say, was promptly told he need never look for another mount from our stable. It seems that, with the vanity of a youth, he thought if he could steal a start he might just beat "Il Barbriere," and never regarded his orders or our wishes in the least. As to stealing a start from Everett, he had not 100 to 1 chance to do so, for he was a first-rate jockey and never to be caught napping. Our hopes of a *coup* were gone, for now at last the horse's form was thoroughly exposed, and it was evident to everyone that the colt was only about 10 lb. behind his rival. What was to be done? The horse was no worse for his race, and getting fitter every day, but November had already begun and the racing season was almost over. I suggested that our only chance was to put him into the Consolation Handicap, on the last day of the meeting, and get him beaten there, and trust to luck to pull a race off at Jerez, the last meeting of the year.

We accordingly entered him for the race, and Mr. Davies' "Barbian," a smart four-year-old, was also entered; the handicapper allotting the weights—"Barbian," four years, 10 st. 2 lb.; "Solitario," three years, 10 st. 3 lb. Nothing else cared to start against us, and we were the only two that weighed out. Going to Heredia before we started, I said to him, "Now look here, if possible, we must not win this race; it is not worth winning, and if we do we shall never have another chance." "Can you win," he asked; "if so, do win it." He dearly loved seeing his colours in front, even for a very insignificant prize. "Well," I said, "it is just this. If I ride him one way we

shall win, for 'Barbian' cannot stay. But if I ride him another way I think 'Barbian' will win. Of course I shall not stop him, and shall win if I can, but he will run at least 7 lb. worse than if I ride him the other way." "Oh, do win if you can," he repeated. "Never mind this race," I said, "it is not worth winning, and we are pretty sure to pick up a better stake at Jerez if we are beaten here." At last he consented that I should ride as I liked. As soon as we started, as I expected, Everett drew back to my quarters and remained there, so steadying "Solitario" and keeping him only to a three-parts speed gallop we went on to the distance. Here Everett drew up to me, and it being no part of my plan to make the most of my horse, I allowed Everett to draw level before I began to ride "Solitario." We had a capital finish, "Solitario" showing even more speed than I expected, and we were only beaten by a head. On returning together to weigh in, Everett slapped his thigh and exclaimed joyfully, "Beaten you again, Mr. Thompson, beaten you again!" "Yes, Everett," I answered, "it is your turn this time, but it will be mine next!"

The handicapper was delighted with the result of his work, and said to me, "I shall make the handicap for the King's Prize at Jerez from your two horses. I shall give you two even weights, and I should not wonder if you run a dead heat. That will be allowing 1 lb. for the short head." "That will be about right," I said, delighted that he had not penetrated our little scheme. "I should not wonder if we do run a dead heat." Nothing, however, would have more surprised me than if we had done so!

Without the smallest idea of winning the race, I rode "Solitario" down to the starting-post at Jerez, and though

it was not a very large field that started, they were all winners of many good races. Everett, on "Barbian," had drawn No. 1 on the rails, while I was No. 3. The moment the flag fell I sent "Solitario" to the front solely with the idea of showing him up well in front, and intending to steady him and draw him back as soon as he was headed, in the hopes of getting better into a handicap later on in the meeting. Before a hundred yards had been traversed I was able to slip across on to the rails and take Everett's place there, as "Barbian" had begun slowly and was a length or two in rear. At the first turn "The Gift," an aged horse, in at a very light weight—in fact, we were giving him 2 st. 1 lb.—came up on the whip hand, and to save pulling at my horse, to keep him close in to the rails, I allowed the other to get a neck in front, so that he shouldered me round; and we went on together in a similar manner, round the second and third posts, till we entered the straight. All this time I had been expecting something to come up and wrest the lead from us, but when we were still leading, with only the run-in before us, it flashed across me, "Why should we not win this race!" Up to that time I had been riding somewhat carelessly, but now every nerve was strained to carry off the prize. "The Gift" soon dropped back; "Solitario" was stretched to his full pace, but not pushed to quite his utmost powers; and it seemed as if we were going to win comfortably. At the "distance," however, I was aware of a horse stealing up to us, and glancing back, I saw the grey nose of "Perchance," ridden by Adams, not more than a length behind. Inch by inch he gained, but he was coming very close alongside, and just as his head reached my quarters, remembering to have heard that he was not supposed to

be very game in a close finish, I took up my whip and "threatened" "Solitario," taking care that each time I raised the whip it almost touched "Perchance's" nose. As I expected, up went his head, he changed his legs, and dropped back out of sight. There were still 200 yards before the winning post was reached, and "driving" "Solitario" to his utmost speed, we made the best of our way to get there first. Adams got "Perchance" steadied, and again the grey nose came nearer and nearer, but in exactly the same place as before. History repeats itself, and so did my tactics; again the head went up, the stride was changed, "Perchance" dropped back, and "Solitario" won the King's Prize by a length, with "The Gift" third half a length behind. The latter's jockey complained bitterly of the use I had made of him at the time, and talked of objecting. He had no grounds to go upon though, and I soon put an end to his grumbling by carrying the war into the enemy's country, and accused him of trying to ride me inside the turning posts.

Poor "Perchance." It was hard upon him to disqualify him for all the races he had won on one day, and then to snatch the King's Prize from him on the next.

The day after the meeting was over, I rode out with my host, Mr. H. Davies, to see the Royal stallions, which, to the number of eighty, had just come in from the country districts, where they had been quartered during the summer. On the way I said to him, "Would you like to know about the King's Prize the other day?" "Indeed, I should," he replied; "for we have been quite puzzled over it. Everett was certain that he would win, for he thought he had quite 7 lb. in hand at Seville." "That is just what we thought we had to spare," was

my reply; "and the result showed that we were right. If the Seville race had been a true run one, 'Solitario' would have won easily; but by making it only a race for speed from the 'distance,' 'Barbian,' who is very speedy, but does not stay well, was able just to beat him. 'Solitario' stays, but has not the highest speed. We wanted the handicapper to put the same weight on him as 'Barbian' at Jerez, and then we were sure of beating him if the pace was good."

The following spring, I was hoist with my own petard. When we arrived at Cadiz for the races, the trainer of Señor Rult's horses came to me while we were at exercise on the first morning, and asked me if I could ride a four-year-old for him in the race for the Duke of Montpensier's Prize. He stated that each morning, after they had arrived there, the horse had bolted at exercise directly they reached the path leading off the course, and that, as this place would have to be passed in the race, he was afraid he would endeavour to run out there, and that he was not strong enough to hold him.

Not being engaged for the race, I agreed to ride, and being warned of the horse's whim there seemed every probability of getting him safely past the dangerous spot. I lay well up as we approached it, but took the precaution to keep on the rails, with a leader just in front, and hoped "Riff" would follow him round all right. He did not do so, however, and endeavoured with all his might to bolt across where he was accustomed to do so. It took all my strength to hold him round the turn; and we had almost got straightened for home when Everett—who was making the running on "Trovador," and was watching me as closely as a cat does a mouse-hole—seeing that I had got

the better of "Riff," took up his whip and threatened "Trovador" with it, close to "Riff's" head. Instantly he tried to bolt again, but we were now safely past the turn, and I was able to let go the reins with one hand, and hit him two or three such stinging strokes with the whip across the side of his face and neck as very speedily put him straight.

The race was only for five furlongs, and that distance does not allow much time in which to retrieve a mischance. Everett had quite two lengths to the good before we were fairly ready to fight out the finish, and, in addition, he had 16 lb. advantage in weight. A capital struggle between the two horses resulted in the victory of "Trovador" by half a length; the third being beaten several lengths. "Riff's" trainer was in a great state of excitement, and full of congratulations, and the horse never tried to bolt again. In the weighing-room afterwards, Everett said to me, "You ought to have won, sir, but I could not help thinking of your race on 'Solitario' last autumn, and I thought I would try it on 'Riff' when I saw you had straightened him." What is sauce for the goose, is undoubtedly sauce for the gander too, so there was nothing to do but to make the best of it!

CHAPTER XVI.

“PLENIPO,” “COLONIST,” AND “KING GEORGE.”

“PLENIPO!” What recollections arise when thy name is mentioned. Memories of sensational triumphs, with all the glamour attaching to great victories, and the excitement attending them. Truly he was a gallant horse, despising weight and distance alike, if only he was fit to run, and “above” himself. When he was in that condition, it was perhaps a trifle difficult to keep on his back when going down to the starting-post. As soon as ever he was “off,” however, he placed himself entirely in the hands of his jockey, adapting his running to the slightest indication given to him, and when asked to go on and win his race, he strove to the very utmost of his power to be first at the winning post. He knew where it was, too, as well as I did! As “‘Plenipo’s’ jockey,” I was known at all the racing towns in Southern Spain, and the little boys used to shout it after me in the streets, when everyone made way for me as if I was a “bull-fighter.” The Spaniards are a very sporting nation, and their courteous, dignified ways are charming. They loved the English at that time. What a pity that a temporary cloud should have arisen to alter their sentiments towards us, on account of the American war! It may be that we are grasping at the shadow and losing the substance, for it is not very long since that business over Venezuela began to assume a

very awkward appearance, and our American cousins are not usually in the habit of professing much love for their English relatives. Often has it been said to me in Spain, among the lower orders, "Ah! the English, we like them. What they say they always do!" (This is their view.) "Does not everything that we have good come from England? Our horses, jockeys, guns, gunpowder, dogs, even salt; and our own are so worthless." It was quite true, and they had an immense respect for us; but as for the Americans, they really hated them. It was quite possible for an Englishman to go anywhere, into the roughest crowd in any place, and so long as he was known to be an Englishman he was perfectly safe, but an American would have been insulted, or even "knifed" immediately. Many a time have I pushed my way into a crowd to see something, and on murmuring "Inglese," or "Inglese gineté" (English jockey), way has been most courteously made for me. Only once was I nearly getting into trouble, through being mistaken for an American, as there were several just arrived. Brows began to lower, and threatening gestures made, as "Americano" was quickly bandied from lip to lip. "Inglese," "Inglese," I repeated, but they shook their heads, and if some Spanish racing lads had not happened to be there, and quickly explained that it really was an "Inglese gineté," there would have been serious trouble. As soon, however, as they were assured of their mistake, they took no further notice of me, and peace was restored.

"Plenipo" was bred at Tarbes, I believe, and made his appearance at Madrid, about the time of the French and German War, when so many good horses were hurried away from France. He was a deep-bodied, short-legged

horse, a perfect model of a weight-carrier, and though very high-couraged, yet was an easy horse to ride.

The commencement of my riding for his owner, Don T. Heredia, was a piece of luck for me. I had gone to Granada to ride on the first day of the races for Captain Luxford, who was at home on leave, and in the evening was at supper in the garden of the Washington Irving Hotel, with some other jockeys. Heredia came up to our table, and said, “I want some one to ride ‘Plenipo’ for me in the Ladies’ Plate to-morrow, can any of you ride?” I thought for a moment, and then replied, “I will.” It was a fortunate chance perhaps for both, for up to that time, the middle of June, Heredia had not won a single race that year, but before the season closed we won sixteen. After we had struck the bargain, I said to him, “Is not ‘Plenipo’ engaged in the King’s Prize to-morrow also? I can ride him in that, too, if you like.” He replied, “Yes, he is, but I have brought Garcia to ride him.” “Oh! all right,” I answered, for Garcia was a capital jockey, who had long been in Count Lagrange’s stable, and came to England when the Count’s horses first came over to Newmarket. He had saved enough to retire upon, and returned to Spain to spend the rest of his life, but still frequently rode at the different meetings. “But,” returned Heredia, “I should prefer you to ride in both races for me.” I thereupon told him I should be very glad to do so, if he could make arrangements with Garcia, and he went off to interview him. He presently returned and said that Garcia had expressed himself quite willing to retire in my favour, though he would not resign his mount to any other jockey, and that he was to receive the same fee, win or lose, as if he was riding instead of me.

When we started for the King's Prize the next day, the pace was made so hot at first, that we dropped back last, being unable to keep up with the others, but knowing that the horse had the reputation of being able to stay, and that there was an incline on the far side, I was not discouraged, and when half the race had been run, I began to urge "Plenipo" to his utmost speed. We were then just beginning the ascent, and the others came back very quickly, so that when we turned into the straight, there was only one left in front, and we were at his quarters. As soon as we were level I was able to ease the horse for a few strides, and then, coming again, got his head in front and won. Garcia rushed up, beaming with delight, and had the courtesy to say, "Well done, sir, I am glad you were up. I should not have won that race myself." About an hour afterwards the Ladies' Plate was run for, and was almost an exact repetition of the King's Prize. Again "Plenipo" was beaten off, again he reached them on the hill, again we collared the leader in the straight, and won by half-a-length. It was a very hot day, and as soon as I had weighed in, I threw my coat over my shoulders, tying it by the sleeves round my neck, without putting it on, and retired under an archway of the grand stand, that led to the stabling in the rear, in order to get cool in the shade afforded by it. My attention was drawn to a number of smart Spanish gentlemen, in tall hats and frock coats, descending the steps of the Jockey Club stand, who afterwards came in my direction. Not wishing to be seen in the melting state I was in, I walked on to the stables, only to be still followed by the others. I could get no further, so turned round, when the first Spaniard came up to me, and taking off his hat, with a polite bow,

accosted me with, “We are the Spanish Jockey Club. We wish to shake hands with the English jockey.” Each of them in turn then took off his hat, and shook hands with me. It really was very complimentary of them to pay me so much honour! There were just thirty of them.

There was a much coveted race run for at Gibraltar, the Omnium, for all breeds of horses, and for all ages, special allowances of weight being made for Barbs, Arabs, thoroughbreds, and the different half-breeds. Five Omniums were run whilst I was quartered there; I rode in four of them and won every time, and very curiously the same horse ran second to me on each occasion. No horse could win it twice, so it was especially unlucky for that horse to be so often beaten, more especially as twice he was better than my mount, but each time a mistake on the part of his jockey gave me the race. Once I won it on “Plenipo,” but then he was undoubtedly the better horse of the two. The next day, however, “Plenipo” won probably the best race of his life. The race was a mile and a quarter, and he was handicapped to carry 13 st. 7 lb., and to give 3 st., all but 2 lb., to the second top-weight! Five started, all winners, and I should have been puzzled how to ride the race, if the initiative had not been taken by the others. Two very light weights started off at the very top of their speed, and I quickly saw that they were going too fast to last, and need not be reckoned with. The other two, who were good horses, were pulled back behind me, and it instantly flashed across my mind that their jockeys intended to wait upon me for some time. I therefore steadied “Plenipo” gradually, so that they should not guess my intentions, and still they kept about twenty yards in the rear, directly in my track.

Five furlongs from home we had to cross a road, after which came a slight ascent, and it seemed to me probable that they would rely on my steadying "Plenipo" to the top of the rise, and that they would try to steal up to me as soon as they crossed the road. The ground was very hard, and as they kept out of my sight I listened intently to the stroke of their hoofs, and the moment they had crossed the road it seemed to me that the hoof strokes quickened. Instantly I set "Plenipo" going at his best pace, disregarding the hill, and thus turned the race virtually into a five-furlong one, with twenty yards start. That excellent jockey, Captain Luxford, reached my quarters about one hundred yards from home, but I still sat perfectly quiet, knowing that "Plenipo" was running as game as a pebble, and I was keeping the last effort for the pinch when it came. On Luxford came, drawing nearer and nearer, and fifty yards from home his horse's nose was up to my knees. There was no time to wait then, and calling on "Plenipo" for his final effort, we just managed to hold our own to the end.

After the race Luxford at once owned that he had made a mistake, and that their plans had been exactly as I had divined them. What made it still more interesting to myself was that I had beaten him over the same course in the spring, for the Omnium, by riding in exactly an opposite manner. I had been back to England to ride in some races, and on my return I found a three-year-old thoroughbred colt by "Chattanooga" the master of the situation. His little game was to whip suddenly round after starting to canter at exercise, and to keep on spinning round like a teetotum. He did nothing else, but it was too much for the lads, and no one could make him go.

On my return I took him in hand and soon had him all right, but one of his fore-legs filled badly from the effects of the fights that he had indulged in, and consequently we dare not give him the work we should otherwise have done. Luxford was aware that the horse was short of work, so when we started for the Omnium he very properly forced the pace on that good horse “Molinero,” in order to pump “Colonist.” Just before we reached the road, “Colonist,” who was feeling the pace, changed his legs three times very quickly and dropped back from his bit. Knowing that he was tiring, I sat as still as I possibly could and let him do what he pleased, and in the next few strides he had dropped some twenty yards behind “Molinero.” We were just beginning the ascent, and had Luxford forced the pace then we should have been out of the race, but looking back over his shoulder he saw “Colonist” some lengths behind, and thinking the horse was beaten, he steadied “Molinero.” We thus went quietly up the hill, and in descending again I felt “Colonist” begin to stride out more freely and take hold of his bit. I was certain then that Luxford had lost his race, and when he found I was gaining on him he realised it himself too. Do what he would he could not get away from me, and nursing “Colonist” for one run, fifty yards from home, he answered gamely enough, and we won by half a length.

Some owners are never satisfied, however, and Mr. “Marland,” for whom I was riding, found fault afterwards for my having allowed “Colonist” to drop away from “Molinero,” saying that he did not approve of such proceedings, and that in his opinion I had jeopardised the race by so doing! In vain did I tell him I should never

have won if I had tried to keep up with the leader at that delicate part of the contest. He could not appreciate the skill involved in the proceeding, and really thought as he spoke. His trainer, however, thoroughly understood the necessity of the case, and warmly congratulated me afterwards, and was most annoyed with his master for his want of judgment. Mr. "Marland" was a rich man comparatively, and yet though I won many races for him he never made me the slightest acknowledgment. He was one of three owners for whom I have trained and ridden, and won many races, finding myself out of pocket in many small ways, besides my travelling expenses, for which I could make no charge, yet who never offered to pay anything towards them, or gave me the slightest present. These three owners must have had an income of at least £300,000 per annum between them. Other owners, some nearly as poor as myself, on the other hand, have been most generous, occasionally almost too much so; and I have nearly always found that people of moderate incomes are more generous, and more thoughtful in saving others' expense, than rich men who could so easily afford it, and would never miss what is a serious item to the others.

On another occasion also I was blamed for the manner in which I won a most desperately ridden race, by an owner who did not understand race-riding. My mount was a good stayer, but deficient in speed, and before we had gone a quarter of a mile I was being tailed off. As the horse had been in my string the year before, I thoroughly knew his capabilities, and I at once began to urge him to his utmost speed, even taking up my whip and threatening him, without actually hitting him. It was only a six-furlong race, and there was no time to lose. When we

turned into the straight there were but two in front of me, and gradually I passed one, and then got up to the quarters of the other. This horse was ridden by a jockey who held theories of his own as to the way races should be ridden, and one of them was, that it was not possible to get more out of a horse by what is called “riding” him, than by sitting perfectly still. He very seldom won a race—never unless he had much the best of it—but he was so plausible, and had such an elegant seat, that owners still continued to put him up. He was now riding a horse also formerly trained by me, who possessed a great dash of speed, and if he had only just asked him for one effort he must have won easily. As it was, by great exertion we worked away at last to his head, and as there was yet time to spare, I dropped my hands for a few strides and collected my horse for the final effort. Glancing at my companion, I thought to myself, “Are you *never* going to try to win a race? Surely if ever you are, this is the time to begin.” But no; he sat placidly there, and then with one more struggle we won by half a length. The trainer rushed up, beaming with excitement, and exclaimed, “Well done, sir, well done, you rode that right well;” but the owner came up, though pleased to win, and wanted to know, “What on earth I had kept so far behind for, and then had to flog the horse to get up again? Why could not I keep up like the others?” Indeed, I should have been only too glad to have done so, if I could; and that was all the thanks I got. Truly the ways of owners are very curious.

It may not be generally known that it is far harder work to ride a race of that sort, especially if you happen to be on a “slug,” who will only do what he is made to do, than to ride a hard pulling horse, however hard he may

pull. A time comes with the latter when he must do his best in order to win, and then when the reins are gradually slackened the rider gets relief. With a sluggish horse, however, it is just the contrary. He will relax his efforts the moment you stop urging him, and the nearer you are to the winning-post, the more exertion you have to use. What a tremendous strain this is on the jockey few outsiders can realise. I once had a conversation with the late Sir Andrew Clark on the subject, and he owned that he could not understand it at all. The loss of weight in even the short time that a six-furlong race takes is sometimes considerable, and shows clearly what an immense effort has been made. But what Sir Andrew could not explain was, how the weight is lost. There is no time to lose it solely by perspiration, and my idea is that it goes considerably in the breath, for on such occasions one often has to pant hard. In an ordinary race not an ounce is lost, but as much as a pound and even more may be parted with in very hard races, unless one has been wasting much. The greatest slug I ever rode was a horse called "King George," and I never weighed out for him without allowing an extra pound for what I knew I should lose before I returned. He was a good horse, and could both stay and go fast, but had to be made to do his best. At one meeting I won on him over $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles the first day, 2 miles the second day, and 2 miles the third day. His owner was greedy, and would yet run him in another race on the last day, although he ought to have been content with the three he had won. We were badly in too, the weights all being in favour of "Carnival," a very good horse. The distance was $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and as the others were afraid of "King George,"

and knew he must have a pace, they waited on him, and I was forced to make my own running. For the whole distance I had to keep at that horse, the end of a hardly contested race being that “*Carnival*” beat me by a long neck; when I returned to weigh in I had lost $1\frac{1}{4}$ lb., the greatest amount that I ever did lose.

Another fact is the extraordinary effect a very moderate amount of food can have, when you have been wasting. My ordinary weight was 10 st. 5 or 6 lb. when stripped, and I had been riding 10 stone. As the next race was 13 st. 9 lb., and the following one 10 st. 7 lb. I ventured to take a very slight amount of food between the two races, yet when I presented myself at the scales only a few minutes afterwards my weight had gone up to 10 st. 4 lb., though I had just previously weighed in at 10 st. with my saddle.

At the Seville autumn meeting we had a very sensational race for the Duke of Montpensier’s prize, which was run over hurdles—very awkward hurdles they were too, being 4 feet 6 inches high, with double top-bars, between which tall broom was drawn, through which we had to “swish” like a “bullfinch.” The hurdles might break indeed, but they were too firmly fixed into the ground to knock down, and were not even slanted to assist the horses when jumping. The usual rains had not commenced, so that the course was very dry and hard, and to keep the dust down under the royal box—which was on the very verge of the course—a water cart had been freely used. As Spanish clerks of the course did not know much about hurdle-racing—in fact, this form of sport had only been introduced that year—I generally had a look round to see if it was necessary to make any alteration in

the placing of the jumps. In this case the hurdles in front of the stand were so fixed, that the horses would have to take off on dry ground and alight on to the watered part of the course, which had now about an inch of mud on the top, with hard ground underneath. We all know how dangerous that is, and how slipping is a certainty under such conditions; I ordered the hurdles to be put further back, so that the horses would alight on to dry ground, as well as take off from it; as to slipping when galloping, that they had to take their chance of.

The workmen began to alter the hurdles and then stopped, and proceeded to replace them in their former position, whereupon I jumped up from the seat where I was sitting with the other professional jockeys, and went to see what was the matter. The workmen said, that Her Majesty desired that the hurdles should remain where they were, as she wished to see the horses jump exactly underneath her. This did not suit my view of the case, however, and telling them that the hurdles must be altered, I resumed my seat. Directly afterwards up came an officer of the Court, in a gorgeous uniform and cocked hat, who very courteously saluted me and said, that "when the English gentleman understood it was the wish of La Reina that the hurdles should remain where they were, the English gentleman could have no objection." "But the English gentleman has an objection," I replied. "I am sorry to disappoint Her Majesty, but the hurdles are too dangerous where they are, so they must be altered." The officer retired, then returned and remarked, "La Reina said, 'Are you an Englishman, and afraid to ride?'" Now this answer made me more determined than ever to have the hurdles removed, for there was a tragical story

current that Her Majesty had addressed a somewhat similar remark to a matador, when he urged the impossibility of playing the same trick twice on a bull in the bull ring. “Now, look here, old chap,” I answered, “if these hurdles are not altered, I’ll neither run another horse, nor ride another horse at this meeting.”

Nearly half the horses running at the meeting were under my control in one way or another, and if I had used my influence to send them away, the meeting would have been spoiled. I was, too, the second highest jockey in winning mounts, only Everett, the professional, being ahead of me, and as there was a large faction of the State against Queen Isabella, I was sure of a very considerable following. All the other professionals were backing me up too, for they knew the danger, though they would have had to act as their masters ordered them. However, my point was gained, and the hurdles were altered. As we came on to the slippery ground, after jumping the hurdle, the horses as nearly as possible fell, “*Plenipo*” slipping for several feet, and having the greatest difficulty in keeping his legs.

We won the race, and then came another little episode. The cups and great prizes used to be put on a raised dais on the lawn, and guarded by sentries. On the conclusion of a race, after the jockey was weighed in, the saddle was put again on the horse, the jockey remounted, and rode round to the front of the stand. The lady of the highest rank present then came forward, attended by a large suite, and presenting the prize to the jockey, as he sat on his horse, made him a little suitable speech. The jockey then had to reply, and afterwards rode away with the prize in his hand amongst the “vivas” of the crowd. Well, when I

had won the Duke of Montpensier's Prize, "La Reina" refused to present me with the cup. I am afraid I did not feel the implied reproof as I ought, for it saved me a lot of trouble. Englishmen do not take kindly to being made "sights of," although I was pretty well used to it, and had learned a little Spanish speech by heart, varying it according to the name of the race that had been won. This had been the last race of the day, and being very hungry, as I had had nothing to eat since my meagre breakfast, I caught hold of an old friend, and said, "Don José, do get me something to eat, I am so hungry." Seville is something like Ascot, on a smaller scale, with numerous luncheon parties, but the hour was very late. Don José went to search, but returned presently, saying that though he had done all he could, he had been unsuccessful, as every luncheon had been packed up and sent back to Seville. He added that the only luncheon left was in the Royal Tent. "Can you get me into that?" I asked him. "Oh, yes," he replied, "quite easily." "That will do," was my answer; and so I got some food after all, though unbeknown to the Royal Hostess.

We had occasionally to stable our horses in very queer places at the Spring Meeting at Seville, for the Great Fair is held at the same time, and regular stables are most difficult to obtain. At one meeting we had to put them into a gymnasium,—but it did not prevent them from winning! Another time our stable was the lower room of a priest's house, and glad enough we were to get any place that was quiet. That time we carried off the chief event of the meeting, and also another race. I remember a remarkably pretty girl, niece of the Padre, peeping into the "stable" to see how we were getting on, and glad

indeed was she and the priest when we returned victorious in the evening. They were both very much interested in their unusual visitors.

Poor “Plenipo!” He met with a sad end in the following spring at Malaga. I was riding at another meeting on the same day, so Tom Alcock rode him instead in a hurdle race. “Plenipo” was a very difficult horse to handle over the first hurdle in the preliminary canter; he would keep twisting himself round, and generally arrived either sideways to the jump, or with his tail towards it. Knowing his tricks, I used to take him outside the track, and then suddenly bringing him round on to it, started him off at the top of his speed, when he would jump all right. In the actual race he would bore with his head right between his toes, so that it was necessary to saw his mouth and get his head up when within a few strides of the hurdle, or he would blunder into it. Once over, he gave no further trouble; and I won many hurdle races on him. Alcock did not seem to have managed him well, for the horse fell with him in the preliminary canter, and again in the race itself at the first hurdle. This last time he was most seriously injured internally, and died on the spot. It was a sad ending to a right gallant horse.

CHAPTER XVII.

TRAINING DIFFICULTIES—SPANISH JUSTICE— THE BULL RING.

WHEN at exercise one morning in the spring at Jerez de la Frontera—the Newmarket of Spain—I noticed a chestnut colt that seemed to gallop with great freedom. I inquired to whom he belonged, and finding it was an acquaintance, I went after breakfast to call upon him, and to find out if the horse was for sale. His owner did not wish to sell him, as he greatly admired the colt, but he was very pleased to show him to me, and I gladly congratulated him on the possession of such a beautiful three-year-old. “Handsome is as handsome does,” however, and when he came to start for his first race he bolted at the first turn, threw his jockey, an English professional, and was not caught for a long time. The next day Alfred Wood rode him, as the other jockey declined the task; and though the colt could not get rid of Wood, he bolted again at the first turn, and took no further part in the race. Thinking that time and care would cure him, as he was so young a horse, I again sought his owner with a view of buying him, but Mr. Garvey said that he still wished to keep him, though he should not race him again, and proposed to use him as a sire, for the sake of his breeding. I then offered to take the colt and train him, to which he gladly assented, and it was settled that he should

join my string at Gibraltar as soon as the round of spring races were over. When he arrived I treated him exactly as if he had never been handled at all, beginning with the breaking-tackle and long reins; and though we had several battles, he was quite quiet before I attempted to ride him. At first he gave some trouble, and twice bolted into the sea with me, at one time swimming so far out amongst the shipping, that I began to wonder if we should ever see Spain again, as he had set his head straight for Africa.

By constantly splashing water in his face, I at last got him to turn a wide semicircle, and eventually he carried me ashore again without mishap. He gradually got quiet, and we began to canter him, but when we tried him for the first time, the slowest horse in the stable could run away from him. I accordingly wrote to his owner to say that "Babieca" had become quite quiet, but was so slow that any hack could beat him. He sent word that the colt was to be returned to him, but I begged to keep him a little longer, as with his beautiful, easy action, it seemed certain that some day he must be able to win a race. One day he suddenly began to improve, and such progress did he make that I was able to write again to Mr. Garvey and say that either of two maiden races was at his mercy, whichever he cared to select. He chose the one at Cadiz, as it was not so far for him to come to see the colt run. "Babieca" ran very kindly; and we won by a length, with half a length between the second and third.

He had run so well, that the next day we allowed him to start for the chief three-year-old race of the meeting; but, as the weight he had to carry was too light to permit of my riding him, a professional jockey was

put up, while I rode another horse, whose accumulated penalties brought the weight within my reach.

According to my directions, "Babieca" cantered with the horse I was riding, and pulled up quite contentedly. We walked back together to the starting-post, the horse looking in a happy frame of mind, lobbing his ears and making little grunts of satisfaction, as was his wont when pleased.

We had a false start, and again "Babieca" pulled up quietly, and walked back quite steadily. Up to this his jockey had been rather nervous, for the escapades at the Jerez races were not yet forgotten. Now, however, he had got confidence, since the colt had proceeded so quietly; so, just as we were gathering together for the start, he pulled the horse's head roughly to one side, and gave him a job with the spur to make him come round more quickly. I noticed the colt give a great start, while such a look came into his face, that I said to myself, "You are done for now, there's no mistake." At that instant the flag fell, and as we left the post I saw "Babieca" whip round and bolt with the jockey, just as he had done before in the Spring.

So here was the result of all my trouble gone, and the colt thrown back again for weeks. I took him home, put him in the breaking-tackle once more, and luckily soon had him as docile as ever.

I started him once more that autumn, getting leave to saddle him at the starting-post, where I gave him lumps of sugar until the other jockeys arrived. I then mounted, and when the race commenced just let the horse follow the others as he pleased, without urging him in any way, and he completed the course without

showing any desire to bolt. During the winter I took him to the meets of the hounds, and rode him on parade, and he became as handy as possible. The following season he won no fewer than nine races. After his racing career was over he was purchased by the late Lady Brassey, and brought home to Sussex to carry her with the East Sussex Fox-Hounds, near Hastings.

One autumn I purchased a very speedy horse in Portugal, and brought him back to Gibraltar. He was a tall, leggy horse, with light back-ribs, a delicate feeder, and had never won beyond six furlongs. I ran him on the first day of the meeting, when carrying 13 st.—he was beaten by a neck by “Molinero,” to whom he was conceding a stone, over six furlongs. That evening he never touched a single grain of corn, he was so upset by his race. His head was up; he kept listening and staring from side to side, and would not settle down at all. I was early at the stables the next morning, but still he would not feed, and at nine o'clock he was as excited as ever. He was accustomed to eat bread out of my hand, so seeing that there was no chance of his taking his ordinary food, I sent his lad up to the house, with directions to bring me the largest loaf that was there.

He brought me a huge cottage loaf, and, breaking it into small pieces, I never left the horse until he had eaten the very last crumb. So long as he had something inside him, it did not much matter what it was, but to have run him again without food would have been perfectly useless.

That afternoon, carrying 12 st. 7 lb., he started for a race of a mile and a quarter, much farther than he

had ever compassed before. The race was run exactly to suit him, for I lay off with him, and the other jockeys—thinking that as “Baccarat” was running so much out of his distance, that he need not be taken into account—made a slow race of it, all waiting on each other. The result was, that I was able to creep gradually up, come with one run and win by a neck, with a head between the second and third. The story of the bread got out, and it was quite commonly believed that this was the cause of the horse winning so far out of his distance? It was a three days’ meeting, and I was confidently assured that on the last day nearly every horse that ran had a loaf of bread offered him, but the talisman failed to answer in every case.

The spirit of gambling is strong in Spaniards, and my friend, Don Heredia, was like the rest of his nation. One evening we were at the Casino in Cadiz, and Heredia went upstairs to the roulette tables, where, before long, he lost what money he had with him. He came to where we were sitting, and begged us to lend him more, but we were inexorable, for even if he won at first he would generally continue till all was gone. It so happened that a sweepstakes on a race for the succeeding day was declared invalid, and the stakes were returned. Heredia received back a sovereign, and promptly returned to the tables to try his luck again with the coin. As he did not come back for some time, I went upstairs to see how he was faring, and found him playing with piles of notes and gold in front of him, while he gleefully called out for me to see what he had won.

Going to the table, I made a grab at the pile of notes, and, seizing a handful, thrust them into my pocket.

Heredia started up to protest, and the croupiers rushed at me from different parts of the table, thinking it was a case of attempted robbery ; then, seeing we were friends, they resumed their seats, with smothered mutterings about the "Mad Inglese"—such, moreover, being the usual opinion in Spain of the character of all English people.

Heredia asked for the money to be given back to him, but telling him that I should keep it safe for him, while if he had it he would lose it, I left the room and went downstairs. Presently Heredia appeared, having already lost the remainder, and begged to have the money returned, that he might have another venture. Just then, however, another sweepstakes was returned, and, taking his sovereign, Heredia again sought the tables. He was in rare luck that evening, and on my going after him I found him with another pile before him. Another grab—not quite so successful as before, for Heredia was on the alert, and seized my wrist—enabled me to still further fill my pocket, and I once more retired from the room. It was not long before Heredia came after me to beg and pray for more money, for it is needless to say that the bank had swallowed up all his gains. His entreaties were in vain, however, and telling him he should have it back in the morning, I left the Casino and retired to the hotel. Then, for the first time, did I count what I had taken ; it was £96, and very thankful was my friend in the morning when it was returned to him, for it came, as he said, in the light of a present, as he would assuredly have lost it the night before, if he had then got possession of it.

Heredia once gave me a valuable amethyst and

diamond pin, to commemorate some of the victories of "Plenipo," and as I usually wore it at race meetings, it came to be known as "Plenipo's Pin." One day I went into a shop in Seville to buy a necktie, and rather foolishly took off the one I was wearing—in which was the pin—and placed it on the counter while putting on the other tie before a pier-glass. On turning round I was surprised to see the shopkeeper rapidly rolling up a piece of paper, which he held out to me, saying that was the tie I had just taken off.

Something in the celerity of his motions excited my suspicions, and caused me to undo the paper parcel, when it was at once evident that though the tie was undoubtedly there, the pin was gone.

On demanding where the pin was, the man affected not to understand me. "Did the señor want a pin? Here was one, white, black, long, short. What did the señor want?" My Spanish did not carry me very far, so the interpreter of the hotel was sent for, and quickly came. Most indignant were the shop-people at being supposed to have stolen the pin, and the man who served me stoutly declared that I was not wearing one at all when I entered the shop. Then the police were sent for. The shopman pretended to look everywhere for the pin, and then suddenly striking me a sharp blow on the shoulder, held up the pin, and declared he had just found it sticking there. The police at once seized the pin, and declared that as it was stolen property, it must now remain with them, and the shopkeeper then entered a charge against me for stealing my own pin! There was no help for it but to appeal to the English Consul for redress, and the case had to come before the Alcaldes. In Seville there are four

Alcaldes,—and in Spain justice goes either by interest or the length of the purse. One of the Alcaldes was brother-in-law of a gentleman I was riding for, so he was sure to be all right. Another was a great friend of his, and would vote with him. The third was uncertain. But the son of the fourth was courting the daughter of the shopkeeper, so the issue appeared very doubtful. However, it began to be rumoured that it was “Plenipo’s” jockey who had lost the pin, and that it was “Plenipo’s Pin” that had been lost. That turned the scale in my favour at once, as Alcalde No. 3 voted with our friendly ones, and so I gained my case. In my innocence I thought I should regain possession of the pin at once, but I little knew the tortuous methods of Spain. Weeks elapsed before I had the pleasure of receiving a little parcel from the English Consul, in which lay the long-lost pin.

That pin has had an adventurous career since, and must have a charmed life. On one occasion it was lost, but was duly recovered the next day in the kitchen garden. Then when worn by my wife, while we were out walking one Sunday on the moors, it was suddenly discovered to be missing. We had had a long tramp, and it seemed hopeless to go to look for it, and yet about a mile back there it lay on a fortunately bare piece of road.

It was only found to be lost again, and this time in the busy streets of York; and yet my wife found it about two hours after it was lost, lying in the track of the tramway in the very busiest and most frequented part of the city. There it had lain, while many tramcars had passed over it, and numbers of foot-people, yet no one had noticed it. It was partially crushed, but this was able to

be remedied by recutting the amethyst, and perhaps this operation has allayed its penchant for adventures, for it has never had one since.

To live in Spain, and mix with the people, almost compels attendance at bull-fights, and there is such intense excitement in the spectacle, that there is some excuse for any one going to see them. Apart from the horrible cruelty to the horses, there is much to admire in the wonderful activity, pluck, and presence of mind of the performers; and it is these qualities that are powerful enough to blind the spectators to what is revolting, and to attract them when they would otherwise be repelled.

Picture the gay magnificence of the scene—the bright sunlight, the brilliant dresses of the performers, the picturesque garb of the country-people, with the pretty señoritas and their most becoming mantillas. To add to the excitement, the band plays the most stirring of the national airs, while vivas and cheers from multitudes of throats greet the exhibition of any special act of daring and skill. Let me recount one of the many feats that I have seen, and judge for yourselves which of the two alternatives is likely to be chosen,—to take a solitary walk through the deserted streets, or to join the glad throng that is wending its way to the Plaza del Toros.

In the very centre of the bull-ring at Seville—which is unusually large—far from the “shelters” against the sides, stands a noted matador, with a pair of banderillos. Before the time has arrived for him to engage the bull with the red cloak and espada, he is going to implant those barbed, gaily-coloured sticks in the neck of the bull, and, to do this successfully, he must attract the animal’s attention, so that, when it charges, he runs to meet it on

the segment of a circle, which manœuvre enables him to allow the horns to pass under his arm, while by a quick turn of the wrist the weapons are embedded in the bull's neck. This is the ordinary routine of every banderillero, but usually they take good care to make their effort close to a "shelter," behind which they can run for safety, in case anything goes wrong. Our matador, however, intends to act sensationally, and boldly stands in the centre of the ring, holding the banderillos at arm's-length, straight above his head, and shouting to attract the bull's attention.

The latter is a gallant animal, and no sooner does he catch sight of his new enemy than he lowers his head and makes for him at his utmost speed. The matador meets him successfully and thrusts in the banderillos, but then occurs what very seldom happens; instead of plunging into the air and endeavouring to tear out the tormenting darts, the bull turns with the utmost rapidity and charges straight at the defenceless man. It seems as if only a miracle can save him from instant impalement. There is no chulo with a cloak handy to float it in front of the bull's eyes, and thus distract his attention. In order to enhance the sensation of the feat, the matador directed all the chulos to retire to the barriers, and now he can trust to his speed of foot alone. As the bull arrests his charge, which he does with marvellous quickness, the banderillero realises what is going to happen and starts for the barrier, with the bull scarcely two yards behind him doing his utmost to catch his tormentor. There are fully fifty yards to the barriers; the spectators hold their very breath from the thrilling excitement of the scene, and absolute silence falls on that vast assembly. The man just keeps ahead, but when he reaches the barrier the horns

appear to be almost touching his back, and surely the bull must pin him against the wooden boards. But no! the fugitive lays one hand upon them, and vaulting lightly over the 5 feet 6 inches of paling, drops down on the farther side. To the horror of the lookers-on the bull rises at the leap at the same moment, taking it in his stride like a steeplechase horse, and even yet it cannot be seen for certain whether he has not caught his would-be victim in the air. The latter, however, has intuitively realised what is happening, for he has kept his hand on the top of the barrier, which has caused him to slightly incline to one side as he alights; whereas the bull has jumped straight and just missed him. Without moving his hand, the matador, the moment he touches the ground, vaults back again into the ring, leaving the bull on the far side.

The cheers, the vivas, and the music that burst forth are the expression of the natural relief to the thrilling moments that have just been experienced.

Let us take one other instance, in the ring at Malaga, on the last occasion that I ever attended a bull-fight.

Frascuelo, together with his great rival, "Lagartijo," the two most famous matadors of the day, were both in the ring, each burning to do some feat to eclipse the other. It was Frascuelo's turn to be matador, and to perform the last act of the drama. It is necessary for the matador to wrap the red cloak around the espada and to roll it up, so that only a convenient length depends, making it much like a flag attached to a staff, with the bare part of the latter cut off. The matador holds the cloak and espada in the middle, and then manœuvres it before the bull until he can manage to get him to stand in exactly the right

position; then still holding the red flag in the same manner, but with the left hand, he withdraws the sword with his right hand and makes the thrust which, if well-directed, is fatal. It is necessary to get the bull to stand with both fore-feet exactly in a line, for then he must take a step forward with one before he can move, thus giving the matador time to escape, if he charges. When standing in the required position, the next thing is to get the head lowered nearly down to the fore-feet, which exposes the top of the withers where the sword has to enter.

Frascuelo had done all this, and made a thrust, but it was a failure; a chulo had rushed forward with a cloak, and the bull was pursuing him, while Frascuelo commenced to rearrange the cloak and the espada.

No doubt partly from chagrin at not being successful, and partly from swagger, the matador never took any notice of the bull after the chulo had appeared on the scene, but stood with his back to the others, concentrating his whole attention on his own business, although one of the chief maxims of the bull-ring is, "Never take your eye off the bull." As a rule, under such conditions, a bull will follow the cloak of the chulo for some distance, and if he tires of that one another chulo is ready, and again the bull is tempted to pursue the gaudy lure. In this case the enraged brute only followed the cloak a few yards, and then, in spite of the efforts of the chulos, he turned and charged straight at the unconscious form of Frascuelo.

It was like a nightmare. Everyone rose to their feet and yelled to attract the attention of the matador, while he, with his head bent down engrossed over his work, paid not the slightest attention. No doubt the confusion of

voices was so great that he could distinguish nothing that was said, as he would have done had but one person alone called out to him. Just when the excitement was at its height, when the bull was scarcely a yard away, coming at full gallop in a headlong charge from behind, Frascuelo apparently heard its approach. He gave a sudden start, looked hurriedly over his shoulder, and instantly stiffening into a statue, turned his body sideways to his assailant, at the same time leaning over backwards as far as he could. The action was so instantaneous that it took far less time to accomplish than to relate it, and almost simultaneously the bull's right horn caught the epaulette on Frascuelo's left shoulder, ripping the whole of his clothes off his chest and leaving the skin bare, but without actually touching him. The scene that followed is impossible to describe. The enthusiasm was intense, and the matador's fame rose to a higher pitch than ever.

These are the feats that are so powerfully attractive, and a bull-fight never takes place, where the bulls are good and the bull-fighters first-rate, without a certainty of someone being killed, if he were not saved either by his own presence of mind, or the skill and courage of others. And yet fatal accidents are very rare. Often and often it flashes across your mind, that someone must be killed unless someone else can possibly do a given action, and, almost before the thought has formed in your mind, that someone has bounded to the spot and done that very action. "*Viva, viva, magnifico, musica!*"

CHAPTER XVIII.

SOME RACING EXPERIENCES.

BEING attacked by malarial fever I was obliged to leave Spain, and Sir Julius Glyn, just then being appointed to the command of the Dublin District, most kindly offered me the appointment of A.D.C., which I gladly accepted. I took over with me a chestnut mare, by "Speculum," that had been bred by my father, and very soon bought another beautifully bred mare, whom, from recollections of Spain, I named "La Marchesa." These were my two chargers, with whom I hoped to pick up a race or two as well, and also to get some hunting on them. We at once began to train them in the Phoenix Park, but, as it happened to be a very hot summer and the ground became extremely hard, we soon had to give up galloping on the turf, and to resort instead to the excellent going afforded by the sea-sands at low tide.

Clever as the Curragh trainers undoubtedly are, they are a little apt to think that what they are not in the habit of doing is unworthy of attention; and I was often told afterwards of the amusement it had afforded them, to hear that not only was a staff-officer in Dublin training his own horses, but that he was actually galloping them on the seashore. The jokes at my expense were, no doubt, both numerous and facetious; but the proof of the pudding is in the eating, and I won a five-furlong race on "La

Marchesa," and also carried off a two-mile race on "Elmina" on the same afternoon at the Curragh, thereby conveying a useful lesson on the folly of underrating the tactics of a rival. What is more, by way of swagger, I rode both the horses at a short field day the previous day, riding "Elmina" in the march past, which further encouraged the prejudice against them.

It is often remarked that "weight can be given away in a race, but not distance," and, in a general way, this is no doubt a true saying. Circumstances alter cases, however, and "Elmina's" race was one in point. Though I jumped off with an excellent lead, and was leading round the first turn, the others passed me at such a pace that I said to myself, "Well, you may go on like that if you like, I can't do so; so I'll toddle behind, and see what happens." The pace was made so strong that I was soon several lengths behind everything; and, when half the race had been run, the leaders did in truth seem so far ahead that it appeared almost hopeless to continue. Still, the little mare was galloping strong, and, feeling sure that the pace must soon have an effect upon the leaders, I held on at the same even rate. The track winds round a hillock, and just before we disappeared behind it I put the question in my own mind, "Is it time to try to reach them now?" but I glanced at the stand in the far distance, and as it still seemed a very long way off, I resolved to wait a bit longer. I remembered, too, that there was a steep hill to ascend very shortly, and wished to see what effect this would have upon the others. Presently I caught up the horse next to me, who was already labouring in his gallop, and as I passed him his jockey made the remark, "I think you and I had better pull up"; but, just glancing at him, I replied, "I

don't know what you are going to do, but I am going to win this race." I had already detected that the leaders were beginning to go slower, and we had not yet even commenced the ascent. Down in the bottom the tan gallop had to be crossed, and I took especial notice that the foremost horses were crossing this as I was passing a particular post, thinking that I would, when the race was over, come back and measure how far I was then behind. When I did so the distance was found to be exactly forty yards. Going up the hill I did not increase the speed in the least, but by the time we were at the top the tired horses were going very slow, and I was at their quarters. As we had to round a sharp turn into the straight I did not attempt to pass outside them, or I should have lost much ground; but directly afterwards two of them opened out from each other, and then, asking the mare for a spurt, she shot through the opening, and only one horse was left before me. We now were in the straight run in, and, in jockey language, I at once went up to look for my race, had the leading horse in difficulties directly, and won in a canter. After weighing in I was sitting on the table, watching the others undergoing the same process, when at length in bustled the jockey whom I had first passed. He took no notice of anyone, but pushed straight up to where I was sitting, and asked eagerly, "Did you win that race?" "Yes," was my reply; whereupon he gave his thigh a resounding slap, and turned away with the one remark, to my great amusement, "Well, I am d—d!"

Another instance of giving away distance was in the Hunt Cup at Thirsk. A horse of mine had run second twice at Sandown Park, and twice at Malton; but we believed he was really a good horse, and should have won,

if he had given his proper running. Yet he had been ridden by some of the best jockeys of the day, so that on the face of it the book form seemed as if it was correct. At Thirsk I determined to ride him myself, which I had hitherto been prevented from doing, from having broken three ribs only five weeks before, and being still strapped up on one side. My horse very soon began to drop away from the others, as in his former races, and when still a mile from home was a considerable distance behind, while in the Ring 100 to 1 was being offered in vain against him. Though very much averse to punishing a horse, I was determined to have it out with him, and used my whip with great effect. He soon began to realise that he had better mend his ways, and when we turned into the straight we were at the heels of the rearmost horses. The late Mr. Egremont Lascelles was just then passing on his way to the station, with one of the trainers, and he told me afterwards that, as we passed, he asked the question, "Is it possible for him to win?" when the other replied, "No, it is quite impossible"; but, to his unbounded astonishment, the next morning's paper showed that we had won after all.

The horse was now running with some dash, and by the time we got to the distance we had drawn level with the late Mr. Abington, who was riding "Blue Back," and who was sitting at his ease a neck in front of Mr. W. Brown, who was riding hard on "Diana."

When Mr. Abington suddenly found me at his side, he lost his head for a moment and got out of balance with his horse, and, seeing this, I was able to drop my hands for a few strides, and ease the pressure under which my horse had now been running for nearly a mile. Fifty yards

from the winning-post I called on my mount for a final effort, and we won by a neck. I never was more beaten, however, myself in a race in my life. Of course I was thoroughly out of condition, though, even if I had been quite fit, it would have been still a severe race to ride. The next day I received a most unexpected compliment. A hospitable friend was giving a luncheon party before the races began, when an owner of racehorses, with whom I had but a very slight acquaintance, came up and asked if I was the owner of the winner of the Hunt Cup. I answered in the affirmative, when he made the remark, "Ah, you owed that win to your jockey and not to the horse." Being unaware that he was ignorant of who the jockey had been, I felt much surprised, and as the others began to laugh, he appeared nettled and repeated, "It's quite true—it was the jockey who won that race." "Why, he rode it himself," said a bystander, whereupon the other hurriedly apologised and retired much confused. It was certainly very amusing, but one could not help being pleased at the compliment, unintentional though it was.

After "Elmina's" race at the Curragh I took her to Cork Park, and seldom has a horse started with less amount of "schooling" than she did. All the practice she had had was to be led over a leaping-bar, and then to be jumped over three jumps in a tiny paddock at Mr. M'Donald's stables at Ashtown Gate. It was the only place I could get to teach her to jump, as it was in the middle of summer, and I should have given up the idea of going to Cork unless that famous steeplechase rider, Mr. Allen M'Donough, had declared that the mare jumped quite well enough and was sure to win. Moreover, he had the courage of his opinion and backed the mare. In the race

she ran very raw, though willing to try, and we soon got some lengths behind the others. After a little while she began to understand better how to take her fences, and we gradually crept up again until a very awkward occurrence happened, especially for such a green mount as mine was. At the biggest bank in the course a horse, just in front on the right, kicked back, and struck a huge piece of gorse out of the bank, which came rolling over and over, just in front of the mare at about the height of her head. I was completely puzzled what to do, for there was no time to avoid it. "Elmina," however, boldly charged into it like a bullfinch, though in doing so she caught the bank with her knees and pitched on to her head on the far side.

I thought we were down, but she was very active and was soon in her stride again, though we had lost some lengths by the *faux pas*. We made up some of our leeway, however, before we got to the bottom turn, and as there was then only a hurdle to jump and a couple of easy fences, I began to think we still had a chance.

As "Elmina" had been well schooled over the bar, I rode confidently at the hurdle, thinking that at any rate she knew what "timber" was, but alas for my judgment! The mare never rose at all, breaking every bar of the hurdle, and again we had a great scramble to keep the right side up. We managed it, however, though the leader had got too far ahead to make things comfortable. Fortunately, however, for me he jumped slowly at the two last fences, and the mare, having now thoroughly got her blood up, flew them like an accomplished steeplechaser, landing at the other's quarters over the last jump. It was then all over but shouting, as her speed on the flat stood

her in good stead, and I was able to draw the race as close as I pleased.

That evening I was offered and refused a thousand pounds for the mare, but I eventually agreed to lease her for one year for £400. The lease was duly drawn up and the mare delivered over, but a sad fate was in store for her. In the very first race she ran for her new owners, on the flat at the Maze, she broke a leg and had to be destroyed.

Thinking that it was rather hard upon the other party to the contract, although I had lost my mare, I returned them £100. Gratitude, however, is said to be for favours to come and not for favours past, and as a report was afterwards bruited about that I had not returned any money, I began to feel sorry I had not kept it, as I had the credit of having done so, and I needed it myself.

Poor "La Marchesa" also met with a fearful accident shortly afterwards, which nearly put an end to her also. She was an unlucky mare, as she first cut an artery in a hind-leg, in the middle of the Wicklow Mountains one day when we had run a hare there. I was entirely alone, without any chance of assistance, and had the greatest difficulty in arresting the copious bleeding. No sooner had she recovered from this accident than I took her out one day to lead her over the banks and ditches in the neighbourhood of Dublin, when an accident happened, which is thus related in *The Field* newspaper, 20th December 1890 :—

"RECOVERY OF HORSE FROM SERIOUS WOUND.

"SIR,—Having been requested by several friends to make public a very interesting case of successful treatment

of a mare that was badly staked in the abdomen, we have to request that you will find room for the following account in your paper.

“R. F. MEYSEY-THOMPSON (Colonel).

“MATTHEW MURPHY, F.R.C.V.S.L.”

“On Jan. 7, 1879, Capt. R. F. Meysey-Thompson, A.D.C. to Gen. Glyn, C.B., Commanding the Dublin District, took out a six-year-old bay thoroughbred mare, ‘La Marchesa,’ to practise jumping, in a cavesson, having with him as assistant one of the Ward runners, who are commonly known as ‘wreckers.’ The mare had just jumped over a bank and ditch covered with long grass, when the assistant hurriedly called out, ‘Come quick, sir, something terrible has happened.’ On running up, Captain Meysey-Thompson found the mare’s entrails protruding from a wound close to the mammary gland, and hanging down for some two feet. The mare was very uneasy, and kicked at the intestines, swinging them forward under her belly, so Captain Meysey-Thompson caught them in his hand and laid them over his knee to examine them, at the same time cautioning the man to keep the mare as still as possible. The intestines being found to be uninjured, there appeared to be a remote chance of saving the animal, and a bandage was accordingly made by tying the ends together of two large handkerchiefs, which fortunately they happened to have with them. On this the intestines were laid, the outer ends of the handkerchiefs were twisted up, thus forming a sort of bag in which they could repose as close to the opening of the wound in the abdomen as they could possibly be got, and the bandage was then secured by

fastening a whip-thong to one end, bringing it up between the thighs, and securing it to the surcingle over the croup, while the other end of the handkerchief was made safe by passing a band from the surcingle over the loins, round the belly, and tying the handkerchief tightly to it.

“The question then arose, What should be done next? It appeared almost hopeless to expect to save the animal, so it was thought best to try and get ‘La Marchesa’ back to Dublin with as little delay as possible, and without going to that expense and trouble which would have been thought necessary had the injury been less severe—the mare being a very valuable one as a racehorse.

“There were two fences to cross before gaining the road, and no gates. So further mishap was ‘chanced,’ the mare was jumped over the banks, and landed in the road without further injury, and without the bandage having moved in the least.

“There were still five miles to travel before reaching Dublin, and, to add to the misfortune, a severe frost was setting in, and fast glazing the roads with ice. A horseman happening to pass the party, he was informed of the accident, and asked to acquaint Mr. Murphy, V.S., of Parkgate Street, with it, and to request him to have everything in readiness to throw the mare on her arrival. Progress was necessarily slow, and Mr. Murphy’s establishment was not reached till 8.30 P.M., when the hobbles were at once put on, and a large quantity of straw having been built up against the animal, she was quietly slid on to her side and secured; but previous to being thrown the bandage was undone, and the intestines then just reached to her fetlocks.

“Captain Meysey-Thompson held them during the

operation of throwing, so as to lessen as far as possible a chance of injury, and the mare received no harm whatever. Mr. Murphy then most carefully and skillfully replaced them within the abdominal cavity—a work that took more than an hour to perform, for, owing to the struggles of the mare, at least 2 in. were constantly forced out again for every 3 in. that were inserted. However, at last all were replaced, and the lips of the wound having been cleansed, it was closed by passing a large iron skewer through the lips, and made fast with a figure-of-8 suture of tow. The iron skewer was passed through both the fascia and skin, just as a needle is passed by a seamstress in long stitch; and the mare, after being allowed to rise, was given a dose of aconite, and a bran mash, and left for the night. Very slight increase of temperature supervened during the next few days, which was easily kept in check by the administration of aconite, and but for a slight discharge which proceeded from the wound, the mare never ‘looked back,’ and was out hunting before the close of the season. She afterwards was put to the stud, and has produced four living foals and one dead one since 1882 (*Stud Book*, vol. xvi. p. 599).”

About two years after this occurrence, a mare of mine called “Lurline,” got blood poisoning in a hind-leg, from getting a gorse spine into it, just when the sap was beginning to run. As the mare carried her tail very badly, I thought it a good opportunity to dock her when she was getting better, but apparently her weak state could not stand the operation, and “lock-jaw” supervened. The mare was standing at Mr. W. M’Grane’s stables, the famous dealer in Park Street, and I treated her myself. After battling

with the disease for some time, it at length left her, but she was so extremely weak that it seemed quite a toss-up whether she would recover or not.

There was a very hard frost at the time, and one evening I called at the stables on my return from skating, as I was anxious about the mare, and it was fortunate I did so. The pulse on the left side had entirely stopped, and was barely perceptible on the right side, and so feeble, that I called to the groom to prepare some gruel at once, and to fetch also half a tumbler of whisky. He had to go to a public-house to fetch the latter, and before he returned, in about twenty minutes' time, the mare had lain down, and was almost motionless. If a well-bred horse lies down when he is really ill, it is nearly always to die, for he will remain on his legs and fight to the very last; while an under-bred one gives in, and collapses very easily. Mixing the whisky and gruel together, we poured it down her throat as she lay, and then with my fingers on the pulse, the latter suddenly began to be perceptible again, and in a few minutes was beating quite regularly. That stimulant was administered just in time. In half an hour she got up, at once commenced to eat some mash, and we never had any further cause for anxiety about her recovery.

There are two institutions in Ireland with which she can challenge the world, The Dublin Horse Show and Punchestown. In these she is *facile princeps*. Punchestown was a fortunate meeting for me, and at my last visit I carried off the Grand Military Hunters' Race and the Conyngham Cup on the same afternoon, and each horse I had purchased for exactly the same sum, £40. "Belmont," who won the latter race, was, I think, the finest stayer I ever knew, and his race for the Conyngham Cup was a

marvellous performance. I was too ill to ride myself, and Mr. W. Murland had the mount, and right well did he acquit himself. A few weeks earlier, before we had begun to put "Belmont" into regular work, I was hunting him with the Westmeath hounds, when he crawled about the steep sides of Knock Ion like any old shooting pony. A lady came up and said, "Is not that 'Belmont'?" and I replied in the affirmative. "But I heard you are going to run him again," she continued; "why is he here?" "So I shall run him," was my answer. "What for," was the next astonished query. "Well," I replied, "I am not quite sure yet, but I think first for the Dunboyne Plate at Fairyhouse, and then for the Conyngham Cup at Punchestown." He did run for these races, and won them both.

I have always found that if care is taken not to overdo a horse out hunting, and he is put into regular training about six weeks before his race, the hunting does him all the good in the world; but of course it must be made subservient to the good of the horse, and the latter not be sacrificed for the sake of the chase.

"Belmont" was very shifty in a race, and given to bolting if he was in front, the only jockey that he never got out with being that splendid rider, poor Roddy Owen. His jockey, therefore, invariably had orders never to take the lead till near the winning-post, yet, however fast the pace might be, to lie up at the quarters of the leader, for no horse could ever get "Belmont" into trouble.

In the Conyngham Cup—which is a four miles race over the big course at Punchestown—one horse, "Kilbride," overpowered his jockey at starting, and came at such a pace that Mr. Murland thought that he could never be expected to keep with him, and therefore followed

some twenty yards behind; the other jockeys, seeing "Belmont" was by himself, kept about the same distance behind him, so as to give him a chance of bolting if possible.

In this order they came past the stand, when just as "Belmont" was opposite the paddock he made a bolt for it, went over the ropes, and in amongst the carriages. The other jockeys, seeing what had happened, immediately put on their best pace, so that "Belmont" should not have a chance of getting up again.

In order to be prepared for eventualities, I was standing on the bottom step of the stand, and when I saw what had happened I rushed to the paddock gate to get on to the course. Like an Irishman, the gatekeeper would not let me out, and I had to climb over the railings and drop down. Someone had cut the ropes, and with my umbrella I beat "Belmont" back into the course, and then wondered what Murland would do.

All this had taken some time. There is a gap left in the hedge next to the stand, and the first leap is therefore two fields' distance away. As "Belmont" got fairly into the course, he caught sight of the last horse, who was just jumping this fence, while the others were well strung out in front. The moment "Belmont" saw that horse he laid himself out to catch him, and very speedily he did so. The word was soon passed up that "'Belmont' was coming," and the jockeys in front urged their horses to their best speed for fear he should catch them. It was one of the most exciting races I every saw in my life. At the "double" there were only three horses left in front of "Belmont"; at the wall there were only two left; when the leader turned into the straight "Belmont" had passed

the second horse, and was now close at his quarters. Both jockeys were riding their hardest, and both horses were responding in the gamest fashion. Fifty yards from home there is a slight ascent, and the moment they reached it "Belmont" had his head in front, and won by a neck; "Turpin" being second, and "Gentle Annie" a bad third. Considering the pace at which the early part of the race was run, and the distance that "Belmont" had to make up, it was truly a marvellous performance, and well worthy his high lineage, "by 'Cambuslang'—'Geraldine' by 'Solon'—'Gramachree,' the own sister to 'Faugh a Ballagh' and 'Irish Birdcatcher.'"

"Belmont" and "Camillo," my two winners that day, were both small horses, as far as height goes, for neither of them were quite 15.1½, but they were lengthy and very muscular: the old proverb is very right, "it is symmetry and action that carry weight."

Another winner of a big four miles steeplechase that I have trained was "Monkshood," by "Uncas" out of the "Abbess," by "Confessor." He had a rather clubby near fore-foot, and I bought him at Tattersall's at a reasonable price in consequence. In consequence of ill health I was unable to train him at first, so Tom Cannon kindly took him in at Danebury, and when he made his début at Sandown Park he ran second, being beaten half a length by "Chancellor," with "Johnny Longtail" three lengths behind, who were afterwards third and fourth for the Liverpool Grand National. We then put him by until the next season, when I was able to attend to him myself, and, ridden by Roddy Owen, he won the Grand National Hunters' Race—run that year at Derby—by ten lengths. When Owen was changing

in the dressing-room, I particularly pointed out to him the jacket that he was to wear, telling him that this was the lucky one, while another that was also there was a very unlucky one. I did not see him again till the horses were being mounted, and he had so many friends to talk to, that he was very late, so that nearly all the horses had already gone on to the course before he appeared. The first thing I saw when he unbuttoned his greatcoat was that he had got the wrong jacket on, and told him so. He declared nothing should induce him to ride in an unlucky one, and that he must change it. So I ran and fetched the other, in an agony of apprehension that he would be too late at the post. Snatching the jacket from me, Owen rushed into the refreshment bar, being the only available place near, and, while the waitresses ran giggling into a corner, he just waved his hand to them, and exclaiming, "Don't look, don't look, I haven't time to go elsewhere," proceeded to doff the one garment and don the other. He had to go at a hand gallop to the post, and then riding a beautifully timed and well-ridden race, landed the "lucky jacket" again a winner.

Mindful of former experiences, I trained "Monkshood" for a long time on the sea-beach at Scarborough during a very hard and continuous frost, and Owen told me he thought he had never ridden a horse in more perfect condition. From various causes the horse never got a fair chance again in England, and for some years carried my wife very well to hounds, instead of racing. Then I sold him to go to India, to win a mile race on the flat, which he did with ease, and there I believe he still remains.

CHAPTER XIX.

ANECDOTES OF FORMER DAYS.

A WILD-GOOSE chase proverbially depends much upon chance, and in that respect may be said to resemble the modern Point-to-Point Steeplechase. The great gathering place of wild fowl in the North, Strensall Common, was sold a few years ago by my cousin, Mr. Leonard Thompson, of Sheriff Hutton Park, to the Government, by whom it was, alas, drained, in order to make it a second Aldershot, and the wild geese, wild swans, green-shanks, red-shanks, ruffs, and reeves, and other commoner sorts that frequented it, have now become only another historical memory.

The geese used to arrive at dusk, in "skeins," till many hundreds were gathered together, but they only passed the night there, and went off at dawn to their various feeding-places for the day. They chiefly fed on the warplands along the Humber, but in the spring-time numbers used to frequent the Wolds, and other hilly districts for many miles round, to feed upon the young growing wheat.

The shooting of the Common was given for many years to the Rev. Frank Simpson, Vicar of Foston, and that keen naturalist and sportsman used to spend hours and days in hiding-places on the marshy land, observing the habits of the various wild birds that frequented it.

Often he had to wait many hours at night for a shot, quite unable to see sufficiently clearly to make out whereabouts the geese were, although well within distance all the time, and listening to their splashing and playing in the water not many yards from him. The merest glimmer of light for a second or two was quite sufficient for him to be able to see the direction, and, though the darkness closed in again immediately, he made most successful shots, even with such precarious opportunities. On one occasion he even "went one better," for, after waiting till past midnight without the slightest lifting of the murky darkness, he fired at length in despair, and made one of the most successful shots in his life. The next morning he picked up nine dead Bean geese, all slain at that single shot with a shoulder gun, and heard besides of one or two more being caught wounded on the neighbouring farms. A few feathers from each goose, strung in tufts on a string, have hung in his "sanctum" ever since to signalise that memorable night.

On another occasion Mr. Simpson went fast asleep during his long night watch, and, on waking up, found himself covered by a fall of snow with the geese close to him, when, snatching up his gun, he succeeded in securing seven of them at one shot. At other times he slew five geese at one discharge; and fourteen mallard (of which, curiously, seven were drakes and seven were ducks), after strenuous crawling to approach the birds through rough heather, reeds, and swamp. He had two five-bore guns that he used for this work, one a single and the other a double-barrel. The single carried 10 drs. of powder and 5 oz. of shot, S.S.G., 17 shot corns going to the oz. The double gun was loaded with half the

above charge in either barrel. Truly they were prodigious weapons for a long tramp in a wild-goose chase, and few men would care to fire such powerful charges, though the above records prove how effectual they were.

In other forms of sport Mr. Simpson has also greatly distinguished himself, especially in long-distance skating when at Cambridge. In 1837 he backed himself to skate from Cambridge to Ely and back, a total distance of 80 miles, in four hours. This he accomplished with great ease, and he then issued a challenge to skate the same course against any amateur. The challenge was taken up by a Mr. Potter of Pemberton College. Mr. Simpson knew that his opponent was very fast for a short distance, and probably had the speed of him, and after they had covered about five miles, finding that his opponent remained close behind him, evidently hoping to win by speed at the finish, he determined to force the pace and tire him out if he could possibly do so.

Do what he would, however, he never could get away from the other, who kept just behind him all the way. When they had covered 37 miles of the return journey—77 miles in all—a large crowd was waiting to come in with them, but the two competitors were able to leave all the others behind in the last three miles, although the latter were perfectly fresh.

Mr. Simpson managed to retain his lead to the end, winning, with very little to spare, in the very fast time of 2 hrs. 36 min., being just under 2 min. for each mile the whole way.

At the very end of the race victory was all but snatched from his grasp. In making the winning stroke, an accident to his skate very nearly robbed him of the

race, for as he struck out for the last time the blade of his skate snapped right in half, which must have caused him to lose if it had happened but a few yards earlier.

A very keen angler, Mr. Simpson was one of the earliest Englishmen to visit the now celebrated river Namsen, in Norway, and famous sport he had there. The heaviest fish he killed was 37 lb., though one of 30 lb. gave the greatest play. Five others between those two weights, and so large a number of smaller ones, that at last there was no more room to make any more "nicks" on the rod to record each fish, made up an extraordinary "bag," even for Norway.

It may be added that Mr. Simpson, for more than twenty-five years, has kept his stables filled with hunters and carriage-horses entirely of his own breeding, while the prizes are innumerable that he has won with them at the local shows. Twice, since he was eighty years of age, has it happened to him to see his birthday in, when at a ball in York, and certainly on one occasion he was one of the first at the meet on the following morning. Verily he may be termed the G.O.M. of Yorkshire, for he has taken a foremost place among the sportsmen who have made their county's name so famous.

Another great Yorkshireman was lately taken from us, Mr. Richard Johnson, the famous north-country racing judge, who died on Thursday, 7th April 1898, in his eighty-fifth year. He was born in York in 1813, and lived in that city all his life, beloved by everyone who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. No keener-witted or more straightforward man ever existed, and nothing ever put him out; whatever the company, and however great the excitement the same measured, courteous language,

ever flowed from his lips. As he never spoke without having first thought over what he was going to say, he never varied from his statement, and his opinion was relied upon by everyone who sought it, while his memory was marvellous.

In 1892 I had a long conversation with him about racing, and jotted down his views as follows:—

“I am eighty years of age next birthday, and I have seen some ups and downs in that time. I was judge for forty years. No, I did not judge in the match between ‘Flying Dutchman’ and ‘Voltigeur’; that was in 1851, and I did not begin till the next year. ‘Dutchman’ won pretty easy; he would have won the year before, but Lord Eglinton made a mess of it; he wanted to make a show of his horse, and he told Marson, ‘Now, just you go on as hard as you can, and win as far as possible.’ If he had told him to wait he would have won, as the horse was not quite fit. ‘Voltigeur’ ran the dead-heat with ‘Russborough’ on the Wednesday, and then ran off the dead-heat; and won the Cup the next day. It never was a dead-heat. ‘Voltigeur’ won right enough the first time, only Clarke gave it against him. I stood close to Clarke’s box, and I never said a word. Clarke used to have both York and Doncaster, and he wanted to give up, and said to me, ‘Now I think we can arrange this. I’ll give York to you, if you will let my son have Doncaster,’ and so we settled it. I was judge forty years. I saw ‘Blacklock’ win here on Knavesmire. He was a wiry, hot, fidgety horse, but a rare stayer.

“Yes, it isn’t always easy to judge in close races, till you’ve had practice, then it’s as easy as A B C. I could always tell at the distance who was going to win. Archer

was rather troublesome. He would be riding hard apparently at the distance, and then come and win by a head, with 7 lb. in hand. Was Archer the best jockey I ever saw? Oh dear no. Archer was good, and so was Fordham, but Frank Butler was the best, and Tom Aldcroft was very good. Are the horses different in shapes from what I first remember? Yes, very different, but they do not stay nearly so well now. No doubt they are faster than ever they were, but they are taller and longer, and much more leggy. I remember 'Blacklock' and 'Altisidora.' They would not be many crosses from the Arab, great-grandsons and so on, and much resembled them. How much weight did I allow when handicapping? Well, generally 2 lb. for a head, but if the race had been very severe, or the weights very high, perhaps only 1 lb.; 1 to 2 lb. would be about right. Five lb. would go to a length, for say a mile, or a mile and a half. Undoubtedly you must take into consideration if the pace was good all the way, and if the horses were carrying nearly as heavy weights as they could race under."

Poor Judge Johnson. He is sadly missed at the councils of the York Race Committee, and by his many friends all over Yorkshire.

There is one remark of his that requires to be well weighed, and coincides, too, with the opinions of the practical men I have met, who lived in the early days of the century. I mean that the racehorses in old days were much better stayers than they are now, and at the same time were shorter-legged and more compact. All have attributed it to the same cause—the nearness of their descent from the Arabian. In these days when many are complaining that the thoroughbred horse, as a

rule, is not so adapted as he was for improving the stamp of our hunters, why are the services of the Arabian not more sought for procuring those qualities than the thoroughbred of the present day is alleged to be deficient in? There is no difficulty, at present, in purchasing Arabian stallions of the very highest class, since Mr. Wilfrid Blunt annually holds a sale at Crabtree Park, Sussex, of his surplus stock, which have either been procured direct from Arabia at vast trouble and expense, or have been bred with the greatest care from animals imported by him.

There is a curious old book, written by one in the last century, who must have been a consummate judge, from which much information may be gleaned, and I think the following extracts are well worthy of perusal. The work is entitled *A Dissertation on Horses*, by William Osmer, and was printed in 1756. It is very *à propos* of the present time:—

“I do here lay it down as a certain truth, that no horses but such as come from foreign countries, or which are of extraction totally foreign, can race. In this opinion every man will readily join me, and this opinion will be confirmed by every man’s experience and observation. . . . Such horses who have the finest texture, elegance of shape, and most proportion, are the best racers, let their blood be of what kind it will, always supposing it to be totally foreign.

“If I was asked what beauty was, I should say proportion; if I was asked what strength was, I should say proportion also; but I would not be understood to mean that this strength and beauty alone will constitute a racer, for we shall find a proper length also will be wanted for

the sake of velocity. . . . Whoever has been curious enough to examine the mechanism of different horses by dissection will find the tendon of the leg in a foreign horse is much larger than in any other horse, whose leg is of the same dimensions. . . . How many instances have we of different horses beating each other alternately over different sorts of ground! how often do we see short, close, compact horses beating others of a more lengthened shape, over high and hilly courses, as well as deep and slippery ground. . . . And how comes it to pass that horses of a more lengthened shape have a superiority over horses of a shorter make, upon level and flat courses? . . .

“But I much fear our distinctions of good and bad blood are determined with much partiality, for every jockey has his particular favourite blood, of which he judges from events, success, or prejudice; else how comes it to pass that we see the different opinions and fashions of blood varying daily? Nay, we see the very same blood undergoing the very same fate; this year rejected, the next in the highest esteem; or this year in high repute, the next held at nothing. . . .

“The blood is worn out for want of a proper cross, one tells us, but these reasons cannot be true, because we see the offspring of all crosses, and of the most ancient families, occasionally triumphing over the sons of the very latest comers. . . .

“Our observation shows us that on the one hand we may breed horses of foreign extraction too delicate and too light for any labour, and on the other hand so coarse and clumsy as to be fitter for the cart than the race. Shall we then wonder that these cannot race? . . .

“Whilst this continues to be the rule of breeding, I

mean of putting male and female together, with no consideration but that of blood and a proper cross, it is no wonder that so few good racers are produced.

“I would not be thought in this to prefer my own opinion of shape and make to the known goodness of any stallion, but would prefer the latter before the opinion of all mankind. . . .

“It is not every horse who has been a good racer will get good colts. . . . But the most material thing in breeding in all animals, and to which we pay the least regards, either in the race of men or horses, is the choice of the female . . . and here I beg leave to be allowed one quotation from Virgil, in the 3rd chapter of the Georgics and the 49th verse.

‘Seu quis olympiaco miratus præmia palmo
Pascit equos, Seu quis fortes ad aratra Juvencos,
Corpora præcipue matrum legat.’

“We pay little regard to the mechanism of the female or of the horse to which we put her, but generally choose some particular horse for the sake of the cross, or because he is called an Arabian. . . .

“Amongst dogs we shall find the foxhound prevailing over all others in speed and in bottom, but if not in speed, in bottom at least I hope it will be allowed. To what shall we impute this perfection in him? Shall we impute it to his blood or to that elegance of form in which is found no unnecessary weight to oppress the muscles or detract from his ability of perseverance? . . .

“Surely no man means more when he talks of the blood of foxhounds than to intimate that they are descended from such, whose ancestors have been eminent for their good qualifications, and have shone conspicuous in

the front of the pack for many generations. . . . In any given and proportionate length, from the bosom of the horse to the setting on of the dock, the nearer the superior points of the shoulders approach to the quarters, so much better able will the carcase be to sustain and bring through the weight; and as much as the shoulders themselves prevail in depth, and the thighs and quarters in length, so much greater will be the velocity of the horse, because a greater purchase of ground is hereby obtained at every stroke.

“It is by this propriety of length, strength of carcase, and the powers of the muscles that foreign horses excel all others.”

There is much food for reflection in the above work. The pith lies in the last sentence, which admirably refutes the advocates of the hackney, when speed and jumping power is required as in the hunter. It is in the absence of “length” in himself and his stock that the hackney is a failure for getting hunters.

It should ever be remembered that the Arab has been bred for centuries for activity and endurance rather than for racing speed—qualities much required in the hunter. Some years ago there was a great match to test the above, and I was fortunate to be able to write down the account of it, one day at Cadiz, from the lips of Mr. J. Reade who was umpire on the occasion. Mr. Reade was then in the consular service, an excellent judge of a horse and of racing, and the handicapper at all the chief race meetings in Spain.

RACE FOR 85 MILES

FOR £1000

*Between an Arab and an English thoroughbred,
at Cairo, 1865.*

“In the autumn of 1865 a match was made between an Englishman, living at Alexandria, named Frederick Smart, and Halim Pasha, the uncle of the present Viceroy of Egypt (1876), to run a thoroughbred English five-year-old horse, ‘Alabama,’ formerly belonging to Mr. Ten Broeck, against an Arab bay five-year-old horse, ‘Handani,’ 14 hands 1 in. high, of the Anezeh breed, to carry 10 st. each, and to run from Cairo to Suez, a distance of eighty-five miles.

“It was afterwards altered, and it was agreed to run a race of the same length, but to start from Cairo, to turn round a point midway between that city and Suez, and to terminate at Cairo, keeping along the old mail road, which was very hard and pebbly.

“‘Alabama’ was ridden by an old man named Marsh, seventy years of age, who was well known with the Quorn, and who came out from England for the race. ‘Handani’ was ridden by an Arab, ‘Clerket,’ who was the head groom of Halim Pasha.

“They started at 10.30 A.M. on a bitterly cold day from the Abbasia Palace, on the outskirts of Cairo, an immense quantity of people being present, and both at once went off at a hand gallop. ‘Alabama’ carefully picked his way along the pebbly road and followed the camel track, being totally unused to such ground, while the Arab, being thoroughly at home, galloped away as straight as an arrow.

“Mr. Reade, the English Consul, had been appointed umpire, and, having started them, immediately got into a special train with General Stanton, and they went to the nearest point they could to the turning-post; they could not get nearer, however, in the train than five miles from the

flag, and on arriving at the station found horses waiting for them.

“They at once galloped on to where they supposed was the place, but mistaking a road-side station which was three miles short of the proper distance for the turning-post, they had to gallop on with the competitors, who were only a few minutes later in reaching the same place. They were going so fast that Mr. Reade’s horse, though a fine one, and fresh, had to do all he could to keep up with them. The time to the flag where they turned was 3 hours 10 minutes.

“On arriving at the flag the Arab at once turned and continued the ride homewards without stopping, while Marsh pulled up, wiped his horse over and washed his mouth out with gin and water, the horse immediately taking advantage of his short rest to ease himself.

“Both horses were, however, so fit that they had hardly turned a hair.

“When the Arab had got nearly a quarter of a mile on his homeward journey, Marsh started again, and soon catching up the Arab, they went on together. Mr. Reade returned to the train, but only arrived in Cairo about half an hour before the Arab appeared by himself, having done the distance a few minutes under seven hours, the English horse having gone lame in one of his hind tendons about eighteen miles from Cairo.

“On approaching to within 300 yards from the winning-post, the Arab raced in at the top of his speed, on receiving a signal from Halim Pasha, and pulled up, apparently fresh. The rider, when weighed in, was found to have lost 2 lb. in weight, but Smart insisted on Halim Pasha receiving the stakes.

“ ‘Alabama’ was soon afterwards got right, and raced for and won several races at Cairo and Alexandria. The Arab was never of any use afterwards, suffering from an affection of the kidneys, brought on from having had no opportunity of relieving himself at the turning-post, as ‘Alabama’ had. He died before long, after living for some time in a paddock belonging to his owner.”

Mr. Reade’s opinion was that the English horse was more leg-weary than anything else when he was pulled up, but that he had been handled much more judiciously than the Arab was, the latter being ridden over rocks or any other impediments, just as they came in the way. From want of an opportunity to relieve himself, the winner must have been running in great distress the latter part of the journey, and been a truly gallant horse.

CHAPTER XX.

HUNTING SKETCHES.

MANY years ago—it was in fact in 1876—we had a run with the Bramham Moor, which for enjoyment and thorough completeness was, for the time it lasted, I think, the best in my experience. It was but fifteen minutes in duration and about four miles in distance, but in that brief space was concentrated an amount of excitement and exultation, that makes a run of this description remain a bright spot in the dim vista of past years, like a particularly glittering star in the firmament. I confess I thoroughly hold with the late Major Whyte Melville when he says, “It is pace that puts life into the chase.” A long hunting run may be enjoyable in its way, and produce plenty of incident. It lacks, however, the glorious excitement of the gallop, when scent is breast-high, when the pack begins to lengthen out as the faster members of it forge their way to the front, and when all your skill is required, though mounted on a bold, big-jumping, thoroughbred horse, to keep the leading hounds in view, as they fairly race over a sound grass country. Then it is that the wonderful strength of the hind-quarters of a hunter is thoroughly shown. In a really fast gallop it is said that there should not be time to go a hundred yards out of the line, or to stop to open a gate unless it is exactly in your way, without losing the hounds; and fences of extraordinary

height and width are negotiated, which in cold blood seem almost impossible to be compassed with success. It is often a source of wonderment to me how those slight hind-legs can launch such a weight—which, including the rider, amounts to 12 cwt. or 13 cwt., and often more than that—over high timber and wide, deep ditches; and how those slender fore-legs can receive the shock of the landing without being splintered into small fragments. Think of the courage and patience of the horse in carrying a heavy rider all day in all sorts of ground, and having to lift him over many fences. How many men are there who can carry a sack of oats one hundred yards? It only weighs twelve stones! How many men could lift a sack and a half and *run* with it. That is only sixteen stones. Do have pity on your horse then in a long day's hunting. Do not go and jump an uncalled-for fence, simply because it gives you pleasure to do so, when you can walk quietly through a gap or a gate without losing your place. Do not gallop him unnecessarily when going from covert to covert, instead of jogging quietly along with the rest of the field. That extra exertion may just make the difference if you have a run later on. The muscles can only do a certain amount of work without tiring, and there is only a certain amount of nervous energy to be expended. If you use this up, when it is not wanted, there will be none at your service when your moment of need arrives. It will be brought home to you when your tired horse chances a strong grower instead of clearing it, or drops short into a wide ditch.

On the occasion above referred to, we had done very little till about 2 P.M., when, in going through Ingmanthorpe Park, a fox was seen just before us, not far from

the Wetherby Road, and pointing in the direction of Bickerton. The hounds were quickly laid on, there was a magnificent scent, and we were scarcely half a field behind the fox at the start, nor was he ever able to increase his lead the whole way. Being fortunately mounted on an extremely good horse, "Mullingar," belonging to my brother, and seeing from the way that the hounds started what a scent there was, I did my utmost to keep up with the pack. The knowledge that a very big drain was at hand caused nearly the whole field to go round by the gate, and we never saw them again. I scarcely lost sight of the fox the whole way, for as each fence was jumped he was only half-way across the next field, and with the exception of one small bit of plough at starting, the whole run was over grass. The fox ran as straight as an arrow, only making a slight detour in the last field, where there was a quantity of flood-water half-way across, and round which he skirted. As he did so, and showed his broadside, the leading hounds caught sight of him and raced him to the next fence, where he dashed through a few posts blocking up a gap, into a green lane close to Tockwith. The hounds were of course unsighted, and crashed into the road after him, and at once threw up their heads.

Just at that instant there was a "view holloa" some way higher up, and though I felt surprised at the moment that the fox could have got so far in the short time that had elapsed since I had seen him go through the fence, I was on the verge of endeavouring to get the hounds on to the holloa when a rustle in the fence at my feet caused me to stop. At first I thought it might be a hound crawling through, but this did not prove to be the case. A favourite saying of the late Sir C. Slingsby then flashed

into my mind, "that a blown fox lies down as soon as he can," and cracking my whip over the place, had the supreme satisfaction of seeing the fox jump out, when he was of course instantly killed. One other follower of the hunt, who had ridden the run, and the well-known "Peter" Wilkinson, saw the fox broken up. As soon as the latter had seen the way the fox was going, he had galloped down the road as hard as he could and got there just in time for the finale. Before anyone else arrived nothing but fragments remained, and when the late Mr. G. Lane Fox came up, I never saw him more delighted in my life, although he was rather by way of preferring long hunting runs to the short and merry ones. "Peter" Wilkinson had been one of the associates of the Marquis of Hastings, and the story of his connection with "Lecturer" has often been told. After the Marquis had struck out all his candidates for the Cesarewitch, "Lecturer" happened to be put into a trial, and won so easily that it was in anguish of spirit that Lord Hastings and John Day recalled the fact that the horse was no longer able to start. Suddenly it was remembered that from some whim "Lecturer" had been entered in Mr. H. V. Wilkinson's name instead of that of the Marquis, and therefore the fatal order to scratch all the horses of the latter did not apply to him. He was accordingly very heavily backed, and won the race. As soon as the horse had passed the winning-post, and been weighed in, a prominent bookmaker came up to Wilkinson, who had owed him a heavy sum for a considerable time, and said, "Now sir, you've won a pot of money, and I am very glad of it, but I've been very good to you, and never yet asked you for what you owe me. I think you must pay up now." "Oh, certainly," replied "Peter," "you

really have been a good chap, and you shall be the first man I pay. Come and have a drink for luck." Too confiding, the bookmaker went with him into the refreshment tent, and Wilkinson then said, "What is it to be, old man—champagne, of course, eh?" Champagne was decided upon, and just as the bookmaker was raising his glass to his lips, Wilkinson exclaimed, "Oh, by Jove, I have left my purse at the carriage. I must just run over and fetch it to pay for the wine. Don't go, I'll be back in a minute." The minutes followed each other quickly, but no signs of Wilkinson appeared, and the bookmaker finally had to pay for the champagne for both. As for being the first man whose debts were to be paid, it might have been quite true that he would have been, if Wilkinson had ever settled with any one at all, but, as he never commenced to do so, the debt remained in *statu quo* for ever.

I began hunting on a pony in the spring of 1859, when the York and Ainsty met at Providence Green under Sir C. Slingsby, who was both master and huntsman. A very excellent run, too, we had on my opening day, finding a fox at once in Cattal Springs, and running him to the banks of the Ure opposite Newby Hall, and finally losing him amongst the gardens at Ripon. Sir Charles would probably have killed him, but just when the hounds were getting close to the fox, he crossed the line, and a train coming by at the time, caused the pack to be stopped till it had passed, so the fox escaped.

No one could have begun hunting under better auspices, for the neighbouring pack was the Bramham Moor, Mr. George Lane Fox being the master, and Charles Treadwell the huntsman, each very celebrated as being perfect

in their respective spheres. From the immense weight of Treadwell, it was scarcely to be expected that the runs would be especially quick, as no horse could have carried him to the front in very fast things, and furthermore, the country was chiefly plough, with very small enclosures. What Treadwell's weight was I do not know, but he was popularly supposed to weigh eighteen stone without his saddle. He was, however, a most superior man, a most excellent servant, and thoroughly understood hunting in all its branches. So long as a fox remained above ground, he was pretty sure to catch him in the end, although it might take him a long time to do so. Mr. Lane-Fox and he had brought the Bramham Moor Hounds to an extremely high pitch of excellence, and in good looks and symmetry, combined with hunting powers, there were few packs to equal and none to excel them.

The character of packs in general is at present, I think, on a very much higher level than it was then. It was rather uncommon at that time to find such necks and shoulders as are frequently seen now; but it was no uncommon thing to find many throaty hounds, and others not quite straight, even in packs of great pretensions. In the field, however, I see no difference; hounds ran just as fast formerly as they do at the present time, and they had as much dash, drive, and scenting powers. It is only "on the flags" that a difference can be noted.

The York and Ainsty were most fortunate in having such a wonderful huntsman as Sir Charles Slingsby. There are two or three living huntsmen that seem to me as good as he was; and one that is deceased, the late Mr. Burton Persse, of the Galway Blazers, had a style very similar to his. I think, however, that of all the many huntsmen I

have hunted with, the few who were fit to be put into the same class with Sir Charles could be counted on the fingers of one hand.

He was very quiet with his hounds, but very quick when they required help; a most patient drawer of coverts, thoroughly searching the portions favourable for holding a fox, and scarcely ever leaving one behind. He had great sympathy with canine nature, and so well understood the ways of a fox that he seemed to know by instinct where it was going, and what was passing through its mind, in every phase of the run. In making a "cast" he constantly held forward to some well-known spot which a fox would be sure to pass when travelling in that direction, and ninety-nine times out of a hundred he was right. His great aim was to be constantly on the back of his fox, and to save every second of time that was possible, for he always kept in view how fast a fox gets over the ground, even at the lopping pace it travels at, in the later stages of a run.

If a fox beat him fairly, he seldom rested till he could account for what had become of him, and I have known him go again and again, on subsequent days, to the spot where he had lost him, to solve the problem of his disappearance. A fox was once accounted for in a curious way. We found him at Stillington towards the end of October, and had a very fast, straight run past Sheriff Hutton Castle, shortly after which the scent suddenly died away in a lane, with high banks on each side. In vain did Sir Charles cast round; the hounds could make nothing of it, and reluctantly he had to take them away. The next day a farmer wrote to say that he had got the fox, and Sir Charles might have him if he cared to send over for him. It appeared that a travelling tinker had been passing along

and met the fox, dead beaten, who tried to get up the bank out of the road. The fox was so exhausted that the tinker caught it, and had just popped it into a bag, when the hounds came up, which was the first that he knew of their being in the neighbourhood. Though he was questioned as to whether he had seen the fox, he had said "No," fearing to get himself into trouble if he produced the fox in the sack, but he took it to this farmer, as soon as the coast was clear, and delivered it up to him. The fox, however, had been run into the neighbouring country, Lord Middleton's, and the etiquette of hunting, therefore, prevented the York and Ainsty from having any claim upon it. The farmer was accordingly directed to set it free, and it probably returned immediately to its accustomed haunts.

How the pack of those days comes again in fancy before me! "Layman," the apple of Sir Charles' eye, one of the truest hunters, ever one of the foremost in running, and never tired, but not a very powerful-looking hound. He was used very much though as a stallion hound, and transmitted much of his own excellence to his progeny. He had one peculiarity—always securing the fox's head when there was a kill, and carrying it triumphantly till the next draw. In those days it was not the fashion to attach the fox's mask to the whip's saddle, as is now the case. When "Layman's" son, "Villager," however, joined the pack, he ousted his father from his position, and took the fox's head himself. "Villager" was a remarkably fine, muscular hound, and it was at my special request that he was not drafted, on account of being too big, when the puppies came in from walk. I had known him well, and had a great fancy for him, both on account of his good looks, and because

he was such a determined hunter when "at walk." Perhaps Sir Charles did not take much pressing to give him a chance. He entered at once, and from the very first was one of the keenest hounds in the pack. There was no question of drafting him then. He was so much more powerful than poor old "Layman," that the latter had to knock under at once and relinquish the coveted head to his younger rival.

If anything, old "Rosebud," a curious-coloured mealy or badger-pied hound, was still more dear to Sir Charles than even "Layman." He was wont to say that she had NEVER made a mistake, and she had extraordinary low-scenting powers. On the driest road, or the most dusty of fallows, when not another hound could own the line at all, old "Rosebud" would just keep slowly moving along the line, perhaps for half a mile at a time, when suddenly the others would catch the scent as we got upon better ground, and many is the fox that was eventually killed through "Rosebud" having been able to keep to the line, without Sir Charles having had to make a cast to recover it. She was a hound, too, of tremendous courage, and if a fox was at bay in a tight corner "Rosebud" was usually let in to draw him. Sir Charles was in the habit of constantly killing foxes in unlooked-for situations, and he seemed to have a natural instinct to guide him as to when a fox was likely to have secreted himself about houses, farm-buildings, or similar places. One day we ran a fox into Moor Monkton village, and Sir Charles and "Rosebud" soon produced it out of a tub of oatmeal in an old woman's cottage, the latter never even having observed the entrance of the fox into her kitchen. On another

occasion the pair tackled the fox behind all the hen-coops that had been used for rearing young pheasants, and had been stored away for the winter in a disused outhouse at Thorpe Green. I remember yet another occasion when we had temporarily thrown up in the garden at Skelton close to a summer house, and, on looking up, the fox was descried gravely looking down upon us from a small ventilating hole just under the roof. It had thrust its head and neck through the aperture, and remained so still that it looked for all the world like a stuffed fox hung against the wall, and indeed some of the field did say that it was not a living fox, it remained so long in the same position without moving.

There was one fox who beat us time after time at the same place for three years, and during this period he shifted his quarters to different places, and affected coverts far removed from each other, but he invariably arrived at the same field after good runs, and then vanished. At last, however, by luck one or two hounds traced him to his hiding-place, and he was killed. His secret had been known to more than one person, but they had honourably kept it, for he had become quite a celebrity. His method had been to jump the wall into Whixley Park, and go to a little drain that ran under the wall and out into the road, of only a few feet in length; he did not dwell in this, but went straight across the road into the middle of the field at the back of Whixley Manor House. A wall encompasses the grounds of the house, and the fox retraced his steps till he got close to it, and then kept alongside until he came to a flagged footpath between the Manor House and the church-yard. Down this path he went, back

into the road, and returned into the little drain that he had just come through. The hounds used to run down to this drain, jump the wall, which was a low one, and, picking up the scent on the other side, carried it right into the middle of the field behind the Manor House. Foxes very often ran this line towards the Thorpe Green coverts, and when the scent was lost the first cast was naturally in their direction; by the time that this had failed the field were sure to have crowded behind, and there being no place apparent where a fox could conceal himself no one ever thought of it being anywhere but forward, instead of it being snugly ensconced in the little drain. Had this gone under the road, it would have no doubt been tried to see if the fox was there, but as it only ran under the wall of the park, and was in fact barely big enough to conceal the fox, it escaped attention.

Another celebrity was a white fox that was one of a litter at Thorpe Green, and was constantly seen 1865-67. Some of the other cubs had more than a usual amount of white, but this one, a short distance off, looked perfectly snow-white. Sir Charles liked its being about, and never would hunt it if he knew that we were in pursuit of it, but on one occasion the hounds ran it hard down the whole length of the Long Wood at Kirby Hall, and it was not known at first that it was the white fox they were after. On reaching the end of the covert in the park the fox was headed, and went straight back through the pack, but though there was an excellent scent not a hound seemed to recognise that it was the fox, or made an effort to catch it. The moment it had passed, and the effluvia reached their nostrils, they started off again in pursuit as eagerly as ever. They were speedily

stopped, however, and the fox allowed to escape. On another occasion we were running a fox along the river bank in the direction of Widdington Wood, when the white fox was seen coming in the opposite direction, and very puzzled were the field as to what it was. Some at first thought it was a shepherd's dog, others a white terrier, but it was soon recognised to be the famous fox. His end was rather accidental. Towards the end of a season's cub-hunting a fox was found at Lylands, when there were only a few people out, and no one saw it go away. There was a splendid scent, and the leading couples were half a field away, racing at their very best pace, as Sir Charles, Orvis, and two or three more, came out of the wood and galloped their best to catch the flying pack.

Over the Moor Farm they swept, across the Moor Lane, past Grass Gill, with its haunted well, leaving High Dunsforth to the right, and down to the river bank, from which point Sir Charles and I were alone left to follow the hounds, whom we had never yet actually reached, though we were still in the same field with them. Without the least check we raced over the grass pastures alongside the river, the fox and pack passing under the arches of Aldwark Bridge, while we galloped through the yard of the Anchor Inn, which was fortunately close by. Hawthorn Bank is just one short grass field beyond, and into it went the pack with unabated pace, but threw up before they had gone fifty yards into the wood. "Keep still," exclaimed Sir Charles to me, "he's blown, and must be lying down close to the hedge," and he blew his horn to get the hounds back. They began to jump up among some high docks, like a terrier after a rabbit in a turnip

field, and in a minute something moved—there was a rush, a scramble, and a worry. We had to run some distance after jumping off our horses before we could get at them, for the hedge was a very thick, high bullfinch. Alas, when we got there, it was the white fox that had been killed, and it was so torn to pieces there was no chance of getting it stuffed, as Sir Charles had always intended to do whenever it should be caught. Up to that moment no one had the least idea what fox it was we were running; but it had come home to die, for the whin covert where it was born was but a few fields further on.

CHAPTER XXI.

SIR CHARLES SLINGSBY.

FIFTEEN years did Sir Charles hunt the pack, showing ever-increasing sport, so that his fame penetrated to the remotest hunt in Great Britain and Ireland, and strangers came from afar to share in the doings of the York and Ainsty, and to see for themselves whether the tales of his prowess were really true. One and all went away thoroughly pleased and satisfied, and returned again the next season, bringing others with them, so that the fields began to wax very large indeed, rivalling even those of the shires.

The awful accident that happened from the upsetting of the ferry-boat on the River Ure fell like a thunderbolt upon all hunting-fields, and was felt indeed to be almost a national calamity.

We, who knew him so intimately, and loved him, were almost prostrated with the shock ; while we had to mourn also the loss of other gallant comrades, who were hurried with him to an untimely grave, the tragic circumstances of the case seeming to enhance still further their dreadful fate.

We had been running very fast, although in a ring, until we neared Copgrove, but on leaving Burton Leonard village, the fox took to running fairly straight, and poor Mr. Robinson and I were the only persons with the hounds

as they ran through the wood, just above Copgrove Beck. We went through a gate, and were waiting to let the hounds get clear of the wood, when I made the remark, "Your curb-chain is loose; turn his head, and I'll fasten it for you." "Thanks," he said, "I'll do it myself," and swung himself off his horse, and put it right. Together we went on, fording the beck with the hounds, and then galloped on in the direction of the weir. I was not familiar with the fields where we were, but Robinson suddenly pulled his horse to the left, and at the same time turned in his saddle and beckoned to me. I therefore increased the pace of my mare, and on reaching him he said, "There is a ferry-boat here. If we are lucky we shall get over before any one else gets up."

When we reached the river, there was a very heavy flood, which far overflowed the banks, but the fox we were pursuing had twice before crossed the river, and escaped, and there was in consequence an extra keenness to catch him this time. The two ferrymen were working in a garden some little distance on the further side, but on our hailing them they hurried down, and made such progress that at first we thought our hopes would be fulfilled, and that we should get started for our journey across before any one else appeared. The ferry-boat was a sort of floating bridge, 30 feet long, with a railing 5 feet high at the sides, and a small gate at each end, which could be fastened at pleasure. It was worked by a windlass, the revolving chain that passed over it being fastened at either bank, but the great mistake had been made in having the chain on the down-stream side of the boat. This had been so fixed because it made it possible to work the boat in a higher flood than could be done when it was on the upper

side, for then the rush of water drifted the boat so far that the chain formed a great bow, and the windlass could not be worked on account of the strain. But this sad mistake made such an accident possible, as speedily happened, though it had never been thought of before.

The boat was quite two-thirds of the way across when, to our chagrin, we saw the first horseman appearing in the distance, quickly followed by others, and it was quite evident that we should have plenty of company in the boat. There was a small cutting leading to the water, and I was standing by my horse on the left, and Mr. Robinson was sitting on his horse on the right. He had a habit of never dismounting when crossing a ferry, as he used to say that he could not swim, and must trust to his horse in case of an accident. There was just room for three persons and horses abreast in the cutting, so that the first person who arrived came up on the right of Mr. Robinson, and some others closed up behind us. Just as the ferry-boat was about to ground, Sir Charles and Orvis, the first whip, came up on the right hand, and there was a shout, "Make room for Sir Charles and Orvis! Pull back those on the left."

Very unwillingly I obeyed the order, and backed my mare, for I feared that after all, instead of being over one of the first, in the rush on to the boat I should be squeezed out, and not get a place on it at all. As it happened, I managed to get on one of the last, and away we started. We were packed terribly close, and I began to feel rather nervous lest some horse should begin to kick, thinking that if they should do so, those of us at the rear end might be pushed into the water, but the idea of an accident to the boat itself never crossed my mind for one moment.

Just as we were starting, I saw Sir Charles at the far end of the boat shutting the gate, but the one at our end was left unclosed. He was talking to Mr. Robinson, and the moment after, while I was idly watching how close the flood was bubbling up, almost to the top of the board forming the side of the boat, I saw Sir Charles' horse, "Saltfish," stretch his neck over the gate, as if to smell the water, and the next instant he jumped over into the river, dragging Sir Charles with him by the bridle. Instantly there was a rush to that side, and a cry, "Oh save Sir Charles!" The boat lifted a few inches above the water on the up-stream side, and the horses being thrown off their equilibrium began to trample and slide down to the other side. The boat recovered itself again, and the idea flashing across me, "Here's a row; I had better be out of it," on the impulse of the moment I shoved my mare violently back into the water, and jumped out myself. The misfortune as it had first appeared, of being on one of the last, instead of the first, now proved a blessing, for not only was I able to extricate myself easily from the crowd, but I was also nearer by the length of the boat—30 feet—to the bank we had left.

The vessel swayed again twice, each time going higher into the air. With the frantic struggles of the horses, as they were tossed up and down, we soon saw that it was an impossibility for the boat to right itself, and that a fearful calamity was impending. At last it slowly turned over, rearing right up into the air, and pouring men and horses in one confused heap down into the water. It then remained bottom upwards, with many of its late occupants underneath, confined by the wooden side railings, which

were now some four feet under water. Immediately on reaching the land I had prepared to try and give assistance by slipping off my coat and waistcoat, and with the help of some one standing by, had taken off my top-boots. With a fortunate thought, as I ran down and jumped into the water, I undid the buttons of the breeches at the knees, which just made all the difference in being able to swim. Others who went in without doing so found that the water got in at the waist, and being unable to escape at the knees, they were so hampered that they were quite powerless to move, and had to return as best they could.

Our chief idea was to save Sir Charles, if possible. He, poor fellow, most unfortunately never tried to swim with the stream and make for the bank from which we started, where were any amount of people ready to help; and no doubt he would have been able to get sufficiently near to it for assistance to have reached him. From the very first his one idea seemed to be to get back to the boat, but he was out in the full force of one of the highest floods that had been known for many years, and he could not hold his own against it. Others, who had also been upset into the water, he saw safely getting out on to the top of the boat, and this, no doubt, prevented his trying to act differently; but they were in a little backwater, caused by the boat being held fast by the chain, and had no stream to contend against. The set of the current, too, was towards the other shore, so that when I was swimming across to try to get to his help, I found that he was being carried further away as well as down-stream. Before I could reach him he was completely exhausted. His horse "Saltfish" came swimming down the stream, close to him, and he gathered himself together for one last effort. As the horse passed

him he snatched at the mane, and he had evidently remembered that "Saltfish's" mane was always on the near side, instead of as usually worn, for I noticed his hand went right to the top of the horse's crest, but he failed to get hold. In slipping down the neck the hand caught the rein, which caused "Saltfish" to throw up his head and lose his balance, when they both disappeared under the water, Sir Charles never to be seen again alive. The horse, however, reappeared again a little further on, and, reaching the opposite bank, managed to get out safely. Of the eleven horses that embarked, I think I am right in saying that only that horse and mine escaped being drowned.

Whilst swimming across I suddenly saw a hunting cap emerge a short distance below me, followed by a head and shoulders, and I recognised Mr. Robinson. To my astonishment he continued to rise still further out of the water, and I began to swim on my side to be able to see what was the reason. After his whole body had emerged I saw a horse's head appear, and then it became evident that he was still sitting on his horse just as in the boat. This was most remarkable, for the place where they came to the surface was a very long way below where the capsize took place. He appeared perfectly calm and cool, shook himself, and looked first at one bank and then at the other. Unfortunately his horse was heading straight down the stream for the weir, which was not very far below, and whether he touched the bridle or not, or whether the horse was so beaten by his long submersion that he could not swim, I do not know. Almost immediately, however, the horse sank. Mr. Robinson was left a moment or two on the surface before he too disappeared, and the horse

was swept over the weir, and his body recovered in the pool below.

There was a great difficulty in swimming, owing to the intense coldness of the water, the flood being caused by the melting of the snow which was just taking place. Fortunately those on the bank had their wits about them, and knotted bridles, whips, and stirrup-leathers together, and made ropes of them, or there might have been even more disasters than there actually were.

If it had not been for the presence of mind of Mr. Clare Vyner hardly one would have escaped of those in the forepart of the boat. The accident occurring at his own place to his own ferry-boat, was to a certain degree advantageous. The construction being familiar, as soon as he found himself in the water, he clutched hold of the railings, and walking up them like a ladder, and getting on to the bottom of the boat, he was able to rescue those who were within reach. In this way he was able to save Sir George Wombwell, who, fortunately for himself, came up on the upstream side of the boat, and the force of the current kept him against it until he was noticed by Mr. Vyner, and safely extricated from his perilous position. His fortunate rescue from drowning was quite on a par with his escape after the famous charge of the Light Brigade at the Battle of Balaclava in the Crimea. Captain Key of Fulford was fortunate enough to get hold of the end of the chain, and by its help reached the shore in safety. Mr. R. C. Vyner and Mr. William Ingilby, of Ripley Castle, endeavoured, and very nearly succeeded, in saving Mr. Edward Lloyd, of Lingerroft Lodge. The latter was a good swimmer on ordinary occasions, but seeing he was in great difficulties the two gentlemen mentioned

plunged into the water and swam to his help. Placing a hand on each of their shoulders, and encouraging him to hold out, they had got close to the shore, when suddenly his hands relaxed their grasp, and he was gone before they had time to realise that their comrade had been snatched away when almost in safety. Poor Orvis, the kennel huntsman, was the only one who floated down the stream, and he, no doubt, succumbed to some injury done by the struggling horses, and his chest was therefore still inflated with air. Noticing him being carried down by the current, I ran down the bank and swam across to the island, formed by the lock cut, in hopes of being able to save him, but he suddenly sank, and as he had never shown any movement there is no doubt but that he was already dead. After returning to Copgrove, where I was staying at the time, to change my clothes, I returned to assist in the search for the bodies, and it was noteworthy that each one was found within a very few yards of where I had last seen them when alive.

A very curious circumstance was that my father, the Chairman of the North-Eastern Railway Company, was holding a Board meeting at Newcastle. The time of the disaster, as shown by the watches which had stopped, was about 2.5 P.M. At 2.30 P.M. a telegram was handed to him in the Board Room, giving an account of the disaster, and with a perfectly accurate list of all who were drowned. The stationmaster at Boroughbridge telegraphed the information. He did not know the person who informed him about it, but the latter must have been very quick, after seeing the disaster, to have galloped the three miles or so that intervened between the railway station and the scene of the accident, in the short time that had elapsed.

By the courtesy of the editor of the *Field* newspaper I am enabled to give the account that appeared in that journal in its issue of 13th February 1869.

“THE FEARFUL ACCIDENT WITH THE YORK AND AINSTY.

“It was a beautiful morning on Thursday, Feb. 4, when the York and Ainsty met at Stainley House. We chopped the first fox in Cayton Gill, but found again in Monckton Whin at 12.40. There was a splendid scent, but the fox twisted about a good deal, and, though the pace was tremendous, yet, after an hour’s running, the fox crossed the river at Newby, just in front of the hounds, and only about two miles and a half from where he was found.

“The river was very high from the floods, and a very strong stream was running, in consequence of which the fox was carried over Newby Weir, and the whole of the hounds also; but they all got out safely, and took up the scent immediately on the opposite side. There is a ford just below, with posts marked with different distances up to the height of five feet, so as to show when the river is fordable; but on that day the river was so high that not even the posts were visible. We were all, therefore, obliged to make for the ferry.

“The ferry-boat was overloaded, and no sooner did it get into the stream than the water began to rush in over the sides. Sir Charles Slingsby’s horse, “Old Saltfish” (whom he bought the first year he took the hounds, fifteen years ago), finding there was something wrong, jumped into the water. Sir Charles held on to the reins, to induce him to swim alongside; but, not calculating sufficiently the force of the stream and the weight of the horse, he was overbalanced and fell in. (I have seen

several papers state that there was then a rush made to one side ; but the horses were so closely packed on board, like bullocks in a bullock truck, that they could not have moved from any cause.) The boat then swayed once or twice, and finally turned completely over, for several seconds leaving nothing to the view but the bottom of the boat.

“ It seemed impossible that any should be saved, but, by degrees, heads began to appear, and Mr. Clare Vyner, having scrambled on to the upturned boat, gallantly assisted all he could reach to gain the same haven. The boat, being still held by the chain, acted as a breakwater, and, therefore, all those who came up near the boat had no stream to contend against. Unfortunately, Sir Charles Slingsby was some way down the stream, in the full force of the current. He struggled gamely to reach the boat, but it was hopeless. If he had only turned and swam with the stream, in all human probability he would have been saved ; for when he was finally exhausted he sank (still struggling to reach the boat) close to the north shore, whither he had been carried by the stream, but where, unfortunately, there was no one to help. “ Old Saltfish ” followed his master like a dog to the very end, and at last swam past him, unfortunately with the near side next to Sir Charles, who with his last effort tried to grasp the horse’s neck ; but the mane being on the opposite side, he only succeeded in grasping the bridle. Both immediately sank—Sir Charles never to be seen again alive ; but the old horse rose again to the surface, and then swam ashore.

“ Mr. Robinson—who was always extremely nervous in crossing ferries, as he was unable to swim and always entertained a horror of being drowned—according to his

usual custom, never got off his horse on entering the boat, and when it upset he rose several yards down-stream, still sitting on his horse. He looked calmly round, as if to choose the best landing-place, when his horse suddenly sank, either from being exhausted before he came to the top, or from the reins being touched to guide him ashore. After two fearful shrieks Mr. Robinson went down.

“Captain Key, being the last on board, succeeded in jumping clear of the boat as it turned over, and, fortunately, being carried against the chain, was able, by making use of it, to reach the shore in safety. Sir George Wombwell, who may consider this as the most fortunate of his many narrow escapes from death, came to the surface on the up-stream side of the boat, against which he was carried, and was promptly rescued by Mr. Clare Vyner, though he himself was too far gone to make the slightest effort to save himself, and was even unaware by what means he was saved.

“In the meantime those on shore had promptly done all in their power. Whips were knotted together; but as the river was at least eighty yards from bank to bank, and those in the water were more than half-way across, every endeavour to cast them within reach failed. Every pole that could be found was thrown, but to no purpose. Four strong swimmers tried their best in vain—one, Mr. Preston of Moreby, had not waited to take off his boots, and it was with difficulty he was rescued by those on shore. Mr. Ingilby, of Ripley Castle, and Captain Vyner, of Linton Spring, succeeded in reaching Mr. Lloyd, who was doing his best to gain the south shore. They had brought him almost in reach of those on the bank when he suddenly sank, and they, exhausted by the long run, the extreme

coldness of the water, and the force of the current, were unable to make another effort to recover him. They were obliged to receive assistance from the shore to save themselves.

“ Mr. Richard Thompson, of Kirby, swam off to the help of Sir Charles ; but the latter being carried further away from him by the current, Mr. Thompson was obliged to give up all hope of reaching him, and was himself helped out by getting hold of two whips being tied together, one end being thrown to him from the bank. As soon as he was a little recovered, he ran down the bank and swam across a canal to an island, where the river makes a bend, in hopes that the body of Orvis, the huntsman, which was being carried down by the current, might be washed within reach. Unfortunately, Orvis was carried to the other shore, and the weir being only fifty yards below he could make no further effort. The two gardeners were never seen alive after the boat was upset.

“ Thus Yorkshire has lost, by this unprecedented catastrophe, Sir Charles Slingsby, perhaps the best gentleman huntsman that has ever lived—one whose genial manners and kind disposition endeared him to all who had the good fortune to come in contact with him ; Mr. Robinson, who was not only the finest horseman and best rider to hounds I have ever known, but the least jealous person that ever followed hounds over a country ; Mr. Lloyd, the best man of his weight (he rode fully 16 st.) that ever crossed this deep plough—one whom no fence was too strong for ; and lastly, poor old Orvis, the cheeriest of huntsmen and the most civil of servants. Four better-known men, and whose loss would be more deeply mourned for, could not be found anywhere. *Requiescant in pace !*

The days of the York are numbered for the present—never, I am afraid, again to equal the last few years.”

The boat was far over-weighted with men and horses, and it is doubtful, even if the river had been at its ordinary level, if the freight would have been safely conveyed across. In the then condition of the river it was madness to have essayed it, but in the excitement of the run all who could get a footing crowded on board. The names of those who embarked are as follows, the asterisks showing those who were drowned :—

Captain Key.

* Mr. George Lloyd.

Captain Molyneux, R.N.

Major Mussenden.

* William Orvis, Kennel Huntsman.

* Mr. James Robinson.

* Sir C. Slingsby, Bart., M.F.H.

Mr. Richard Thompson.

Mr. Clare Vyner.

Mr. White.

Sir G. Wombwell, Bart.

* Christopher Warriner, }
* James Warriner, } Ferrymen.

Six passengers out of thirteen were thus drowned, and nine out of eleven horses, the two that were saved being Sir Charles Slingsby's "Saltfish," and Mr. Thompson's "Wood-pigeon."

If only Sir Charles had been spared for some seasons longer, there is no gauging the pitch of perfection to which he might have brought his pack. It was only the previous season that he had swept the board at the great

hound show, held at Wetherby, with the famous litter that included

“Nestor,”	.	1st Prize, Dog-hounds.
“Nosegay,”	.	1st Prize, Bitches.
“Novelty,”	.	2nd Prize, do.

and also another brother which, though an excellent hound, was not thought quite good enough by the judges to receive a prize. The judges on this occasion were Lord Galway, the Master of The Grove; Mr. Scrattan from Essex; Lord Herries; and Mr. John Parrington. The latter was the brother of the Secretary, the renowned Mr. T. Parrington, so well known as a famous judge of hounds, and afterwards the Master of the Sinnington Pack, one of the oldest in Yorkshire, and who was also at one time Master of the Hurworth. The famous litter mentioned above were by Lord Yarborough's “Nelson,” out of the York and Ainsty “Comedy,” by Comus. This latter hound was obtained for a season by Sir Charles, and besides being very low-scented, was very good-looking also, and true made. His one slight drawback was a very unmusical voice, very deep and hoarse, with a long drawn-out note, scarcely like a foxhound at all, but his stock did not inherit this peculiarity.

It was remarkable what influence Sir Charles possessed with the large fields that usually came out, and even with all the hard-riding strangers from afar it was very seldom that he ever had occasion to utter a word of remonstrance. A quiet look from him seemed to curb the most impetuous. Even if he had occasion to speak his admonition was always courteous. “Here, sir, please take my horn,” he said on one occasion, at the same time drawing it from its

case, riding up to the offender and holding it out to him, "We cannot both hunt the hounds." No amount of bad language could have caused the effect that that simple action and those few words had in abashing the culprit. On another occasion, a hard rider jumped right into the middle of the pack, and tumbled off as they were casting themselves on the farther side of a hedge, on a bad scenting day. Sir Charles hastened up, and we all expected to hear something rather forcible issue from his lips, but all he said after checking his horse and looking over the fence at the offender was, "I'm ——— very glad of it." The result was that everyone did their best to avoid meriting displeasure, and the field was one of the best ordered ones in the kingdom.

The secret of it was that he was such a thorough gentleman and inborn sportsman. All sports came alike to him, and he excelled in everything. Shooting, fishing, even rat hunting with his terriers, or whatever the pastime of the moment might be, he thoroughly understood the nature of the pursuit, and had the keenest insight into the habits of the quarry he was after. He once captured 120 blackbirds with his sparrowhawk during a ten days' frost, and he threw himself into the sport of the moment with all the zest that he did when fox-hunting. His very wish was law in the country he ruled over, and he was mourned equally in the mansion of the squire and in the cottage of the peasant.

CHAPTER XXII.

WITH THE YORK PACKS.

IT was a very curious circumstance that the four followers of the hunt who were drowned were the only ones who habitually wore hunting caps. Before the great Marquis of Waterford was killed when hunting in 1859, hunting caps were the ordinary head-gear in the hunting field. Because he happened to be wearing a cap at the time of his death, the unreasoning dictates of fashion decreed that the ridiculous tall hat should henceforth be worn, perhaps the most unsuitable head-dress that could possibly be devised for the purpose. Always in the way, getting its owner into trouble with boughs and branches, in hedges and coverts, most uncomfortable in a wind, it further generally falsifies its *raison d'être* by tumbling off the wearer's head when he gets a fall, though the only supposed good that it possesses is to break the concussion. What does a steeplechase jockey choose for his head covering? He does not allow sentiment to stand in the way, while certainly most falls out hunting are nothing compared to a roll over when steeplechasing. Instead of a tall hat he puts on a thin silk cap, and it is the rarest thing to hear of a jockey breaking his neck. He breaks almost every other bone that he possesses, but his neck almost always escapes scatheless. As a general rule, when in doubt as to what tackle is the most suitable for any

pursuit, the best way is to "Follow the money." Where money is to be won, the sharpest wits and the keenest intelligences are invariably set to work to find out what will give the best aid in winning it. A jockey going to ride over the Liverpool steeplechase fences does not generally put a powerful curb bit into his horse's mouth, though there are plenty of high, strong fences to be ridden over on a very tired horse; so high and so strong are they that few men in an ordinary hunting field would think of riding even at a single one. No, he chooses a plain, thick, smooth snaffle, with a nice long martingale and noseband. The hunting rider is fond of laying down the law that you must have a curb bit to collect a horse at his fences, and that martingales are dangerous. Again, I say, "Follow the money" if you wish to have what is really the most suitable for crossing a country. A curb bit, unless accompanied by more perfect hands and a firmer seat than most riders possess, is very apt to make a horse jump short, and many a fall is the inevitable result that might have been avoided if an easier bit had been used.

Then, again, just turn to all the fads about different gauges of guns in shooting. This man recommends a 20-bore, that a 28-bore, and again a third a 10-bore. What wins the pigeon matches at Monte Carlo or the Gun Club? Invariably a 12-bore. So again I repeat, "Follow the money," and it will be found a very safe guide when in doubt.

Poor Mr. Robinson was undoubtedly one of the very finest riders that ever rode to hounds, and he was generally regarded as the successor of the Rev. J. Bower, who again had succeeded Lord Jersey in the rôle of "the finest rider of the day." He had undaunted nerve, most

beautiful hands, with an extremely quick eye for a country, and he knew every trick of the game.

In his quiet way he would often point out to a beginner how a particular fence should be ridden at, and then by way of pointing the moral, give a practical lesson by riding over it himself. A very useful maxim of his was that when the country is very blind, and the ditch is on the taking-off side, the wisest plan is, if possible, to pick a place where the ditch is uncovered, so that the horse can see what he is doing. How many riders do the reverse of this, and by way of calming their own nervousness, ride at the most hidden part of the ditch! Further, he used to say, that if a hidden ditch is suspected, ride at a high part of the fence, and put the pace on. Your horse is then obliged to stand further away when he takes off, and does not gallop into the ditch. But nerves require to be good, to pick out a big place instead of a much smaller one equally available! He had a most excellent stud of horses that carried him apparently so smoothly, that few suspected what bad-tempered brutes many of them were until they bought them at the executor's sale. They were mostly thoroughbred, many of them being picked up at the Newmarket Sales when three or four years old in the autumn. One of his best, though an extremely bad-tempered horse, was "Brunow," who had been second in the Grand Prix. A rather curious circumstance happened one day with the Bramham Moor. There was a wide ditch, generally known as the Marston Drain, which we had to cross when running from Hutton Thorns to Wilstrop, a very favourite line in those days. There was then no hunting bridge over it, and we invariably used to creep halfway down

its steep sides, then jump the water at the bottom, and scramble up the other side. It had often been discussed whether this could not be flown, and after a good inspection of it I marked a place in my own mind where it seemed possible to do so. The next time that we found at Hutton Thorns, and ran in that direction, I galloped straight for this place, being mounted on a magnificent four-year-old, "Redbourne," who had run the previous year in "Hermit's" Derby. He was out of "Repentance," who was also dam of "Wolesley," who run a dead heat with "Lozenge" for the Cambridgeshire; and of "Remorse," who subsequently ran third for the Derby, for Lord Falmouth, as the "Macaroni-Repentance" colt.

"Redbourne" was a beautiful jumper and a very bold horse, and I knew he would do his best. As I came slanting down from the right hand, Robinson appeared from the left, also making for the identical same spot, and I soon saw he was also going to have a try at it. He was riding a very fine chestnut that he had bought at Newmarket the autumn before, and as he was about fifty yards ahead of me when we were straightened for the jump, he had the first attempt at it. His horse just got over, and the moment after "Redbourne" was safely over also, and then for the first time, turning his head, Robinson found he was not alone. He told me that he also had been to look for a place where he might fly it, and had chosen the same place as I had done, but he had never observed that I was also making for it. It was rather a quaint coincidence that we should have both had the same impulse on the same day, unknown to each other, for I have never heard of it being jumped at the same place, either before or since.

At the present time, when such great interest has been renewed in the doings and writings of the Brontë family, it may be interesting to note that Mr. Robinson was the pupil of Bramwell Brontë in 1845, when the latter was the tutor at Thorpe Green, where his sister Anne was also governess. Thorpe Green was in ancient times the halfway house of the Abbots of Fountains, between Ripon and York, and was also their hunting box. The original house—still inhabited—is *in statu quo*, with the extremely ornamental lead patterns in the glass windows, and the picturesque quaint gables and chimneys that carry one back to the mediæval times. In the courtyard close by is still the ancient “piscarium” for holding the fish required for the Abbot’s dinner. In the Carta Fountainis is an ancient lease, of which the following is an extract. It was granted by the Abbot of Fountains to Francis and Peter Mann, of the Manor of Thorpe Underwoods, on October 29th, in the sixteenth year of the reign of King Henry VIII. :—

“ . . . Further, it is agreed that the said Francis Mann, and Peter Mann, his son, or one of them, shall take and deliver to the said Abbot and convent, their successors or deputies, such pidgeons as shall fortune hereafter to be taken at every flight within the said Manor and Lordship of Thorpe Underwood. Further, it is agreed that the said Francis Mann, and Peter Mann, his son, and either of them shall oversee, and keep as well such wild boares, deere, heron-sowes, howle-ordes, and peasantes, partridges, as other fowles and beastes of warranty, breeding within the said Manor and Lordship, to the use and profit of the said Abbot and convent and their successors, so that the said Francis Mann, and Peter Mann, his son, shall not suffer

any destruction of the said fowles or beastes of warranty to be done by any person or persons . . .

“Also, it is agreed that the said Francis Mann, and Peter Mann, his son, shall find beddings and other houselment of household as shall be necessary for the said Abbot and Convent, and other his brethren and servants coming with him, to the said Manor of Thorpe, at such times as the said Abbot, his brethren, and servants shall tarry and lodge there for their solace and benefit, so that it be not continually. . . .”

Abbot John de Ripon died here in 1434 while sojourning in the Manor House.

The descendants of “Francis and Peter Mann, his son,” continued to live here until the early years of the present century. There is rather a romantic story of the way it became the property of the Robinson family. Late one winter’s night a chaise drew up to the door of Thorpe Green, and a belated traveller craved lodging for the night. She was a pretty young widow, with a little son, whose husband had died, leaving her with very little to live upon. She stated that she was on her way to stay with her husband’s cousin, Mrs. Robinson, of Studley Park, the ancestress of the present Marquis of Ripon; but that, as darkness had come on, she felt afraid to proceed further that night; and her husband having told her to seek the aid of his old friend, Mr. Mann Horsefield, if in need of help, she had now done so, on finding herself in his neighbourhood. The visitor ingratiated herself so much that she was begged to return after her visit to Studley, and accordingly did so, the sequel of the story being that the old gentleman left all his estate to her son, the grandfather of Mr. Robinson. The latter eventually sold it to my

father, as it joined on to the Kirby Hall property, which had also originally belonged to Fountains Abbey.

Amongst the maxims of Sir Charles Slingsby was one, in contrast to the dictum of a blown fox lying down as soon as he could, viz., that a fox who had never been pushed fast at any time in the run, even though he might be tired, never lay down until he had got well inside a covert, and in many cases, if the covert was small, went straight through it. In a long, slow run, on coming to a small plantation, he would often gallop round to the far-side with the hounds, so as to pick up the line, without wasting time in working it out through the wood. If the fox was still inside no harm was done, but if he had gone through, many valuable minutes were often saved. He would also say that it was folly to stop a single hound in the middle of a run that had recovered the scent when a check had occurred, though the body of the pack might be in the next field or further. On the contrary, let him alone to make the most of it, taking care to keep him in view, for the hounds being altogether and in the open, they are very quickly got forward without danger of any being left behind. They pick the scent up, too, so quickly under such conditions, for they put their noses down on reaching their comrade, knowing that he is hunting on the line. It is quite a different thing when one or two hounds get away after a fox from a covert. It takes time for the others to get out, even if they are aware that the fox is away, though even then the stopping the leading hounds may be carried to an extreme; and if there are enough to carry on the run by themselves, much valuable time is lost if they are whipped off until the others join them. Stephen Goodall, who hunted the Bramham Moor and the Vale of White

Horse, perhaps carried this to an extreme, as so long as he could see the fox himself, or had a hound or two that could own the line, he would gallop on, blowing his horn continuously and loudly till he had got the pack together. Still he showed marvellous sport, killed an immense number of foxes after rattling gallops, and his hounds never needed a Whip. They used to fly from all parts of a wood the moment they heard his horn. Though his method was very unscientific, it was an extremely killing one, and was certainly not criticised by the hard-riding division. The Bramham Moor are fortunate in having had for some years one of the finest huntsmen of the day in Tom Smith. It is a very cunning fox that is able to escape him on a good scenting day, and he shows extremely good sport under the adverse conditions of a very large field, whenever they meet within easy reach of Leeds and Harrogate.

York is an excellent hunting centre, for besides its own proper pack—the York and Ainsty—the Bramham Moor and Lord Middleton's both meet once a week within easy reach of the city. The latter pack also rejoice in a huntsman, who well deserves the fame that he has acquired. To kill, as he has done, considerably over eighty brace of foxes in a season, argues the highest talent in the "managing director" of the pack. How quick he is in reading signs the following anecdote may possibly show:—A year or two ago several foxes were picked up that were being poisoned, and as everyone in the neighbourhood was known to be friendly to them, Will Grant was completely puzzled as to the author of their destruction. One morning, when exercising the pack, he suddenly got a clue. After kennelling the hounds he rode over to the farmer and told him that at last he had found out who had laid the poison,

and on being interrogated who it was, he informed him that it was himself. The farmer indignantly denied the charge, when Grant stopped his utterances, and proceeded to explain how he had done it. It appeared that as the huntsman was riding along, some pigeon's feathers caught his eye in a wheat field, and on further search a partly eaten pigeon was discovered, in whose crop was some new sown wheat. This had been steeped in a poisonous preparation, and thus the farmer had unwittingly first poisoned the pigeon, and the fox having found the dead bird, had also succumbed after devouring a portion of it.

The York and Ainsty are fortunate in having a very keen master in Mr. Lycett Green, who spares neither time, trouble, nor expense in providing sport and in keeping the pack to a very high pitch of perfection. He is an excellent horseman, and always with his hounds. A deep debt of gratitude is also owing to his brother, Mr. Frank Green, who has elaborated a most excellent scheme for dealing with wire, that foe to fox-hunting, and which under his capable management works most harmoniously.

Barbed wire is a most unnecessary and growing evil, and threatens to stop hunting altogether in some countries unless prompt measures are taken to hold it in subjection.

During the lengthy stay of the 10th Hussars at York, the meets of the various packs were constantly graced by the presence of H.R.H. the Duke of Clarence, who was very fond of hunting, as well as of anything in the way of sport. He had a long easy seat on a horse, and went well to hounds, while he was so courteous to everyone and so thoughtful for others, that he won the hearts of all who came in contact with him. When the mournful news

came that he had been so early snatched away, it was genuine sorrow at the loss of a friend and comrade as well as of a Royal Prince, that clouded the homes of his many Yorkshire friends. There was nothing he enjoyed more than entering into the sport of the moment, as a partaker of it, without the trammels of Court etiquette, and feeling himself free to do as the spirit moved him. It was amusingly brought home to me one day, towards the end of one hunting season, when, as we were going to draw a covert in the afternoon, I spied a plover's nest with eggs close by. Jumping off the horse, and wrapping each egg in moss, I deposited them one by one in my breast-pocket, and had hardly clambered back into the saddle with great care than I heard my name called. Turning my head to see who it was, I was startled by the feint of a blow of a closed fist, directed at the eggs where they bulged my hunting-coat out, and a hearty laugh broke on my ear as the Prince enjoyed the scare he had given me. The eggs, however, got safely home from all dangers, even surviving jumping some fences.

A little steeplechase course at my residence often attracted the "10th" to come and have a ride over it, and the Duke was a frequent visitor to watch the performance. He loved to see the horses jump, and to chaff the riders. Those few fences were good enough to school a considerable number of winners, and when the Regimental and Hunt Steeplechases took place, the horses that were trained at Nunthorpe Court took more than their share of prizes. Lord William Bentinck and Captain Hughes Onslow were especially successful, and were both much above the "form" of ordinary amateurs. The latter indeed is now one of the very best of our soldier riders, and has twice ridden the

winner of that coveted prize, the Grand Military Gold Cup.

The Duke of Clarence once showed remarkable "form" when shooting the coverts at Kirby Hall. He was placed well out in the park to take the pheasants as they were crossing from one wood to another, and they came both high and fast. The Duke screened himself behind some cut wood, which answered the purpose of a "butt," so that the pheasants did not notice him and came straight without swerving. He shot twenty-eight, nearly all being hit well forward and killed instantly. He was very pleased, and had every reason to be so, for the birds were all good ones, and it was a fine exhibition of skill.

The happy years of his stay in York will ever be held there in mournful remembrance, alike by those who had the privilege of his acquaintance, and by others who revered him as a most courteous Prince.

The greatest run that occurred with the York and Ainsty during the Mastership of Sir Charles Slingsby was always stated by him to have been one from Red House, when the hounds ran clean away from the field, and pulled their fox down in the park at Nun Appleton. The distance in a straight line on the map is almost thirteen miles. No one who started with the pack saw the finish, though others did who joined in during the run. I do not believe that this grand run has been equalled since. Red House has frequently sent forth good stout foxes, and one gave a very fine run from here, and was killed after only one check, at the outskirts of Wetherby in 1867. The fox ran through Skip Bridge Whin, but after that never touched another covert. Leaving Wilstrop Wood to the right, and the Ingman-

thorpe Coverts to the left, he went straight up to the high road opposite to Kirk Deighton, and then turned towards Wetherby, and was killed.

Sir Charles never rode anything but extremely well-bred horses. "Welham," on whom he was painted in a posthumous picture of the pack, by his brother-in-law, Captain T. Slingsby, was a thorough-bred horse. The beautiful "Rosamond," who made over 400 guineas at the sale of the stud, was also clean-bred; while on "Egg Sauce" Sir Charles won the Hunt Cup on the flat at Thirsk Races. He bought two horses on the Ash-Wednesday of the first season that he took the hounds, and appropriately named one "Egg Sauce" and the other "Saltfish." The latter horse carried him very nearly fifteen seasons, yet he scarcely looked up to his rider's weight. He was a very lengthy, well-bred-looking chestnut, but was a wind-sucker all his life, and never carried an ounce of flesh on his bones. He was an extraordinary performer over a country, however, a very hard horse, and somehow Sir Charles generally happened to be riding him whenever an exceptional run occurred. There was another remarkably good horse, too, in the stud, "Daddy Longlegs," so good, in fact, that the late Mr. Clare Vyner—who bought him at the sale of the stud—had him prepared for the Liverpool Grand National, and thought he had a chance of winning it. On one occasion I was staying at Newby for a meet of the Bedale Hounds, the other guests being the late Mr. "Peter" Wilkinson and the late Mr. John Booth, then the Master of the pack. The evening before hunting, the question cropped up as to whether horses could beat hounds for actual speed over a few furlongs. Wilkinson and I, both well used to riding

racers, each were of opinion that horses were much the fastest, while Mr. Vyner and Mr. Booth were of the contrary opinion, although both of them owned racehorses. It was settled that if we had a good chance the next day we were any of us to avail ourselves of it, and as the Duck Pond in the park invariably held a fox, and was the first draw, it was thought to be a likely place for a trial, for there was a long stretch of excellent flat galloping ground before the confines of the park were reached. I was riding "Bellringer," who afterwards won the Grand National Hunters' Race for Mr. Vyner; he himself was on "Daddy Longlegs"; "Peter" Wilkinson rode Mr. Vyner's "Dagolino," and Mr. Booth was on one of his own good racing hunters. When the hounds crossed over to the island, we all drew up, where there was a little isthmus of dry land, and awaited the result. A fox was speedily on foot, and crossed the narrow neck of land, with the hounds in close pursuit in full view. "Wait a bit," exclaimed Mr. Vyner, "give them a fair start," and we accordingly let them get some fifty yards away before he gave the word "Go," the fox being at that moment some thirty yards in front of the pack. "Hold hard, gentlemen," roared the huntsman; "Hold hard!" and then to his utter astonishment he saw his own M.F.H. riding madly on to the very top of the hounds—as it appeared to him. We had a grand scurry, but the result was as we had anticipated, for we not only flew past the pack, but past the fox also, and reached the park boundary some way ahead of the latter, who had moreover gained a little on the hounds as they raced over the turf. On another occasion, however, the fox, or rather foxes, did not have the best of it in a trial of speed with the

Bedale Pack. An extraordinary fast puppy came in from "walk," and one day, when drawing some heath, a fox jumped up in full view. "Singer" at once shot out from the rest of the pack, caught the fox up, turned him, and killed him. Very shortly after, another fox was roused, but this time it was near a fence, and when the puppy singled himself out again in pursuit, it was thought that he must lose the fox as soon as it had slipped through the ragged high hedge that skirted Hutton Moor. This was not the case, however, and though the fox had a long start, the young hound viewed him again in the large grass field that he was crossing, raced after him, caught him, and killed him. Two foxes in less than twenty minutes was a pretty good beginning, but was by no means the end of the puppy's performances. Later in the day we had about an hour's run, when in crossing a park the fox was viewed, and again "Singer" raced him down, and killed him. Being so much faster than the rest of the pack, he was condemned to be drafted, but the fiat was cancelled, and he continued for some time to do good work for the Bedale. If ever he caught sight of a fox, he was almost sure to overtake it, and then he had the rather uncommon courage to attack it single-handed. I believe he was of Brocklesby descent. In the early "sixties" the York and Ainsty had the misfortune to lose by far the larger proportion of their puppies when still unweaned. On arriving there one very hot day, poor Orvis received me in a state of despair, for several litters were attacked by jaundice, which proved fatal in every case. The weather was extremely hot, and soon after breakfast Orvis had moved all the little huts under the shade of a clump of trees, which

then stood in the paddock at the kennels. There had been an extremely heavy dew, which had not yet evaporated under the trees, and in consequence this fatal disease seized upon the puppies that had been placed there for the sake of shelter from the intense heat.

There was a singular fatality that dogged the York and Ainsty after the great accident. William Powter, the second Whip, who was not on board the ferry-boat at the time of the disaster, met with a fatal accident during the following cub-hunting season. I had just been in conversation with him, and showing him a horse that I was riding, a four-year-old called "Kettleholder," who had been heavily backed for the Hunt Cup at Ascot earlier in the summer, and for the Cambridgeshire the year previous; a horse that was beautifully bred, being by "Kettledrum," winner of the Derby, out of the flying "Ellermire," the dam of "Elland," the winner of the Ascot Vase. After looking at him Bill jumped a fence, and cantered on round the end of the covert, and was never seen again alive. He was found a little later on the far-side of a fence, lying with a broken neck, though what had happened nobody could tell, as no one had seen him at the time.

Sir George Wombwell became the new Master of the York and Ainsty, with Peter Collinson as his Huntsman, and they again were succeeded by the Hon. Egremont Lascelles and Squires. Alas! another fatal accident happened, the huntsman's horse kneeling a low stile near Marton Village, and breaking his rider's neck in the fall.

Such disasters, following so quickly one after the other, threw such a chill over the Hunt that it was years before the country seemed to emerge from the cloud that overshadowed it.

With regard to the relative speed of horses, hounds, and foxes, a further illustration was afforded by the late Mr. H. S. Thompson undertaking, for a bet, to catch a fox by himself, by riding it down. The trial took place many years ago on the Wolds, when a fox being found, Mr. Thompson rode after it, a fair start having been allowed, and in a few fields got up to it. The fields there are very huge, and the fences, though very strong, stiff, quick-set hedges, have no ditches to them. On reaching the fox, Mr. Thompson kept close behind it, constantly flicking at it with his hunting-whip, until at last he drove it so distracted that it dashed into a fence and struggled to force its way through, where there was no smouse to help it. Jumping off his horse, Mr. Thompson secured it, and carrying it back in triumph to where the hounds were running the line, he threw it down before them and claimed his bet.

He was one of the best of the early steeplechase riders, and the famous Allen M'Donough, with all his recollections of such men as Jem Mason, Lord Clanricarde, Black Tom Oliver, Captain Becher, and others equally good, once said to me: "Of all the jockeys that I often rode against, the most difficult to shake off was Mr. Thompson. You never knew when he was done with; and after you thought his horse was completely beaten, he would come again and make a fight of it."

In early life he joined the King's Dragoons in company with his fellow Yorkshireman, Mr. W. H. Thompson, who was afterwards well known on racecourses and in the hunting-field as "Colonel Thompson," through commanding the East Yorkshire Militia, or "Beverley Buffs." Together, when quartered in Ireland, they used to visit the Irish

race meetings, Mr. "Henry" riding in the steeplechases and Mr. "George" in the flat races. They had a compact that if either was "called out" in that fire-eating land, the other was to attend in the capacity of "second." "You crassed me, sor," said one of the beaten competitors to Mr. George, who had just won, "and I'd like to know what ye mane by it." "I did not cross you," replied the other. "Ye did crass me," returned the Irishman. "I did not cross you," answered Mr. George; "but there's an elegant case of pistols in the carriage there, and I'll cross them with you as soon as you like." The other suddenly found he had pressing business elsewhere, and no more was heard about his grievance.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

IN after life Mr. Henry Thompson became very famous for his marvellous powers as a mesmerist, and he used his great gifts very much indeed in alleviating pain, and in assisting in medical and surgical cases. The late renowned Dr. Simpson, of York, used to tell him that in any serious case that he was attending, he would come himself, and throw the sanction of his great name over the case. A headache would generally speedily yield to a few mesmeric passes. Stiff joints were frequently manipulated after the patient had been thrown into a trance, and adhesions were thus sometimes painlessly broken down, and the full use of the limb eventually restored, without the subject being aware of the treatment he had undergone. One person walked continually round the room when "mesmerised," and yet for long afterwards refused even to try and stand when in possession of his ordinary mental faculties, declaring that the knee-joint was completely ankylosed, and thoroughly believing that the power of motion had gone. It was only by bringing him back to his senses suddenly, when in the very act of walking, that he at last found out that he really could walk again.

On another occasion Mr. Thompson very kindly came to Thorpe Green to endeavour to mitigate the headaches that the late Mrs. Barnes used constantly to suffer from.

On his arrival, the patient could not summon up courage to be mesmerised, and seeing that she was beginning to get excited, he made a signal to her husband, bade her good-night, and left the room. He instantly returned again very silently with her husband, and the latter passed into the room, whilst the mesmerist remained behind a screen, that happened to be there to exclude draughts, without Mrs. Barnes knowing that he was there. He began to make "passes," and in a few minutes Mrs. Barnes exclaimed to her husband, "The pain has moved across here," putting her finger on the spot indicated. Very shortly after she exclaimed again, "It is very odd, the pain has gone altogether," and then Mr. Thompson stepped out from his concealment, and she found that she had been mesmerised without her knowing the fact.

On another occasion, the clergyman of the neighbouring parish of Shipton had a son exceedingly ill with internal inflammation. The doctors in attendance said that the only chance for life was to induce a violent perspiration, but every means to produce this had failed, and in despair Mr. Pickering sent to ask Mr. Thompson to come and try his powers. He did so, and sat by the bedside "Willing" for the desired result, and before very long the child was bathed in most profuse perspiration, and his life was saved.

The power of clairvoyance, shown by those who are in the mesmeric trance, is often very great, and a remarkable instance of this was shown by Mrs. Harland, of Sutton Hall, who for a considerable time required a course of mesmeric treatment. It was the custom of Mr. Thompson to leave his patients in the trance, and allow them to come naturally out of it, instead of rudely arousing them, as is more frequently done, and he thought that there was less

trial to the nervous system by so doing. As a rule they would awake at their usual time in the morning, as if they had only enjoyed an ordinary night's sleep, if left quietly to themselves. Before finally leaving them, however, he was in the habit of asking them if they were quite comfortable, when, if there was anything on their mind, they would tell him what it was. Unless they were pacified, and the irritating cause removed, they were quite unable to rest comfortably, and their nerves became more or less upset.

When Mrs. Harland, on this occasion, was interrogated, she replied that she was very unhappy, because George (Mr. Thompson's son) was ill at Eton. She further stated that the doctor was treating him quite wrong and thought it was nothing, and there was a letter in the post-box at Eton to his father to say so; "but," she added, "it is not so, the hurt is here," putting her hand to her temple as she said the words.

After soothing her as best he could, and seeing her lapse quietly into sleep, Mr. Thompson went straight home to Fairfield, and was so impressed with what she had said, that he only waited to pack up a few things, and then started off at once for Eton College, actually passing on his way the very letter of which Mrs. Harland had spoken. On his arrival he found his son very dangerously ill indeed, and the latter has kindly written the particulars as follows:—

"The story of the clairvoyant telling my father, when I was at Eton, that I was very ill, that the doctor there was treating me quite wrong, that I was suffering from congestion of the brain from a bad fall I had had against a door, is quite true.

“My father came down to Eton, took me to see Dr. Elliotson in London, and the first question I was asked was, ‘Have you had a bad knock on the head?’ I began to think, and then remembered that in the holidays, in rushing out of a room, I had slipped and fallen against the lock of the door, but beyond having a bad headache, I did not think anything of it at the time.

“I had to leave Eton, and for a year was neither allowed to look at a book nor eat any meat, starving both mind and body.”

If it had not been for the very opportune and remarkable power of clairvoyance shown by Mrs. Harland, the illness of the young Etonian might have had even still more serious consequences.

On one occasion Mr. Thompson, with all his experience of the mysteries of mesmerism, confessed himself completely puzzled, and to the end of his life was quite unable to explain, or even understand the agency that produced the phenomenon. A horse under his management was the favourite for the Goodwood Stakes, and was sent from Yorkshire some days before the meeting commenced, for at that time there were very few trains, and racehorses had, like other folk, often to do their travelling by road. It was therefore necessary that they should arrive at the scene of action a few days before their race, to recover from the fatigue of the journey.

Mr. Thompson followed a few days after, and, having heard that there was a famous spirit-rapper in London, he thought he would go and see his performance, as there were a few hours to spare, before the coach started for Sussex. When the question was asked if anyone wished to call up a particular spirit, Mr. Thompson at once replied

that he should like to communicate with the familiar of Bill Scott, the famous jockey,—and he was accordingly summoned. From the very vigorous and characteristic language that was then rapped out, Mr. Thompson really believed that it must have been the shade of the jockey that was present. He ventured to ask, “Who would win the Goodwood Stakes?” and received at once the answer “You won’t.” Mr. Thompson was much taken aback, and asked, “Why?” and the answer again immediately came, “Because your horse has broken down.” As far as he knew, no one present was aware of Mr. Thompson’s identity or connection with the horse, which did not belong to him, and was not running in his name. He had only been in London a few hours, and had never been to this *séance* before, though as his was a prominent figure on the turf, it is probable enough that he might have been recognised when entering the room. He was sufficiently impressed with the information to go down to Tattersall’s before starting for Goodwood, and there hedged all the money for which he had backed the favourite.

On arriving at the stables the trainer was on the watch for him, and, on seeing him, exclaimed, “Oh, I’m so glad you have come.” “I know why,” said Mr. Thompson, “because the horse has broken down.” “How did you know?” asked the other; “there was not a soul there this morning, except the lad and myself, and I’ve kept him locked up in the saddle-room ever since we got back.” “Ah,” replied Mr. Thompson, “I’ve a tout that you know nothing of—one that I can depend upon”—and he then related to him how he had obtained his information and been able to hedge the stable money.

During the "sixties" there was an undergraduate at Cambridge who also had very great power of mesmerising, though at that period he only exercised it for the sake of amusement. His "patients" were other undergraduates, more especially a particular one who was peculiarly susceptible to his influence, and amongst other performances gave frequent exhibitions of clairvoyance. After being touched on the "bumps" over the eyebrows, and made to believe he was blind, he would read any book aloud, the *Times* newspaper and so forth; but the curious part of it was that the volume in question had to be held BEHIND HIS HEAD, and if placed before his eyes he was quite unable to read a word. To all intents and purposes he was blind for the time being, and would blunder over furniture in the middle of a well-lighted room exactly as if he was bereft of sight, or in a completely dark room. Any small article, such as a knife or pencil, held up behind his head he would at once identify, and he could recognise them just the same when some one held them up on the further side of a closed door, so long as he stood with his back towards it. We generally kept the door just sufficiently ajar as to enable us to peep through and see if he was right, but whether the door was entirely closed or not made no difference to his power of perception. The only time I can remember to have seen him puzzled was when some one took out his watch and swung it round by the chain as fast as possible. He persisted in saying "It is a wheel." At last the owner of the watch ceased to swing it, and immediately the other exclaimed, "Oh, it is a watch" as soon as ever the gyrations became slower, and he was also able to discern the hour that the hands pointed to. When in this state he could tell us where

any one in the college was, and what he was engaged in doing—dining, playing cards, or so forth. The only difficulty was to direct his attention to the particular person concerning whom the information was required. He could not always grasp the identity of the individual, and his mind was apt to wander to other things. When once, however, he realised who the person was, he was instantly able to recognise him in whatever part of the college he might be.

His physical powers were often put to outrageously severe tests, but undergraduates do not always stop to consider cause and effect! The one that he afterwards used to complain of most—though he was perfectly unaware of what treatment he had been subjected to, only knowing that whatever it had been, it had caused his muscles to ache very much and feel as if they had been very severely tried—was when he was placed sitting in an ordinary wooden chair, and was made to hold his legs out perfectly horizontal from the hips and as stiff as if they were made of wood. While in this position three stalwart young fellows would stand on his shins betwixt the knees and the ankles, and he could bear this great weight—considerably over 30 st.—without giving way in the least. To enable him to withstand the strain, it was necessary for two strong men to hold him down in the chair by the shoulders, pulling backwards with all their might, or else he would have toppled forwards. I verily believe that weight might have been piled on until the muscles snapped before they would have relaxed. It was rather curious that it was in the muscles of the chest and shoulders that he afterwards complained of feeling most aches, and he did not seem to notice much effect on the

muscles of his thighs and calves, which it would seem at first sight to have undergone the greatest trial.

A further feat was for him to lie at full length on the floor, and then to be "stiffened" from head to heel, after which he was raised up "as stiff as a board," and his head placed on one chair and his heels on another. It would perhaps be thought that it was an impossibility for him to sustain his own weight thus, but, in addition to that, the mesmerist—weighing a good 12 st.—would step on to his stomach and stand there. I confess I felt very uncomfortable at this part of the performance, for I feared lest his neck might break, though apparently my fears were groundless, and he never specially mentioned afterwards of having felt that he had been undergoing a severe trial.

It was sometimes wondered whether he could not, in this state, compete in a high jump at athletic sports, for his performances when mesmerised were perfectly phenomenal. In his own *propria persona*, he was a short, slight, rather feeble man, without any inclination towards athletics of any kind, and of the most moderate muscular power; and yet under that mysterious influence he was a giant in strength and a wonderful athlete. To bring out his jumping talents it was necessary to make him believe that he was a cock, and then to tell him to fly. It really was a most amusing scene. From the moment he believed that he was really the head of the farmyard, he would go down into almost a sitting posture and keep flapping his arms, and crowing, and making the most extraordinary hops all over the room. This was varied by endeavouring to scratch up the carpet with his feet—*à la poule*—and then, on finding some supposed edible, would give a cock's call note, endeavouring all

the time to pick up the grain with his mouth. Some Windsor chairs used then to be set back to back, and with great flaps of his arms, he would come hopping along, and jump over them with ease. He could just manage to get over four of them, but five always brought him to grief; and yet, with the most undaunted courage, he would turn round and essay them again. When a leaping bar was erected, he would "fly" over an extraordinary height, always from the same almost sitting posture, and he could clear more than five feet, and thus it was that the idea was suggested of trying him at the athletic sports. The difficulties in the way were, however, so very obvious, that the notion was abandoned almost as soon as it was started.

There was one "character" that was really awful to look upon, and that was when the bump of "murder" was touched, though governed by touching at the same time the bump of "caution." The instantaneous change of countenance that followed—the most fiendish face that could almost be imagined that he assumed—was indeed extraordinary, and fearful to see. The sole idea that then possessed the unhappy "subject" seemed to be to make away with the man that he undoubtedly regarded as his tormentor. Snatching up something in the form of a knife, he would commence to sharpen it, continually feeling the edge and the point, and glaring all the time at the mesmerist. Suddenly, without the slightest warning, he would leap upon him, and endeavour to stab him with all his force, and yet that "bump of caution" invariably prevented him from actually striking his victim. Working himself into a frenzy, foaming at the mouth, and endeavouring with all his might to strike the knife into

the other, he presented such a personation of a fiend incarnate as the most lively imagination could scarcely conjure up. When he found that he could not drive the knife into the mesmerist, he would place the point against the other's chest, and strike the butt with all his force, regardless of hurting his own hand, and thus endeavour to effect his purpose. Then he would strive to cut his throat, drawing the knife backwards and forwards, and shrieking with rage and disappointment. All this time the mesmerist, a big, powerful man, stood perfectly still, without moving the fraction of an inch, for if he had met the blows of the other by ever so little a distance he might have been seriously hurt, as the would-be murderer was most violent in his efforts, and every time almost grazed the skin with his weapon. At the last—and for which we stood ready prepared to rush to the rescue—the other suddenly flung the knife away, and with a leap and a shriek, flung himself upon the other, and seized him by the throat with both hands. Big and powerful as was the victim, and puny and weak as was the other, yet such was the extraordinary strength the latter was now endowed with, that the former was as a child in his grasp, and if immediate help had not been at hand, undoubtedly he would have been strangled. As it was, it required the united strength of two or three of us to drag them apart, and then the patient was rapidly brought to by flicking a silk handkerchief two or three times across his face, when he could come to himself with a start, perfectly oblivious of what had just taken place.

What the motive power is in mesmerism, and the uses that may be made of it, has yet to be discovered and developed. That by its aid deeds can be performed that

would otherwise be miraculous, is an undoubted fact, and electricity is probably a large element in the case. It is, however, a subject that should not be trifled with, and it hardly seems mete that it should be used as a means of extracting shillings from the multitude, and shown as a popular spectacle on the boards of a music hall.

The leaps and bounds by which science has advanced during the present century, and the progress that has been made, is something so marvellous that it is impossible to foresee what new developments may be in store in the coming era. Amongst them, however, electricity must take a foremost place, and, in studying it, much will be learned about its distant branches, in which, very possibly, may be included "mesmerism," or rather, "animal magnetism."

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONCLUSION.

THERE are times and seasons in the lives of men and nations, when it is advantageous to take stock of their position, and the same holds good of sports and pastimes, as well as in matters of business and commerce.

For me this seems a suitable opportunity. My life coincides with the last half of the century, the landmarks are therefore prominent, and the horizon is clearly defined.

What, then, is the key-note of the whole. It may, perhaps, be summed up in the single word "Pace." Everything now gives place to this. In it is embodied the feverish haste and love of constant change, which now characterises the nation. It is even shown by its amusements, by the rise of the popular taste for the Palace of Varieties, and the decline of solid worth, typified by the opera and classical music.

In every detail of life a tendency is shown to have something new and showy, regardless of lasting qualities. "Jerry" buildings take the place of the old-fashioned houses, built to last for centuries. The broad-cloth which made the fame of British goods pre-eminent throughout the world, and which could be worn for half a lifetime, is ousted from its place by shoddy-made clothes. The taste being now for newness and cheapness, honest workmanship is at a discount, and goods are only "made to sell."

This was amusingly demonstrated lately, when taking a pair of razors to be "set" at the cutler's shop. They were given to me by my father, and had been left to him by his father, whose decease occurred in 1853, and they have been my toilet companions since 1874. In joke I said to the shopman, "These are good steel, are they not? You do not sell such razors now?" To which he replied, after gravely examining them, "No! why, you might shave every day with them for three or four years! It would never pay to sell such steel." When I told him I had been shaving with them for more than twenty years, he was horrified. He took care, however, to do something for trade before he returned them, for he ground more steel away than had been worn in all the years that they had been in use.

In our sports the tendency for pace is shown by the anxiety shown to break records, and from morning to night everything seems done in a hurry.

For producing increased celerity the cleverest brains have been ever at work devising fresh aids in every phase of life, and improvement follows rapidly upon improvement.

The mail coach of the early part of the century gave way to the railway train of the "forties," but this, in turn, is as much surpassed by the express corridor train of the "nineties," as the "Rocket" excelled the four-horse coach of the earlier period.

When the detonating percussion cap supplanted the flint-lock gun, it was deemed to be perfection, yet it had to give way to the Lefauchaux breechloader, on account of the increased ease and quickness in loading; yet this again, in these days of "ejectors"—with their marvellous

delicate mechanism—is as much out of date as the most antiquated weapon of the early days of gunning.

“Shooting over dogs” has had to retire in favour of “driving,” and as “gunners” have multiplied by thousands in the last part of the century, the amount of game to satisfy the ever-increasing army of shooters has had to be augmented accordingly, while the shooting rents have risen correspondingly. Since “practice makes perfect,” however, it is undoubted that the art of gunning has attained a much higher level than was formerly the case, and in no branch of sport do I notice such an improvement to have taken place as in that of shooting. The skill that would have caused a person formerly to have become a celebrity is now so common that it is scarcely noticed, and there are dozens of good shots now to each one that there was some thirty or forty years ago,—perhaps, though, there is not much difference between those who were then at the very top of the tree, and the few who occupy the same position at the present time, for “there were brave men before Agamemnon,” and even in the days of flint-locks there were men who could have held their own with the very best shots that are famous now.

In fishing there is a similar vast increase in the numbers of the votaries of the sport, and where there was one angler in the “fifties” and “sixties,” there are probably now hundreds. The fish have become so wary from constant persecution, that increased skill is required for success, though the improvement in the tackle within reach of the angler has kept pace with the exigencies of the situation, and enables the followers of the sport to cope with the difficulties of the time. Split-cane rods; beauti-

fully made waterproof, tapered lines, and marvellous "floating flies," make "dry-fly" fishing comparatively easy to what it was when this form of angling first came into fashion. Successful as this is on the sluggish chalk streams of Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Southern England, it must not be deemed that there is no skill required to capture the sharp-eyed trout by the wet-fly process in the well-whipped, rocky streams of the North of England. Many a dry-fly fisherman, who has thought in his heart of hearts that he was about to give the natives a lesson, has had to confess that he had something yet to learn, when he ruefully compares his own light basket at the end of the day with the well-filled panniers of those he thought he was about to teach.

In racing, the desire is all for "short cuts," and plenty of them, in lieu of the old four-mile races, and "heats," and whereas the latter imperatively required a stout, true made, strong constituted animal to be successful, while the former may be won by a horse possessing only the one attribute of speed, it is obvious that the result of the racing of this century has not been altogether in the direction of the improvement of the horse, as a generally useful animal. In this no doubt the old truism still holds good, as in every other walk of life, "*medio tutissimus ibis*," and if the Jockey Club will but resolutely follow out the plan that they have sketched, of increasing the distances for older horses, and deferring the running of two-year-olds till the autumn of their year, much good may result. The professed object of permitting racing to take place at all, is the improvement of the breed of horses, and if, on the contrary, deterioration takes place, the only weapon of defence is taken away from the fol-

lowers of the pursuit against the arguments of the great majority of the people, who decry racing on account of its attendant evils. As a means of gambling only, racing would have but a short life before it.

In the accessories of racing—though not in the horses themselves, except in the item of speed—a great improvement has taken place, especially in the matter of comfort and facilities for seeing. This has been largely due to the advantages offered by the managers of enclosed courses, who vie with each other in catering for the patronage of the public. What was good enough for our grandfathers is no longer good enough for us, and a higher standard of comfort is assured at all well-managed race meetings. The tracks, too, are equally looked after, and, being well covered with herbage, which is duly watered and rolled, all objectionable turns done away with, railings instead of posts at the turning-points, and “straight miles” and “six furlongs,” the jockeys of the period know little of the rough country courses that their predecessors had to jeopardise their lives and limbs over in the usual exercise of their profession.

Cricket has also shared in the general improvement. Picturesque pavilions replace the former scanty accommodation that sometimes even consisted of only a few wooden benches, while the “pitch” itself more nearly approaches the smoothness of a bowling-green, than the ill-cared-for grounds on which the “All England” and “United All England” elevens were wont to meet the local “Twenty-twos” during their country tours. The improved conditions under which cricket is now carried on make it possible to compile the enormous scores that are now so frequent, for unless the wicket “breaks” in the course of

a match, there are few irregularities in the ground to give assistance to the bowler.

Still, the removal of the restriction which formerly forbade the hand to be raised above the shoulder when delivering the ball, makes it even now almost as dangerous to face very fast bowling as in the days when the humorous picture appeared in *Punch*, of the victim to the terrific pace of Jackson, who was one of the fastest bowlers that the world has ever seen.

Other pastimes have held sway for a time, and then have lost their attraction when some newer rival has appeared upon the scene. Croquet for many years held absolute sway at garden parties until it remained but a memory, when lawn tennis became the universal favourite. This, however, in turn has been compelled to partially retire, owing to the unexpected restoration of croquet to popular favour, though the latter has reappeared in so altered a form that its earlier worshippers have difficulty in recognising it as the same game they so energetically pursued in the bygone days of yore.

Golf, the latest innovation, long maintained a precarious foothold at "Westward Ho," in Devonshire, but never succeeded in establishing itself elsewhere until it suddenly swept with irresistible force from across the Border, and now boasts legions of followers in England as keen as even Scotchmen themselves.

The pastime, however, that has really caused a social revolution is cycling. When once the light, swift "safety" made its appearance, shortly followed by the invention of the pneumatic tyre, it "caught on" with marvellous rapidity, and has undoubtedly come to stay. So long as the wooden "bone-shaker" was the only pattern,

few persons cared to tussle with that clumsy machine. This was followed by the high "ordinary," and a considerable impulse was given to the new movement when it was found possible to make a long journey with its assistance, without undue fatigue. It was, however, an impracticable mount for ladies, and was only suitable for young, athletic persons, who did not regard a fall from it as necessarily a serious accident. In its present form the "ubiquitous bike" has become the common hack of everyone from the highest to the lowest, and has supplied a long-felt want in the happiest manner. Apart from the pleasure of rapid travelling, it has placed a cheap mode of locomotion within the reach of those whose limited means preclude the expenditure involved in keeping even the humblest pony and vehicle; and it has come as a boon and a blessing to hundreds of girls who formerly were condemned to pass their youth in the narrow sphere that was limited to the extent of their own powers of pedestrianism.

A great change has taken place in coursing, and although Altcar still keeps up its renown and high character, in other localities recourse has been obliged to be had to enclosed places, owing mainly to the scarcity of hares, through the ill-advised "Hares and Rabbits Bill," fathered by Sir William Harcourt. The character of the sport is necessarily altered, and there is little left of the old charm that surrounded it formerly. When hares were plentiful, many a large farmer kept his brace or two of greyhounds, and was in frequent enjoyment of a merry gallop after them, in company with a friend or two when riding round his farm, and this naturally led to a local coursing club, and the meeting of a few neighbours to run their dogs against each other in friendly rivalry. The Bill

above mentioned struck a deadly blow against this innocent, healthy, country sport. It destroyed one of the few amusements within reach of the farmers, who have so many other evils to contend against, and has practically put an end to local coursing.

The retrospect of hunting, unfortunately, is scarcely very favourable to its future, for forces are at work which tend in many respects to militate against its well-being. Increased facilities of travel, combined with lowered rents and depreciated income, serve to induce owners of estates to winter abroad, and thus save the cost of keeping up establishments at home with a stud of hunters they can ill afford to buy or to maintain. The country-house being shut up, the next step is to let the shooting also, and this is often taken by persons who do not hunt and who naturally desire to obtain as large a return for their outlay as they can manage to secure. Foxes are therefore not so carefully preserved, subscriptions to the hunt are diminished, and the social gathering of neighbours at the meet is reduced, all from the same cause.

Personal influence counts for much everywhere, and most of all in the country. When the landlord no longer resides at home, encouraging the sport by his example and precept, his tenants do not take the same interest in the hunt as when the squire is a hunting man and lives amongst them.

As local purchasers become more scarce, the inducement to breed a good class of horse is withdrawn, and so the farmer ceases to take an occasional day with the hounds when he has no longer a promising young horse coming on to educate into a hunter that might some day carry the squire. His active participation in the field

having ceased, he is apt to become more impressed with the usefulness of barbed wire for strengthening a weak place in the fence or making up a gap, while he does not realise the difference it would make in the price of his farm produce if all the money put in circulation by a hunt was suddenly withdrawn.

How many and vast are the interests involved in the maintenance of a pack of hounds was very clearly shown when the senseless raid against hunting was promulgated in the early "eighties" by the Parnellites in Ireland.

The distress in the county of Kildare alone was very great, and in many cases unexpected. It was not only the persons directly employed that were affected, such as grooms, saddlers, blacksmiths, and car drivers, but also all the trades which in their turn were dependent on their support, and supplied these people with their necessaries; bootmakers, small provision dealers, tailors, public-house keepers, and others were all involved in a common ruin. As no one had any money to spend, the farmers were utterly unable to sell poultry, butter, eggs, milk, beef, or mutton, in addition to hay, corn, or straw. The ramifications proved to be so great that the so-called leaders of the nation were compelled to reconsider their shortsighted policy ere another season commenced, and to receive hunting again into favour to stave off actual want and starvation.

One thing is certain. If all hunting throughout England was to end, the loss of the money that now circulates therefrom would cause an amount of misery and hardship which it is impossible to estimate, and that must eventually recoil upon the farmers. In every way it is their interest to foster the chase. The market for farm

produce that is thereby caused would be eagerly welcomed by any other country in the world, if they had the opportunity to secure it; and, without hunting, the pinch of free trade would be felt far more acutely than it even is at present.

The fostering of field sports is a national question. The hardihood and resource that are thereby engendered go far towards making the national character; and if Waterloo was won in the Eton playing-fields, it is the love of sport that make the rank and file the all-conquering soldiers that they are, the envy of the world, and the despair of foreign nations—*Vivat Regina, et fiat Imperium in orbe terrarum.*

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