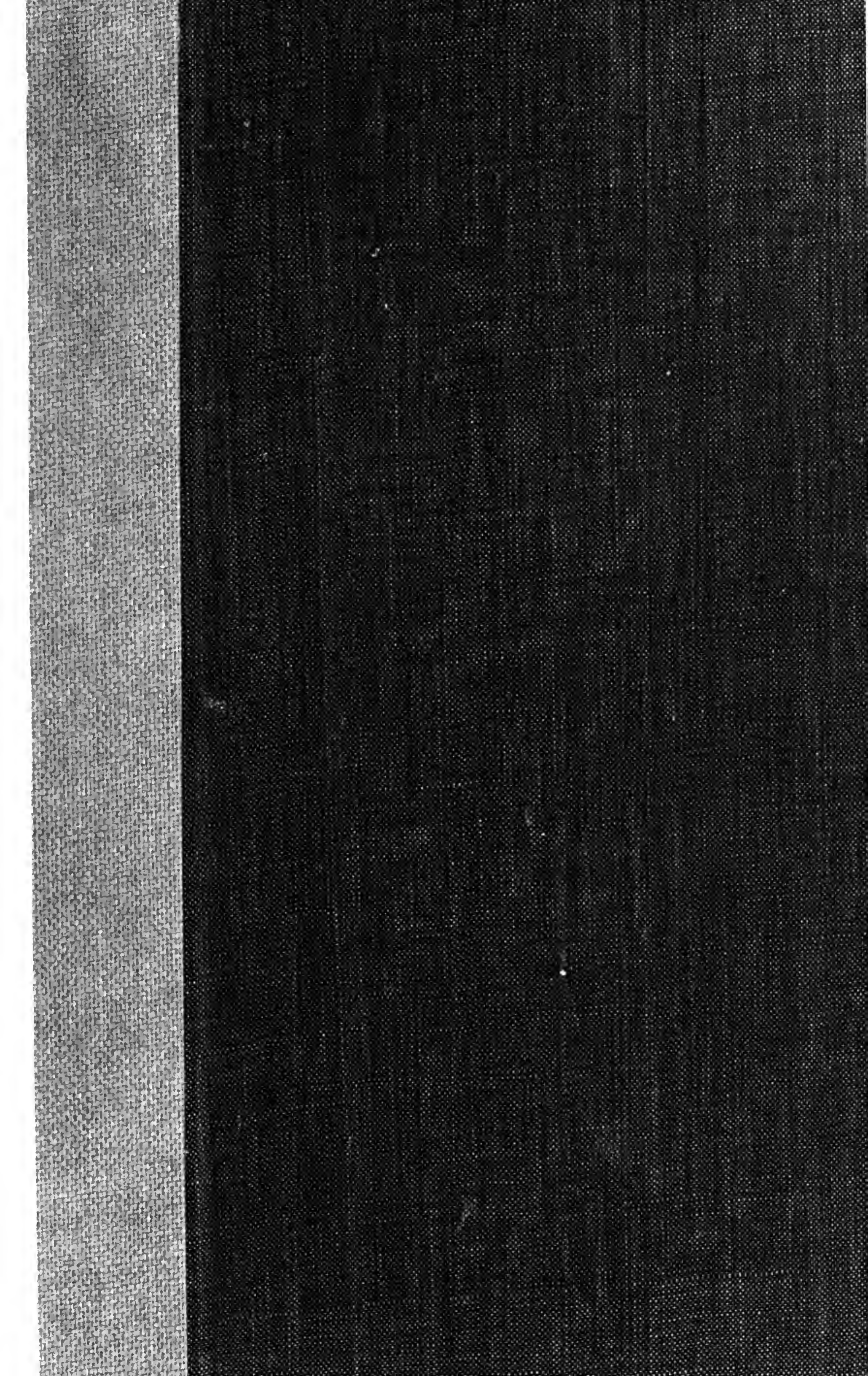

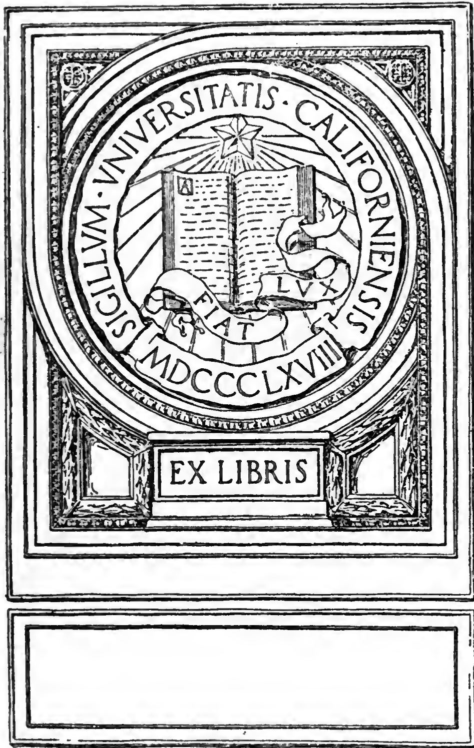
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SPORTING DAYS AND SPORTING WAYS

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SPORTING DAYS AND SPORTING WAYS

BY

RALPH NEVILL

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PART AUTHOR OF "PICCADILLY TO PALL MALL"

LONDON
DUCKWORTH & CO.
3 HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN
1910

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GV75 N4

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The Author is desirous of expressing his thanks to Mr. Mowbray Morris for allowing him to print the hitherto unpublished verses given on pages 6 and 7. He also wishes to acknowledge the great courtesy of Mr. E. North Buxton, Verderer of Epping Forest, who most obligingly supplied him with information as to the present numbers of the fallow deer which, thanks to judicious preservation, still inhabit the woodlands into which they were introduced many hundreds of years ago.

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SPORTING DAYS AND SPORTING WAYS

I

THE closing years of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth may be called the "Golden Age" of the man of pleasure who was then a recognised type, much toleration being extended to the most unconventional ways and doings. Sport, often of a somewhat rough description, was the life-long occupation of a large number of people, and not infrequently the meaning of the term was stretched to include much that would to-day seem unalluring, if not positively brutal. London was an altogether different city from the one we now see. Luxury was only for the privileged few, but the populace had a good deal of rough enjoyment of a sort unknown to our more fastidious age. The ordinary conveniences of life, now so perfect, left much to be desired. To begin with, the facilities for locomotion were of a primitive description, the only public vehicles being the old-fashioned hackney coaches, with a pair of horses that never exceeded five miles an hour. There were no omnibuses or hansom cabs, the first of the former having been

introduced in 1828 by Shillibeer. One hundred years ago the police did not exist, and when it was dark the old Charlies went their dreary rounds, crying the hour and the state of the weather. Occasionally, as they slumbered away a portion of the night in their watch-boxes, dashing bucks, elevated by a festive evening, would let them quietly down, when, like a tortoise under his shell, the unhappy guardian of the public peace could only by great efforts just get his head out and call for assistance. In Saint James's Street stood a row of sedan chairs, which the dowagers of Saint James's made use of to attend their whist parties, and these sometimes met with the same fate as the watchmen's boxes. After dark the springing of the watchmen's rattles was no unusual sound, and many a Corinthian passed a night in the cells of Vine Street, before being fined the following morning at the Marlborough Street Police Office. Tyburnia had few or no dwellings on it, and Belgravia had not sprung into existence. The Five Fields where Eaton Square and its neighbourhood now stand were swampy grounds, into which rubbish was cast, and the Life Guards occasionally went there to exercise. At Chalk Farm, a district now long covered with houses, was a nice country inn which people frequented in order to enjoy the fresh air and to eat syllabubs. Chelsea bun-house was then a favourite resort well known to all schoolboys; it was approached by green fields. Regent Street, the construction of which was authorised by an Act of Parliament in 1813, was considered a great novelty as a public thoroughfare. Nash,

the architect, had a style of his own which was not entirely devoid of merit. His strange mixture of Doric, Ionic, and Corinthian in the houses was, for want of a better designation, called Nash's "Positive Order." New Bond Street was the fashionable promenade, and there the lounger was sure to meet his friends and acquaintances after four in the afternoon. The national theatres were well frequented, and it was very much the fashion to dine at the Bedford and Piazza coffee-houses in Covent Garden, as being in close proximity to them. Such places were also well used by people who went to read the newspapers, which then often contained a number of quaint announcements characteristic of the age. The following, for instance, appeared in a London paper of April, 1810: "To be sold, a Sugar Plantation, in the island of Grenada, comprising 558 acres of land, and 230 slaves upon it, including several valuable tradesmen! The situation of this estate is so healthy that the stock of slaves has for the last thirty years been kept up, and rather increased, without purchasing!"

The reference to the valuable tradesmen is rather amusing.

The suburbs around London were then highly rural in character, and the first attempts to impair their sylvan charm were stoutly resisted. When, for instance, a manufactory of some sort or other was established near Twickenham Common, those living in the neighbourhood objected to the offensive smells which the works in question produced, and a lawsuit began as to whether they constituted a nuisance.

During the hearing of this case an amusing incident occurred. Opposite to this manufactory dwelt a superannuated admiral, who was supposed not to have been in his best fighting humour on some important occasion at sea. He was a witness in the case, and having already declared upon oath that the stench of the works was intolerable, he was required to say what this intolerable smell resembled. It is not always easy to hit upon a comparison, and the veteran was puzzled; he could only repeat, "Like, like—I don't know what it's like; it's like the horridest smell I ever smelt in my life!"

"Was it like gunpowder, Admiral?" said the malicious counsel.

The whole court saw the point, and amidst general laughter the witness retreated to his place.

Not only the life, but the dress and even the language of Londoners differed very much from what they are to-day. For a considerable period the curious habit of mispronouncing "w" was widely spread amongst all sections of the population except the aristocracy.

This lasted well into the middle of the century, as Dickens's novels show.

The mispronunciation is well illustrated by the following dialogue—a short conversation between a pursy liveryman and his servant.

Master.—Villiam, I vaunts my vig.

Boy.—Vich vig, Sar?

Master.—Vy, the vite vig in the vooden vig-box, vich I vore last Vensday at the Westry.

It frequently produced ludicrous effects. At Brighton, for instance, the public crier once gave notice that there had been found under the rocks, about a mile to the east, a black-spotted patent lace "whale."

A feature of old London life were the sporting hotels, which, even up to about some fifty years ago and later, were recognised resorts for fashionable sportsmen. At Hatchett's and the Blue Posts were to be found the sporting squires come up to London for a taste of town life; whilst Limmer's and Long's, the latter of which still exists in an altered form, were much frequented by men about town. The notorious Jack Mytton was especially fond of this latter resort. Arriving in town one day, the squire of Halston, who happened to be particularly anxious to hunt with Lord Derby's staghounds, which met that day at Caterham Common, took another sportsman's cabriolet which was waiting outside this hotel whilst its owner had gone in to talk to Sir Godfrey Webster. Mytton, who had at first contemplated seizing Sir Godfrey's chariot and four, also waiting at the Clifford Street entrance, made prisoners of war of both cab and tiger, and, almost as much to the astonishment of the latter as of the unfortunate black horse between the shafts, proceeded forthwith to Smitham Bottom at about the pace of an express train. This unceremonious proceeding, far from leading to trouble, originated a warm friendship between the eccentric squire and the owner of the cabriolet.

Limmer's retained its sanded floor up to comparatively recent years, when it was rebuilt, and as a result lost its sporting traditions and clientèle. There was a famous head waiter at old Limmer's—John Collins by name—no doubt the well-known drink was called after him. A celebrated song about this character was very popular at one period. According to a tradition prevalent at Limmer's, in Whyte-Melville's time, it was written by Charles and Frank Sheridan, in order to while away a rainy morning. The names of nearly all the frequenters of the place were introduced. It was never published, but seems to have been freely circulated in manuscript, and used to be sung to the well-known air of *Jenny Jones*. The following stanzas are all that have survived :

My name is John Collins, head-waiter at Limmer's,
  The corner of Conduit Street, Hanover Square,
My chief occupation is filling of brimmers
  To solace young gentlemen laden with care.

Mrs. Cole sells kid gloves for to go to the opera,
  While Peter sits scratching his head in the bar ;
And Henry, I think, should behave his self properer,
  Who'll give on the sly a Havanna cigar ?

Our Peter he wished to be clerk at Saint George's ;
  But the Rector he said that those sort of men,
Who could callously view our young gentlemen's orgies,
  Would be calling *Coming* instead of *Amen.*

That he'd register marriage as *Brandy and Water,*
  And indecently enter a birth as a *Go ;*
And in short, tho' in Heaven they have Peter for porter,
  'Twas not that sort of Peter—so he would not do.

My ale-cup's the best that ever you tasted,
Mr. Frank always drinks my gin-punch when he smokes,
I can carve every joint that ever was basted—
And give you a wrinkle or two on the Oaks.

I'm old, but I'm hearty; I'm grey, but I'm merry;
I don't wish to go, and few wish me gone;
Shall I bring you a pint, or a bottle of sherry,
To drink the good health and long life of Old John?

The only surviving stanza of a number dealing with habitués of Limmer's is as follows:

There's Lewis Ricardo, so full of bravado,
And sweet Spencer Cowper, a blood I declare;
There's profligate Punch, who's so fond of his lunch,
And conkey Jem Howard, who ne'er knows despair.

Punch was an old Eton nickname of Charles Greville (the Clerk of the Council), known in later days as The Gruncher, from his manner and temper.

Lord Waterford was a constant frequenter of the sporting hostelries of London, and at Limmer's conceived many of his wild jokes.

The eccentricities of this nobleman were indeed numberless. He painted the Melton toll-bar a bright red, put aniseed on the hoofs of a parson's horse, and hunted the terrified divine with bloodhounds. On another occasion he put a donkey into the bed of a stranger at an inn. He took a hunting-box in the shires, and amused himself with shooting out the eyes of the family portraits with a pistol. He smashed a very valuable French clock on the staircase at Crockford's with a blow of his fist, and solemnly proposed to one of the first railway com-

panies in Ireland to start two engines in opposite directions on the same line in order that he might witness the smash, for which he proposed to pay.

Very handy with his fists, Lord Waterford used to sally out with Lord Methuen and the two brothers, Billy and Ffolliot Duff, the party being never so happy as when engaging butchers and draymen in fistic encounters. Lord Methuen was a man of prodigious physique, and in his day was reputed to have raised a fifteen-stone man from a table with one hand. Billy Duff, on the other hand, was of light and square build, but a very capable boxer. He fought a sturdy butcher once in the middle of Pall Mall, when the butcher, deceived by Duff's appearance, received a severe thrashing.

At times Lord Waterford was foolhardy almost beyond belief. On board his yacht, the *Charlotte*, in the Bay of Biscay, whilst it was blowing a gale, this scion of a mercurial stock happened to lose his cap, which was carried away by a gust of wind whilst he was on deck watching the sailors shorten sail.

"Hullo," said he to the captain, "there's my tile gone; lower away the boat and send some men to get it."

"My lord," respectfully urged his skipper, "no boat could live in such a sea."

"The deuce it can't," was the rejoinder; "then I'll see whether I can or not"; and as he spoke he leapt from the taffrail into the seething waters. It was now no time for hesitation, and the captain at once caused a boat to be lowered, and went to attempt the

rescue of his reckless master, who was eventually reached about a mile astern of the vessel in an exhausted condition, but clutching his cap!

As a horseman Lord Waterford was daring to the verge of insanity whilst having little idea of saving his mount. As a matter of fact, it was a veritable miracle that he lived till he was forty-eight, at which age (in March, 1859), having put a horse three times at a fence, it eventually fell and rolled over him.

A favourite joke of Mytton's and other wild sparks was to take timid people out in a gig and then wilfully overturn it. Gigs indeed were held accountable for numberless fractures, amputations, and deaths, for gig driving was highly popular with thousands who knew nothing about it. Knowledge, however, in this instance was often put to defiance, and several old and experienced road-coachmen were killed out of gigs.

Old gentlemen shook their heads at the doings of wild charioteers, and many pranks were played upon timid people.

A Staffordshire squire meeting his nephew one day in London, they began to compare notes, and it appeared that each was bound for Oxford the next morning. "How do you travel?" said the nephew. "I shall post it," replied the uncle. "You had better come with me, in my gig," rejoined the nephew; "we shall do it comfortably in ten hours." "Hang your gig!" said the old man. "I hate the very sight of them." "Oh," replied the young one, "mine is the quietest horse in England. A lighted cracker tied to his tail would not alarm him."

On hearing this, and ruminating on the expense of posting, the old gentleman consented to the proposal, and at eight o'clock the next morning they were under way. When they had got out of the park the uncle told his nephew that he had been brushing up his recollections, and he believed he could say that that was only the fifth time he ever had been in a gig in his life. "Oh," said the nephew, "my horse beats you by chalks, for he has never before been in one at all." It is needless to add that the old gentleman began to claw (as it was called on the road), and was out of the gig in the twinkling of his eye.

A volume might be filled up with the escapades of amateur coachmen, wild and often eccentric beyond belief.

One dashing buck chose a wife merely from having caught sight of her from his box-seat. This impulsive blade, passing through Clarges Street in his chariot early one morning, was struck with the appearance of a smart girl, washing the steps of the doorway. He stopped and, having entered into five minutes' conversation with her, persuaded this nymph of the mop to step into the carriage with him, in her dripping state, and the next morning conveyed her in better trim to church and married her!

Amateur coachmen were highly tenacious of the rights of the road. Their curious independence of spirit is well shown by an incident which occurred in 1814, the chief actor in which was a gentleman driving a barouche and four in a narrow street at Windsor. Making an effort to turn at the time the

Queen's coach was coming down the street from the Castle, in which were her Majesty, two of the Princesses, and the Duke of York, the Queen's horses unavoidably ran against the leaders of the barouche. Some confusion and considerable alarm to the Royal Family ensued before her Majesty's carriage could pass. No apology having been offered by the amateur whip, the Duke of York sent and pointed out the necessity of such a step. This, however, was peremptorily refused, the driver insisting that he was strictly right on every principle of true coachmanship, and therefore, instead of apologising for what he deemed no offence, he felt himself entitled to require that her Majesty's coachman should be discharged for his unskilful conduct in the exercise of his profession. Eventually an apology was offered by a friend, the driver resolutely declining to make the slightest move in this direction.

The great majority of men of fashion were thoroughly at home on the box-seat, and the Prince Regent himself was celebrated as an expert whip. His extravagance in connection with horses was absolutely unbridled, and as a consequence a farrier of the name of Layton, who lived at Walham Green, when the Prince's debts were being liquidated by Parliament, sent in a claim for shoeing and doctoring horses which amounted to no less than eleven thousand pounds. One-third of this amount was disallowed.

Layton, who is said to have been as ignorant of the principles of the veterinary art as any ploughman in

England, and to have ruined as many horses' feet as would fill St. Paul's, by the help of much effrontery, wearing a scarlet coat, and riding thoroughbred horses (he made it a common practice to ride to Brighton and back in a day), carried everything before him.

In his latter years George IV abandoned high-mettled horseflesh, and was content to jog along in a pony chaise. Driving with Lady Conyngham one fine day, the two beautiful Highland animals, overpowered by the weight of Royalty, turned restive, and would not stir an inch. In vain did the Sovereign apply the lash; in vain did the attendants pull at them. Even the soft and rosy palm of her ladyship, which could do wonders in the coaxing and persuasive line, had no effect. The attendants were out of breath, and the lady was out of patience; but the merry monarch lost not his temper, but coolly ordered one of his servants to fetch another carriage. "It would require an Act of Parliament," said he, "to move these Northern rebels; but I must say one thing in their favour—they are true game, for they seem as if they would rather die than run."

It was George IV who, though a great dandy in his youth, contributed chiefly, it was said, towards making gentlemen's clothes inartistic and dull in colour. He first introduced black neckcloths. His choice of dress was much influenced by the famous tailor, Stultz, who left such a large fortune.

Near Mannheim is a costly Gothic monument erected to his memory. Stultz was very charitable to his

countrymen, and endowed and built a hospital, in consideration of which the Grand Duke of Baden created him a baron.

Men about town, with plenty of spare time upon their hands, were always up to jokes of one kind or another. A confirmed joker of this sort, entering a music shop, was told by the proprietor that his assortment of instruments could not be beat. "I am sorry for that," replied the wag, "for then I shall have to go elsewhere—I want a drum!" Elaborate practical jokes were very popular.

About the middle of the last century Londoners were much mystified by the appearance of a phantom coach. It was drawn by four white horses, and was of old-fashioned construction, of the time of George III. The coachman and two footmen were in the dress of that period, with cocked hats, powdered hair, and bag wigs. It used to drive slowly into the Park at Hyde Park Corner, and then down one of the drives. It created a great sensation, and was quite the talk of the day, numbers of people going into the Park on the chance of seeing it. The mystery was at last solved, and it was discovered that it was done by some medical students at St. George's Hospital, by means of lights and reflecting mirrors.

The following joke, perpetrated at a time when whiskers were fashionable, was certainly of a most original kind.

A certain young dandy, who prided himself upon his appearance, excited a good deal of amusement amongst his acquaintances by his love of dress.

His fingers were hooped with rings, his shirt bosom was decked with a magnificent breastpin; coat, hat, vest, and boots were all immaculate, he wore kid gloves of remarkable whiteness; his hair was oiled and dressed in the latest and best style; and, to complete his killing appearance, he sported an enormous pair of whiskers, of which he was about as proud as a young cat is of her tail when she first discovers she has one!

Chancing to be in conversation with some friends, one of whom had refused a good offer for a horse, the dandy said that for his part he would be ready to sell anything he had if he could make money out of it.

"Oh, no," said some one, "not anything; for instance, you wouldn't sell your whiskers?"

"Oh, yes, I would for a good price, but I don't suppose any one would want to buy them, for, except to myself, they would be of no use. If, for instance, I was offered fifty pounds, I would sell them like a shot."

"Well, that's cheap enough," said his friend, who was a business man, "you'll sell your whiskers for fifty pounds?"

"I will."

"Both of them?"

"Both of them."

"I'll take them! When can I have them?"

"Any time you choose to call for them."

"Very well—they're mine. I think I shall double my money on them in the end."

The sale was concluded, the dandy writing on a piece of paper, "Received £50 for my whiskers, to be worn and taken care of by me, and delivered up when called for."

The fifty was paid, and the seller went off in high glee, telling every one he met of the good bargain he had made.

The purchaser meanwhile, though much chaffed, said:

"Who laughs last laughs best; I'll make a profit on those whiskers yet."

A week passed, and the dandy still had his whiskers, though whenever he met his friend he asked him when he intended to claim his purchases. "That's all right," would be the reply; "take care of *my* whiskers, I shall call for them some day, you may be sure."

A short time later, just before a great ball to which the dandy was going, the purchaser of the whiskers arrived in the latter's rooms, and was met by the remark:

"Come for your whiskers, I suppose; I am always ready for you, as you know."

"Perhaps," was the reply. "Well, now I think of it, the present would be as good a time as any other; let's send for a barber and have them off."

The dandy was rather upset at this.

"You couldn't wait until to-morrow, could you?" he asked hesitatingly. "There's a ball to-night, you know——"

"To be sure there is, and I think you ought to go with a clean face; at all events, I don't see any reason

why you should expect to wear my whiskers at that ball."

After a short discussion, however, a barber was sent for, and the dandy having rather sulkily sat down, in a few moments his cheeks were in a perfect foam of lather. The barber was just about to commence operations when the purchaser of the whiskers said, "Stop," upon which the man quietly put up his razor, while the dandy started up from his chair in something very much resembling a passion.

"This isn't fair," he exclaimed; "you've claimed your whiskers—take them."

"I believe a man has a right to do as he pleases with his own property," remarked his friend, and walked out, leaving the poor man washing his face.

In a short time the story had got about, and several mutual friends told the business man that the joke was being carried too far, with the result that he eventually agreed that it was time for him to reap his crop the next day. He would, he so promised, write to the dandy to come round to a barber's, where the operation could be quietly performed. To this place the victim duly came, and, much to his disgust, found it full of spectators.

"I'm in a hurry," said he; "so be quick. I've got to take some ladies out to-day."

"Set to work, then," said his torturer to the barber. "Don't detain the gentleman any longer than you need."

The lathering was soon over, and with about three

strokes of the razor one side of his face was deprived of its ornament.

"Come, come," said the dandy, "push ahead—there is no time to be lost—let the gentleman have his whiskers—he is impatient."

The purchaser, however, now suddenly arrested further operations.

"After all," said he, very coolly, "I'm in no sort of hurry myself; and as you are in a great one, and I hate to keep ladies waiting, I'll not take the other whisker to-day."

The poor dandy blustered, begged, and argued all in vain; his persecutor was inflexible, and absolutely declined to take the remaining whisker. At length, becoming desperate, he began, amidst the loudly expressed mirth of the crowd, to propose terms of compromise—first offering the buyer ten pounds, then twenty, thirty, forty, fifty! to take off the remaining whisker. The latter said firmly, "My dear sir, there is no use talking; I insist on your wearing that whisker for me for a month or two."

"What will you take for the whiskers?" at length asked the poor man. "Won't you sell them back to me?"

"Ah," was the reply, "now you begin to talk as a business man should. Yes, I bought them as a speculation. I'll sell them if I can obtain a good price."

"What is your price?"

"One hundred pounds—must double my money!"

"Nothing less?"

"Not a farthing less—and I'm not anxious to sell even at that price."

"Well, I'll take them," he groaned. "There's your money; and here, barber, shave off this whisker. I'll never wear the infernal things again."

The dandies and bucks were, of course, great admirers of the fair sex, a large number of whom, it would appear, did not resent their attentions.

It is all very well to speak of Platonic respect being the highest tribute which can be paid to the fair sex. Moralists may like to fancy such things, but philosophers will continue to doubt.

Old Q was the object of perpetual abuse, yet so long as the name of woman is remembered, his will never be forgotten. His attachment to the fair sex was so ardent that it bade defiance to time, or his hour-glass; and long after the hoary frost of age had silvered his locks, the sight of a fine woman appeared to give him new life.

In old age, when the weather was fine and sunny, the old man would come out on to his balcony in Piccadilly to the amusement of the passers-by.

Here—an emaciated figure, sheltered by a parasol—he would sit waiting to feast his eyes upon some pretty face, which, when it appeared, was subjected to much ogling.

He is said, indeed, to have kept a pony and a groom in constant readiness, in order to follow and ascertain the residence of any fair one whose attractions particularly caught his fancy! This groom was called a tiger, which originated a term since commonly applied to a

servant of this kind. The old man was deaf in one ear, blind in one eye, nearly toothless, and labouring under multiplied infirmities; but the propensities of his prime still pursued him.

Up to the day of his death, at a very advanced age, Old Q continued to coquette with the granddaughters of those with whom he had flirted in his youth. This is alluded to in a humorous epitaph written during the susceptible Duke's lifetime.

> And what is all this grand to do
> That runs each street and alley thro'?
> 'Tis the departure of Old Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly.
>
> The King, God bless him! gave a whew!
> "Two Dukes just dead—a third gone too!
> What! what! could nothing save Old Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly?"
>
> The jockey boys, Newmarket's crew,
> Who know a little thing or two,
> Cry out—"He's done! We've done Old Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly!"
>
> The Monsieurs and Signoras too,
> Like cats in love, set up their mew,
> "Ah morto, morto, pov'ro Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly!"
>
> Poll, Peggy, Catherine, Patty, Sue,
> Descendants of old dames he knew,
> All mourn your tutor, ancient Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly.
>
> "Thank Heaven! thank Heaven!" exclaims Miss Prue;
> "My mother and grand-mother too,
> May now walk safe from that vile Q,
> The Star of Piccadilly."

Old Nick, he whisk'd his tail so blue,
And grinn'd, and leer'd, and look'd askew—
"O ho!" says he, "I've got my Q,
The Star of Piccadilly."

On wings of sulphur down he flew:
All London, take your last adieu—
There, there, away he claws Old Q,
The Star of Piccadilly.

And now, this may be said of Q—
That long he ran all folly thro',
For ever seeking something new:
He neither car'd for me, nor you,
But, to engagements strictly true,
At last—he gave the devil his due;
And died a boy of eighty-two—
Poor Q of Piccadilly.

As a matter of fact, the amorous old Duke lived four years more, dying in 1810, aged eighty-six.

He used to say, "London is, in my opinion, the best place in the world to pass nine months of the year in; and I don't know anywhere you could spend the other three better!" a sentiment which the well-known Captain Morris re-echoed in the famous lines:

In town let me live then, in town let me die;
For in truth I can't relish the country, not I.
If one must have a villa in summer to dwell
Oh! give me the sweet shady side of Pall Mall.

These lines, of course, were written at a time when numbers of West End men thought of nothing but pleasure, and thoroughly despised the clerk-like drudgery of arithmetical calculations. The man of fashion, indeed, seldom subjected himself to the

mortification of entering into an investigation of his concerns, and was, therefore, without the misery of knowing how many thousands worse than nothing he might be. From the earliest stages of his existence such an individual was generally a stranger to self-denial, and, as he had never laboured under even momentary restraint, so he never found it necessary to bestow a condescending reflection upon the state of his affairs, till a melancholy reminder from the steward, the banker, or the lawyer denoted the game to be up, and the advent of that pecuniary annihilation which extravagance had rendered inevitable.

Nevertheless, though squandering an inheritance is no doubt highly reprehensible, it is an open question whether the prodigal has not the best of it as compared with a miser.

The former starts with many thousands, and dies with nothing. The latter starts with nothing, and dies worth many thousands. Presumably the prodigal is the happier of the two. True, he has spent a fortune; but on the other hand the miser has only left one: the prodigal has lived rich to die poor; the miser has lived poor to die rich; and, if the prodigal quits life in debt to others, the miser quits it still deeper in debt to himself.

More toleration was formerly extended to ruined spendthrifts than is now the case, and comfortable sinecures were often comparatively easily obtained by those having some political influence. Owing to the small amount of effort or work required from the holders of such snug posts, they were exactly

suited to the capacities of the ruined man about town.

Sometimes also impecunious men of fashion would be given a chance by some well-meaning friend who obtained for them a land agency or some similar employment; but the majority of such characters were in reality no good for any serious work, and, as a wag said, resembled nothing so much as coffin makers, because they never worked twice for the same customer.

In old days, when the laws against usury were still in force, spendthrifts had to resort to all sorts of expedients in order to raise money. On the other hand, the only way in which money-lenders could extort a large rate of interest was by lending on post obits, by way of annuity, or on bills at short dates. In the latter case, the borrower had to purchase all imaginable articles, for which he gave a bill at a longer date than that for the cash advanced. One extravagant man about town, very hard pressed, going to a celebrated tobacconist to raise the wind, only obtained what he wanted on condition that he bought a large number of pipes and snuff-boxes. His necessities forced him to consent; but when he saw what an immense supply of them was produced, he was not a little astonished, and wondered where they could be put.

Another reckless spark, well known as one of the most agreeable men of his day, through a financial transaction with a usurer reluctantly came into possession of a number of brick-kilns near London, and when his creditors pressed for a settlement of their

claims, gave them orders for so many thousand bricks, instead of cheques on his banker. Rumour declared that the same individual, having exhausted his credit with the tradespeople who dealt in the common necessaries of life, and wishing to invite a friend to his house, wrote, asking him to "come and dine at half-past seven, on turtle and venison, as the fishmonger and butcher will stand it no longer."

This individual, on being told of the death of a rich old widow at the age of eighty-nine, exclaimed, "What a fine match she would have made two days ago!"

"Will you lend me a hundred?" said the same man to an acquaintance.

"Can't possibly do it," was the reply. "I never lend a man money the second time, when he disappoints me the first."

"That's a mistake, for I paid you the fifty I had last week."

"The very reason. I never expected it back, and you disappointed me, which is why I can't do it. Very sorry, but principle is principle." And so the spendthrift was foiled.

Another particularly impudent fellow of the same type lost his pocket-book—a rather good one—and advertised:

"Lost, yesterday, a small blue morocco pocket-book, containing a variety of papers—among the rest a tailor's bill for £20. Any person finding the same will please to pay the bill, and nothing more will be said."

A cynical individual being once asked by a friend whether he could lend this spendthrift a certain sum with any chance of seeing it again, replied, "What! lend him money? Why, you might give him an emetic and he wouldn't return it."

Many men about town were quite shameless in their dealings with tradesmen. One of the former, who was not reckoned among the number of the best paymasters, received a clever rebuke from his hatter, after he had ordered one of the hats in the shop to be sent home upon credit. This was politely refused, upon which the spark exclaimed, "What! do you refuse to give me credit for a hat?"

"Sir," replied the hatter, "I have another trifling objection besides that of merely giving you credit—I should not like to be under the necessity of bowing to my own hat till you may choose to pay for it."

Brummell's method of putting off irate creditors was characteristic of the man. When at his wits' end how to keep going, he said to a friend, "Whenever any one of my creditors calls upon me, the moment he enters the room I commence an amusing conversation, and tell him anecdotes that I think will interest him. This has hitherto succeeded very well, for I divert their attention from the subject that brings them to me. We shake hands, and part on good terms, but my stock-in-trade is exhausted, and I am now completely used up. I have nothing left to tell them, and now I don't know what to do."

The greatest house for procuring loans and advances of money that existed in the London of those days

was the well-known firm of Howard and Gibbs. The former had accumulated an immense fortune, which he suddenly lost by the folly or mismanagement of his partner, as it was said at the time. Not only all the Albany, but many of the houses in and about Old Burlington and Cork Streets, belonged to him, besides a splendid estate in Yorkshire. He lived in princely style, and the Duke of York, Lord Wellesley, and the greatest men of the day were frequent guests at his table. Howard went to Paris on a visit to Laffitte, the banker, supposing himself to be a very wealthy man, when one morning he received a letter from his partner announcing his utter ruin, and with it that of numerous depositors of small sums, who had been tempted by a higher rate of interest to lodge them in the hands of the firm.

Howard's story was curious. He was educated in a charity school at Oxford, from which he was taken into a hairdresser's establishment as an apprentice. After remaining there the usual time, he took a shop of his own, and having saved a small sum of money, he gave it up, and started off on foot to the metropolis, in the hope of bettering his condition. The first night of his arrival in town, not knowing where to lay his head, he slept on the steps of a house at the corner of Hamilton Place, Piccadilly ; and when he awoke the next morning, he made the best of his way to Seven Dials, in search of an occupation. The keeper of a beershop engaged him to sweep out the bar, and he gave so much satisfaction that he was occupied in various ways by persons who frequented the house.

Amongst these was a lawyer's clerk, who, observing the boy's assiduity and respectable appearance, asked him if he could write, and on his answering in the affirmative, he employed him in copying some deeds.

Somehow or other, the clerk's employer became acquainted with young Howard, and took him into the office, where he became a favourite, from his steady business habits and regular conduct. A rich client, who had found him useful on many occasions, then took him in hand, and started him on his own account. By dint of attention and hard work he obtained so much business that he became one of the great capitalists of the day, and vast sums of money passed through his hands, in loans to needy men about town. He dealt largely in annuities and post obits.

Being arrested for debt was no extraordinary incident in the life of those who had gone the pace; the King's Bench was always full of debtors, many of whom, however, led a fairly comfortable life. Further, those having generous friends willing to stand security for them could obtain the privilege of residing without the walls of the prison, in what went by the name of "The Rules"; that is, within a circuit of about half a mile. On the other hand, the power of arrest was frequently much abused, as an individual had nothing to do but swear a debt against whoever it might be, and he was at once placed in "durance vile." Many debtors, however, were quite content with their captivity, and delighted to remain in "The Rules," and set their creditors at defiance. Some even lived in good style, and gave dinner parties

to their friends and acquaintances. They were not altogether deprived of amusement, inasmuch as the Surrey Theatre was within the prescribed limits; but if by any chance they passed the line of demarcation, and it could be proved, the creditors could claim the amount of their debts from the Governor of the Bench, who, of course, repaid himself at the cost of those who had stood security.

After an arrest had been effected, it was customary for the sheriff's officer to convey his prisoner first of all to a "sponging-house," kept by himself, in or about Chancery Lane, where he could remain as long as he had the means of paying for his board and lodging. The charges in such places were extortionate, the whole system being one of unblushing robbery.

Lloyd, the poet, was, like other poets, subject to occasional familiarities from the shoulder-tapping fraternity. On being ushered into his apartment in a sponging-house, he enquired, with affected simplicity, what the huge bars at the window were intended for.

"Why, to keep you in, to be sure," replied Cerberus.

"Strange," rejoined the poet, "that you should take such pains to keep me in, who could never keep myself out."

At one time the Isle of Man was a debtors' paradise, an asylum where all were free from arrest for debts contracted elsewhere, and in consequence of this the capital, Douglas, wore a very strange social aspect. It was indeed more like a stronghold of corsairs and banditti than a simple fishing hamlet. The greater

proportion of those who had recourse to it, to avoid impertinent importunities, were Milesian gentlemen. Many of these were individuals of rank and large estates fully secured against seizure, and the owners being themselves out of all legal jurisdiction, their creditors were treated as the garrison of an impregnable fortress are wont to handle their besiegers. Retaliating, as desperate men will when set at defiance, the result was a condition of things without a parallel in the civilised world. Douglas was in a constant state of beleaguerment, while every town in the island was subject to descents and invasions for the purpose of forcibly carrying off the recusants, and placing them where they could be made amenable to civil process. Upon the pier of the Manx capital bands of "gentlemen in difficulties" would promenade armed to the teeth; while off the harbour lay desperate-looking craft, manned by wild crews willing and eager for any violence. These would occasionally land, and attempt by open force to get possession of their quarry, with the result that fatal frays were common.

In a number of cases, however, so wily were the defaulting exiles that stratagem was deemed to afford the best chance of effecting their capture. At a certain period one of the regular topics of the place was the devices employed to entrap a certain Irish baronet whom the bailiffs were always after. A man of great strength, indomitable resolution, and up to every artifice, he somehow always contrived to evade them. Like most Irishmen, however, he was very susceptible, and eventually a lady, who for the

moment was engaging his not very serious affections, was brought over by some of the principal creditors, who gave her some money and the promise of more. Everything being settled, it was arranged that the victim should be induced to indulge her in a boating excursion, when the boatmen, being properly selected, and a wherry hired, which was to cruise off the harbour of Castletown, a good return would forthwith be made to the capias of the Sheriff of Dublin. All went well, and the old fox was wheedled into the trap.

Once in the boat, however, he realised the stratagem.

"You're no Manxmen," said he to the boatmen.

"We're Dunleary boys, your honour, going to take your honour to where you'll be made welcome."

"And pray what are you to be paid for this job?"

"Ten guineas for the trip and forty more when your honour is safely delivered."

The baronet now said he would give a hundred to be put ashore again, which offer the boatmen could not resist. Accordingly, the captive wrote out an order on his agent at Castletown—the boat being meanwhile rowed towards the landing-place—which, on arrival, was, together with a note, handed to one of the men, who was to go and fetch the hundred whilst the baronet remained in the boat. In reality, however, the note and order were directed to no agent, but to a sharp attorney well used to the baronet's ways. It ran: "I'm in the Devil's own scrape. The scoundrel who gives you this is one of a party by whom I was kidnapped an hour ago, and am still detained prisoner until you pay him a hundred pounds, for which he

imagines this the order. Keep him, and send round a well-manned yawl to the extreme of the harbour, so that they cannot, on the alarm being given, run out with me to sea. I will pay liberally for the rescue." The affair ended by the Dunleary boys being soundly cudgelled, and sent adrift, after having had a ducking to cool their ardour.

An extraordinary individual was the adventurer who in the early part of the last century masqueraded in Dublin as Baron Von Hoffman, Earl of Sirony, A.D.C. to General Von Blucher, and other dignities " too numerous to mention." His run, under all the circumstances, was probably as remarkable a one as the annals of modern fraud and gullibility afford example of. " Alone he did it," without confederate, without outward card of introduction. He captivated ladies with ease, and was hail fellow well met with the choicest spirits with whom it pleased him to associate. Speaking English fluently, he was by his own account a Hungarian noble of vast possessions, visiting Ireland for amusement and instruction after a series of campaigns with Blucher. He was unquestionably a great master of blarney, largely aided by effrontery.

Possessed of talents of no mean order, united to inventive faculties enough to endow a score of writers of fiction, no surer test of his genius could be adduced than the attention which he could at all seasons command for the narratives of his adventures, that out-Heroded the wildest of Eastern legends. After dinner, while yet the ladies remained at table, was the time generally selected for these stories.

The baron, who probably never possessed a shilling of his own whilst in Ireland, feasted sumptuously every day, rode his chargers, dressed *en prince*, and actually engaged the cousin of a well-known Irish member (remarkable for the energy and classical character of his forensic and senatorial oratory) as private secretary and domestic physician, at a salary of five hundred a year ! However, the day of reckoning came ; prison, the insolvent court, and all the grim concomitants of ruin finally overwhelmed him.

Nothing could be more wild or careless than some of the Irish officers. One of them in the West Indies, having formed a tender connection there, and not wishing to return to his family, wrote home to his wife at Kilkenny that he had died the year before of yellow fever, and therefore hoped she would not expect his return.

About a hundred years ago Dublin was the scene of much wild life.

Old and young, rich and poor, seemed to live but to one end—to make the most of time present. The landed interest got no rents ; but dinners, routs, and entertainments were the order of the day in Merrion Square and Stephen's Green. Ready money and the shopkeeper had long been strangers. Nevertheless, he was the incarnation of junketing and jollity. In spite of the general atmosphere of enjoyment which prevailed, misery abounded in every public spot, and actually besieged the doors of the shops in the public streets. But these living scarecrows were the merriest of all the merry ; you could

not tell one of them to get out of your way but he had a witticism at your service; and if the jest were pointed at his own misery, with so much the greater zest did he appear to give utterance to it. "Oh, may the blessin' of the Holy Virgin attind your honour's beautiful honour night and day, I pray!" said an old beldam, a monstrous thing of shreds and patches, standing so that all hope of escape without a reply was cut off. "More glory to you, and throw a halfpinny to an ould woman that's fasting from everything but sin this mornin'."

"And whisky," said the individual accosted, for there was no mistaking the air to which her recitative was set.

"Ah, thin, jewel," was her reply; "don't blame a poor ould crature for taking a drop iv comfort iv a could day; sure, if it wasn't for the sup of something warm, like the cloak that's hanging about me shoulders, I'd die of the stitches."

The hairbreadth escapes of the careless spendthrifts of other days from bailiffs were numberless in their variety. An Irishman of this sort once made a peculiarly bold and successful dash for liberty in Dublin, to which urgent necessity had called him from an enforced retreat. Near Phœnix Park there was then an old inn called the "Sun," in Queen Street. There the impecunious sportsman stabled his nag, and having explained his case—a matter at that time likely to have enlisted every Pat breathing in his favour—he ordered his horse, except when feeding, to be kept ready bridled and saddled, with his head turned round,

and then, by all the back slums possible, went to his appointment. The interview over, he was returning rejoicing on his way, when, just above the Four Courts on Ormond Quay, two fellows rushed out and, to use his own phrase, basely kidnapped him. He was so taken by surprise that he was powerless, and proceeded with them up the quay to durance vile. It was a terribly hot day, and the captive, pleading fatigue, begged of them to let him sit down between them on the parapet which overhangs the Liffey; they did so, and also complied with his request to be allowed to get at his pocket-handkerchief. The moment his hands were loose, he threw his arms, with all his force, back across their bodies. The right-hand man obeyed the mandate by going at once over the parapet; the left staggered only, but this unpleasant prisoner soon triumphed, and, throwing him over after the other, he set off full tilt, no one offering to molest him, for the stables. Throwing down his money, he found his nag all ready, and was soon out of the chance of pursuit. It luckily being low water, the "thieving kidnappers" escaped with a sound ducking.

A singular character of much the same kind was a Major Fitzgerald who, though of good birth and pursuing a regular profession, possessed the singularity of never allowing a King's writ to be served upon him. It was, indeed, common amongst the Dublin bailiffs, when judgment had been obtained against any one who it was hinted might give trouble, for them to reply, "Oh, it will be all right, barring Major Fitzgerald." At one time the latter resided at a

place called Cappagh, about four miles out of Dublin, on the banks of the Grand Canal, opposite the pretty village of Clondalkin. It was a small house, with its back to the towing-path, on which looked out one small window. Out of this many were the escapes the Major had made from his enemies. However, they got used to this, and one day, as he was returning from Dublin, his creditors had mustered in such force, and placed so many sentries, that capture seemed inevitable. They had, however, forgotten one thing, and that was to occupy the other side. The love of liberty soon caused the Major to make up his mind. The Grand Canal was properly so called, it being double in breadth and depth the ordinary dimensions. As soon as the other bank was ascertained to be clear, in went the Major, horse and gig, with the result that he eventually gained the opposite bank with great peril and difficulty, leaving everything else to fate.

It was at one time highly dangerous to serve writs in certain parts of Ireland, notably in Connemara, where very rough treatment was not infrequently meted out to obnoxious officers of the law.

On one occasion two of these men, more daring than their brethren, having undertaken to serve a writ on a popular landed proprietor (for there were popular landlords in those days), the inhabitants of the districts assembled from all quarters and, as the luckless officers proceeded, cut off their retreat. When the debtor's mansion was reached, the crowd, civil as yet, closed round. The officers then produced

their credentials, which created a most unfavourable impression, and, after some parley, so infuriated did the people become that they condemned one of the officers to swallow the writ, seal and all, on the spot, crammed him into a sack and hurled him over a bridge into the river—the other one escaped with his life.

II

TO-DAY a very large number of men engaged in business in the City are first-rate sportsmen—fine shots and good men across a country; but this is a comparatively recent development. A very different state of affairs prevailed in the past, when there was much jeering at what was called cockney sport, and there was some justification. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, on the first of September, detachments of sporting cockneys used to march out of London before daybreak, much to the annoyance of all keepers of poultry for miles round the metropolis. A few of the most determined shots, it was always said, slept on their arms the night before, that they might not be caught napping by their more vigilant associates. Fearful of this invasion, the cow-keepers and little farmers in the neighbourhoods of Hackney, Islington, Clapham, and other suburbs very prudently drove in all their pigs and poultry, to prevent their falling into the power of the common enemy! As a rule the platoon firing commenced with the dawn of day, and what was humorously called the free-warren of Lambeth Marsh and Coldbath Fields rang with the sounds of shots. The whole line round the suburbs went to it with a will, keeping up a running fight till broad noon-

day, when the fire slackened, and the more successful sportsmen, flushed with victory, marched into cantonments in the many conveniently situated public-houses.

Ludicrous misadventures were common. In 1795, on September the first, three cockney sportsmen, determined to be first in the field, set out before dawn, and started what they fondly hoped was a partridge, near the Middlesex Hospital. They instantly discharged their rusty blunderbusses all at once and to their delight brought down the game, which, however, on examination proved, alas! to be the watchman's dog. As a consequence of their tragic mistake all three of them were taken into custody.

Another cockney sportsman, out for a day's shooting in a more likely district, was wearily trudging over the ground, when at last a partridge got up, just under his feet. Pop! went the gun, but the partridge flew in gallant style over the hedge, only dropping a few feathers by the way. Over leaped the sportsman, expecting to find his prize at the other side. No sign of the bird! nothing but a labourer dragging a plough after him.

"I say!" cried the cit, "you have not seen a partridge fall this way, have you?"

"Not the very smallest one, sir."

"It is very odd, for I certainly saw the feathers flying!"

"Oh! I saw them too," quickly responded the man with a knowing look, "and they flew so well that they carried the flesh with them."

Many a joke was played on such "sportsmen," one of whom, being asked by some friends to shoot near London after trudging for hours over ground barren of game, to his delight came upon three hares motionless in a glade. Taking cautious aim the cockney fired, and to his delight found that all three were dead. This satisfaction, however, on his return home was greatly mitigated by the discovery of a game-dealer's card in the ear of each hare, and as it was made by the lady of his heart, to whom he had presented his "bag," he was exposed to much chaff from those who had placed the dead hares in position.

Many a cockney shot, however, would quite frankly buy game when he could not find anything to shoot.

> If birds should be shy, my dear Sammy,
> And the devil a one be brought down,
> I've secured a fine brace for my mammy
> From our neighbour, the poulterer Brown.

Some maintained a reputation as great "shots" at considerable expense to their pockets, making it a point of honour never to return home without a well-filled bag, the contents of which were generally drawn from a supplementary supply always to be obtained at the hovel of an old poacher well known to a number of sporting clients.

The sort of sporting dogs employed by such sportsmen may be realised from the comments made by a cockney on a book which purported to deal with the subject and enumerated the breeds generally valued by sportsmen.

"A fig," said he, "for his pointers and setters. If he had axed me, I would have told him all about it, that I have a brace of the best pointers going, and they are of my own training, and, though I say it, they have had a finished edication. One of them is a bull-bitch, and the other is a dog between a Dutch pug and a mastiff. My dogs, I allow, are not taught to point at partridges, but they will stand well at sparrows, robins, and greenfinches."

Besides the possessors of guns who deemed themselves sportsmen, and ranged the suburban districts for game at the proper season, almost all the year round the fields, which then came close up to the town, were on every Sunday full of idle fellows out after small birds, and such gunners endangered people's lives, being brutally careless, as a rule. For instance, three men shooting larks in Battersea Fields followed the birds so near to a house that, on firing, one of them shot a little boy who was playing at a short distance from the door. As soon as the cries of the child convinced the man of his imprudence, he threw down the gun and ran away. He was pursued without success; but his two companions were taken into custody.

There was formerly some fair shooting to be had within reach of the metropolis, and eighty or ninety years ago game was to be found in places which now form part of the town itself.

Men alive not so many years ago remembered going snipe shooting on the site of Belgrave Square, and at the beginning of the nineteenth century there was

free shooting to be enjoyed within ten miles of London Bridge. The outskirts of Penge Common (then strictly preserved by Mr. Cator), and the coverts adjoining those of Lord Gwydyr, near Croydon, were favourite haunts of City sportsmen, one of whom boasted that, without having permission from a solitary landed proprietor, he had in one lucky season with a single barrel killed upwards of two hundred head in the counties of Kent and Surrey.

As late as 1842 some sportsmen succeeded in making a bag of ten brace of partridges in September on Wimbledon Common, where old birds still occasionally bred. The sedgy bottoms of this common were in winter then well frequented by snipe, and one cockney—a sedulous pounder after the long-bills—generally obtained about a hundred couple in the course of a season.

As the common was considered neutral territory, there was continual shooting there during the season, and at times a good many pheasants which had strayed from the preserves of Wimbledon Park were secured by City sportsmen.

Whilst the neighbourhood of London abounded in sportsmen who had little claim to such an appellation, there were also some really good shots. Such a one was John Holt, of Tottenham, who died in 1831, even when near eighty-five years old a typical sportsman of the real old school, who scorned to go out shooting with a double-barrelled gun, and held battues in utter abhorrence. He hated new-fangled innovations, and repudiated detonators—"flint and

steel, and straight powder," he was wont to say, "were all that a fair sportsman required."

Certainly very extraordinary shots were sometimes made by these single-barrel guns. In October, 1819, for instance, a Northamptonshire gentleman with one shot killed six partridges out of a covey of seven, whilst the surviving bird was wounded!

Double-barrelled guns were also considered highly dangerous by many sportsmen. In 1818, on the occasion of an accident to the Rev. C. Colton, whose double-barrel had burst with disastrous results, a great sporting authority wrote:

"Gentlemen cannot be too often warned that, while they increase, by the use of the double-barrelled fowling-piece, their chance of execution only twofold in the field, they may increase, at the same time, perhaps a hundredfold, the chance of injuring themselves."

Be this as it may, Mr. Holt, as has been said, resolutely declined to abandon his single-barrel, with which he did great execution.

His favourite sport was woodcock shooting, at which he was considered an expert. From a game book which he kept for a series of years it appears that upwards of six hundred couple fell to his gun. The coverts which afforded him this, his favourite sport, were Hollick and Betstyle Woods, near Colney Hatch, Lord's Grove, Southgate, the Larks and the Hawk Hills, Essex, and Enfield Chase before it was enclosed. The Chase in question, it may be added, was disafforested by an Act passed in 1777, when it contained

something over eight thousand acres. The deer, which were then very numerous, were taken to Lord Bute's park, at Luton Hoo. The process of enclosure took a great deal of time, and persons alive in the middle of the last century remembered travelling from Hadley Church through the Chase, Epping and Hainault Forests, to Wanstead, without ever leaving the green turf or losing sight of forest land. Remains of the wooded glories of Enfield Chase are now only to be found in some private parks which were carved out of the ancient hunting ground of Elizabeth and James I, and in the lower or easternmost portion of Hadley Common, known as "Hadley Wood," which retains something of the old forest-like character of the original "Chase," some two hundred and fifty acres of which were allotted to the parish of Hadley at the time of the disafforestation.

The wild fowl and snipe which then abounded on the Tottenham and Edmonton Marshes also afforded Mr. Holt much enjoyable sport. An indefatigable walker, no day was too long for him, whilst he cared nothing about inclement weather.

A faithful servant, who had been with him for forty-three years, was a constant attendant out shooting. There was then good sport to be had quite close to Tottenham. One first of September Mr. Holt walked out of the back door of his house there, and came home to breakfast at nine o'clock with seven brace of birds. After lying down for two hours, he started off again, and returned with two brace more, making eighteen head; and this notwithstanding he

had been confined to his room for the previous month with acute rheumatism in his left arm, which obliged him to walk with it in a sling.

In early life he shot with a gun the barrel of which was three feet three inches. This he exchanged twenty years before death for a more modern weapon with a shorter barrel of two feet ten, a weapon with which he killed many long shots and highly prized. A sportsman of the good old school, English from top to toe, Mr. Holt ever showed the greatest consideration for growing crops and fences; a greater ally of the farmer never drew trigger. Above all things, he loved fair play.

Another genuine sporting character was old Rose, who for many years kept the public-house known by the sign of the "Jolly Anglers," at Kentish Town. Rose, in his youthful days, had been a keeper, and still considered the green plush jacket as the most honourable one he could wear. Notwithstanding the old man had become lame, blind, and deaf, he kept a good dog, and still contrived now and then to waylay a partridge. His next-door neighbour, a tradesman in the village, was a little man, and though rather crooked in his person, was considered by all as a very upright man, and remarkable for holding his gun straight. These two friends used sometimes to steal a day from business, to try a piece of taters or a few turnips; and if game was scarce, to bag a bird was the greatest honour. It happened one day that old Rose and my Lord, as he familiarly called his friend, had strayed rather too far upon some

person's manor, who marched up to the little man and demanded his name. Now this would have puzzled any one of small resource, because, unfortunately, he had no certificate; but the little man, putting on a big air, called to Rose, who was half across the field, "William, come and tell this person who I am."

"What do you say, my Lord?" replied the old man.

Immediately the lord of the manor pulled off his hat, and after begging the other lord's pardon, hoped his lordship would amuse himself as long as he thought proper.

Whilst the generality of cockney sportsmen were content with an occasional day with dog and gun, a certain number, fairly dowered with the world's goods, devoted their attention to what they considered a nobler form of sport, and made a point of taking now and then a day with one of the packs of hounds which hunted districts now forming part of London. About a century ago packs of harriers met at Beddington, Southgate, Finchley, and other suburbs. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, Mr. Wood, of Littleton, near Chertsey, hunted the entire district of Bedfont, Chalton, Hounslow Heath, and Sunbury, and three days a week Mr. Chapman's hounds met on Putney Heath, Wimbledon Common, and at Twickenham. At such meets every type of cockney sportsman was represented, from the City prig who, obtaining a morning's leave of absence from the counting-house, had decorated his person with all the imaginary paraphernalia of the Meynell or

Raby hunts, to the more antiquated and prosperous merchant wonderfully equipped in grizzle wig, flannel stockings, and other obsolete articles of sporting attire.

One City sportsman, who had spent a good deal of his early life behind the counter, took to keeping a pack of harriers near London, and as a master manifested a great preference for small hounds. His huntsman, on the other hand, preferred large ones, as to the merits of which he never lost a chance of expatiating. Out hunting one day, one of the diminutive pack set up a tremendous howling just as they had found in a cover.

" What is the matter with that hound ? " cried the master.

" The hare, in getting out of her form, kicked the dog in the face," replied the huntsman, " and the poor little devil could not stand the blow."

Many droll incidents occurred to the sporting cits.

At the close of the eighteenth century a meet of Mr. Chapman's hounds on Sutton Common was enlivened by the appearance of an elderly individual who, equipped in a cauliflower wig, cocked hat, black breeches and boots, rode up and enquired of the huntsman what the hounds were going to hunt that day.

" A bag fox," was the reply ; " and I hope," added the man, who was a wag, " that you are going to join us."

" I should be very happy to do so," said the cockney ; " but as I have been away staying with my brother

(who has the honour of being an alderman) I must get back to my shop, for fear of business being neglected. Still, it might perhaps be managed."

The cit then desired to be introduced to Mr. Chapman, whom in due course he requested to order the fox to be turned out with his head towards London in order, as he put it, " that he might enjoy the pleasures of the chase on his way home."

The master, conceiving that some amusement might be extracted from this original character, gravely assented, and shortly afterwards a fox was duly set at liberty, his head, according to the cit's request, being turned towards town.

As luck would have it, Reynard, whilst in view, ran in a direct line with the London road ; but by the time the hounds were laid on he turned and took quite a contrary direction. The scent lying vastly well, the hounds ran very swiftly, and were eagerly followed by a very numerous field of sportsmen, all of whom enjoyed the distress of the cockney, whose horse, having more mettle than his rider, ran for some time close in with the hounds, to the great terror of the latter, who, Gilpin-like, held fast by the mane and pommel, and, after having escaped many dangers in a chase of an hour and a half, was at last completely thrown out, and left in a ditch with the loss of his whip, hat, and wig, where, after having lain some time, and recovered from his panic, he perceived a town at a short distance, which he made for, in hopes of being soon able to reach St. Paul's or the Monument. Upon his arrival, to his great surprise

and mortification, he was informed the place he was at was Dorking.

Humorous incidents were plentiful at these old hunts.

On one occasion a wealthy and well-known London brewer thought proper to join a pack of foxhounds, and appeared with the then unfamiliar moustache. He was well mounted, and dressed in a very conspicuous manner, in consequence of which a French nobleman who happened to be present was so struck by his appearance that he asked the master, who knew something of French, if he were not *un grand militaire*. "No," was the reply, "*il n'est qu'un Chevalier de Malte.*"

This Frenchman just knew enough of the English language to make his conversation highly amusing.

On another occasion out with hounds, he said, "I forget vat you say ven de hound run de fox without see him."

"Oh," said the master, "I suppose you mean the scent."

"Ah! to be sure," said the Frenchman; "I always forget de "sante."

Soon after this explanation the hounds found their fox, and began to run very hard. Monsieur, having jumbled together all that could be derived from the word "smell," shouted out, "Bravo, bravo, but you have van ver fine stink now!"

A favourite pack of foxhounds with sportsmen from London was the Old Surrey, which about 1770 used often to meet at Peckham Rye. Forest Hill was

another favourite meet; at that time very capital runs were enjoyed in the neighbourhood of Sydenham, which for miles round was surrounded by open commons.

Up to 1810 the kennels were at East Hall, Bermondsey, the residence of Mr. Henry Dudin. At that time the Old Surrey frequently left off drawing at one o'clock, so that the members might be on 'Change in the City at four p.m. Many of those City sportsmen had only time to cover their hunting dress with long coats.

The costume of the hunt was then green, and a beaver top-hat. Some few members, however, wore pink. About 1810, when the Honourable George Nevill, grandfather of the present writer, was master, the kennels were moved to Godstone, where he lived at Flower Place.

In those days the Old Surrey foxhounds hunted four days a week, and their country extended on the north to Bromley and Beckenham, and nearly to Sydenham; south to Lingfield; east to Brasted and Chelsfield; west to Banstead, Carshalton, and Mitcham.

A gentleman alive a few years ago—perhaps alive to-day—remembered as a boy having seen the huntsman, Tom Hills, killing a fox near West Croydon Station.

Tom Hills, one of a famous hunting family, became huntsman in 1816, when Mr. Maberly was master. This gentleman rode to hunt, rather than hunted to ride. The kennels were then at Shirley, near Croydon.

When Mr. Maberly had the Old Surrey, old Tom—a character in his way, who continued to act as huntsman till 1861—was one evening instructed by the master to get the finest fox possible at Leadenhall Market, in order to make a certainty of sport the next day, when there was to be a particularly smart lawn meet. Tom started from the kennels, then at Shirley, rode post haste to London, discovered the object of his inglorious pursuit, and, having strapped him gingerly, deposited him, legs upwards, in the capacious pocket of a large blouse which he wore when moving cubs to any part of the country where they might be required.

As he was cantering home over Streatham Common, he was stopped by a truculent highwayman with the summons, "Your money or your life!" Tom's reply was characteristic.

"I've got no money," he said; "I'm only a servant. And as to my life, why, you wouldn't take that, surely—it isn't worth powder and shot."

The ruffian persisted, however, but Tom's nerve and pluck did not desert him. He thought of the fox which he carried, and told his assailant that he would find money in his pocket, indicating the one that contained the treasure. A dive was at once made into it by the highwayman; he was severely bitten, and while he was howling in agony Tom cantered blithely away. His remark was afterwards, "I could have downed him with my old hunting whip, but I wanted to see a bit of sport."

During Mr. Maberly's tenure of the mastership

some very good runs with bag foxes took place, which, however, he managed so cleverly that few of the field discovered what they were hunting. He was practically forced to resort to such arts in order to keep the game alive. Regardless of expense, he showed sport in what, as far as foxes were concerned, was a wilderness, and those who beat him subsequently did no little to stock that part of Surrey.

In the neighbourhood of London drags were often resorted to in order to help matters out. One of the best runs in which man, horse, or hound could be engaged in any country took place with a drag which was managed so adroitly that the secret was not for years afterwards known to any individual except the master who concocted it, his groom, who rode the drag like an out-and-out trump, and a farmer, who got the groom out of harm's way, and as deftly put down the bag fox in a small covert. So complete was the deception, that one old and excellent sportsman declared he had a casual glimpse of Reynard (this was during the drag) going over a fence.

In Tom's young days parts of Surrey, now covered with houses, were quite rural in character. Here was the snug retreat of many a wealthy cit; and the meads, the time-stepping mower, the hay-cart, the scattered herds, and a variety of rustic scenery together formed a charming picture, often enlivened by a pretty milkmaid, who, as old Isaac Walton said, "had not yet attained so much age and wisdom as to load her mind with any fear of many things that would never be, as too many men too often do."

As time went on, and London grew, the meets of the Old Surrey had of necessity to take place farther away from town, whilst rows of houses began to cover many a field over which generations of City sportsmen had galloped. As late, however, as the middle of the last century some very irregular packs used to make attempts at hunting quite close to the metropolis.

In 1840, for instance, an announcement appeared in *Bell's Life in London* to the effect that " the Surrey Hounds " would meet on Wimbledon Common on a certain day, upon which in due course a very motley field assembled at the " Bald-faced Stag," named as the rendezvous.

After a considerable time the huntsman—a badly-dressed young man in a green fustian shooting coat, together with some other flash-looking youths, got up in what they evidently considered sporting style—arrived.

These sportsmen, in answer to enquiries as to the whereabouts of the hounds, said that they were in an outhouse till a sufficient sum could be raised to remunerate the owner of a tame fox at Wandsworth who was waiting for a messenger with the money, and after some wrangling a sufficient sum was subscribed, and a pony-cart sent for the victim, or rather victims (for there were two). These having arrived after an hour's delay, the hounds were let out and a move made towards the Windmill.

The " Surrey hounds," which, it appeared, were kept by various individuals at Clapham, were then

seen to consist of seven couple of every breed and size; a more extraordinary pack it was impossible to conceive.

Previous to the liberation of a fox, the field were solemnly requested not to venture beyond the precincts of the Common, upon which a waggish sportsman enquired if the fox had been trained not to leave it as well.

"Many a fox," impressively replied the custodian, "have I turned down there, and never knew one of them leave the Common in his life." This answer created a very favourable impression amongst the assembled sportsmen, especially those who had come on foot, some of whom began to cheer, realising the advantage they would have over the mounted division, whom they evidently looked forward to seeing pounded amidst the thick gorse.

The lid of the basket was then raised, and out bolted the fox. A few minutes later the pack was laid on, and three or four of the best of the dogs having set up a soul-stirring bow-wowing, the rest very civilly joined in the chorus, and away went hounds, horsemen, and pedestrians as fast as they could go.

After some half-dozen checks in as many minutes, some of the field declared that the hounds must have started a hare, for the cavalcade had reached the limit of the Common on the south side, a boundary no fox had ever been known to pass.

Some unmounted men soon confirmed the truth of this surmise; the fox had been left behind on the Common, they said. Besides, everybody would get

into trouble if they did not go back. The field took this advice, and, returning to the Common, found a lad who, having captured the fox by means of a handsome bull terrier, had once more put Reynard to his basket. A second fox afforded sport of a similar description.

The "Surrey hounds" on another occasion hunted a tame hare on the Common, but poor puss gave worse sport than the foxes, for, running into a pond, she met with a watery grave. The hounds made no attempt to trouble her last moments, but magnanimously bow-wowed round the pond, not venturing to wet their feet by any attempt to drag out their victim.

In old days a great event in the life of many a sporting cit was the annual Easter hunt at Epping, which Tom Hood immortalised in verse.

For centuries Epping Forest was renowned for the sport to be obtained there. Queen Elizabeth had a hunting lodge close by.

A large part of the Forest, called in all charters Waltham Forest, originally belonged to the Abbot and Canons of Waltham Abbey, to whom it had been given by Edward the Confessor in a fit of devotion. The Forest laws were then of exceptional severity.

At the dissolution of the monasteries, however, the monks were hunted off the Forest, the King reclaimed his rights, and the Forest, with all the game, became the property of the Crown. From this period till the beginning of the eighteenth century, the royal buckhounds often hunted over Epping Forest,

and there was formerly a tradition preserved amongst the old keepers, that the kennel used in these temporary visits was in the bottom, at the back of the Eagle Inn, at Snaresbrook.

On the resumption of the royal rights at the Restoration, the charge and keeping of the Forest was granted to a Ranger, with all the usual privileges. In the reign of George II the Rangership was given, as an hereditary grant from the Crown, to Sir Josiah Child, together with many parcels of land in the Forest, the ownership of all the red deer, the fallow deer, and other game being still reserved. The hereditary Lord Wardenship belonged to the Tylney family, whose successors were only deprived of such dignity as remained to the office by the Epping Forest Act of 1878, when £300 was awarded as compensation. The appointment of Warden was then vested in the Crown, the first Ranger of the Forest after it had been saved being H.R.H. the Duke of Connaught, who still holds it.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century the fallow deer had been greatly reduced in numbers owing to the depredations of a gang of poachers known as "Waltham Blacks," in consequence of which an order was issued absolutely prohibiting the capture of any deer at all for three years; and this would appear to have been fairly respected, for the herds once more became large.

The history of the Easter Epping Hunt is of some interest. About 1739 a number of sporting gentlemen living in the neighbourhood of the Forest united

to collect a kennel of staghounds, and the then Ranger being himself a member, granted them leave to hunt the red deer, which were his own property This hunt was called the Ladies' Hunt, as many ladies in the neighbourhood joined in it. The meetings were in general at Fencepiece, near Hainault Forest, and there was an anniversary meeting on Easter Monday, with a dinner, ball, and other festivities. To this Easter meeting it was customary for the Londoners to resort, some as invited guests, others as strangers, merely to enjoy the sport.

For many years the pack was known as the Tylney hounds from the fact that the kennels were at Lord Tylney's. The first huntsman was a man called Fuller, the next Bishop, and after him old Will Deane —a great character—who rode with the pack for forty-seven years, during which time he broke eleven bones and married four wives. The uniform of the hunt at this time was green with gold-embroidered button-holes and a black velvet hunting-cap.

When Lord Tylney went to the Continent the hounds became temporarily a subscription pack, being afterwards kept for a time by Mr. Mellish, at Chingford Hatch, when they were called Mellish's hounds. Mr. Mellish took great trouble with the pack, which were of the sort known as "lemon pyes"—all white with yellow spots. These appear to have hunted the deer in the Forest up till 1805, and afterwards became the foundation of the old Devon and Somerset staghounds.

The original master of the pack, Mr. Joseph Mellish,

met with a sad fate, for one evening, in 1798, after having enjoyed a day's hunting with the King's hounds, he was robbed and murdered near Staines. As a mark of respect, the annual Easter hunt was abandoned that year.

The nephew of the murdered master, Mr. William Mellish, kept up the pack till 1806, after which there appears to have been no regular hunt till 1812, when Mr. Tylney Long Wellesley, a gentleman who had married a great heiress, Miss Long—" Man wants but little here below, but wants that little 'Long,'" was a favourite saying in Essex for some time after the wedding—inaugurated a new pack with servants equipped in Lincoln green, his huntsman being Tom Rounding. Mr. Wellesley, who resided at Wanstead, became well known for his wild extravagance, to which Byron alluded in Canto XI of *Don Juan*—

> Where's Brummel? Dish'd. Where's Long Pole Wellesley?
> Diddled—

and eventually recklessness caused his financial collapse in 1822. After he had left the county Tom Rounding continued the hunt with a scratch pack. The last occasion on which a wild red deer was hunted is said to have been in 1826, when one ran from Hog Hill to Plaistow.

For years after Mr. Wellesley had retired to the Continent festive gatherings used to be held, at which a silver cup inscribed " From Long Wellesley abroad to Tommy Rounding at home" was merrily passed from hand to hand. Rounding, like all his family,

was a good sportsman. His portrait has been left us by Tom Hood, who knew this "jovial elf," as he called him, well.

> A snow-white head, a merry eye,
> A cheek of jolly blush;
> A claret tint laid on by health
> With Master Reynard's brush.

The few remaining red deer at this period kept mostly to the adjoining Hainault Forest—the last of all is said to have been removed from Epping Forest to Windsor in 1827. Nevertheless, in 1888 it was said that some still existed in the Forest, whilst a small herd is recorded a year previously in Takeley Forest, near Hatfield, Broad Oak, the progeny of a single Epping Forest hind lost by hounds during a chase.

A few words as to the above-mentioned Hainault Forest may here not be out of place.

This beautiful expanse of wild woodland, originally the eastern portion of Waltham Forest, is now unfortunately only represented by about eight hundred acres, which a few years ago were saved for the enjoyment of the public by the endeavours of several gentlemen locally interested, foremost among whom was Mr. E. North Buxton.

Hainault Forest consisted of some seventeen thousand acres in 1793, which had shrunk to four thousand in 1851, of which the King's woods comprised rather more than half. Even at this time the forest in question was a wild tract of uplands and dells covered

with dense underwood, pollard oak, and hornbeam, broken by breezy stretches of common overgrown with furze, broom, and heather.

In 1851 the Commissioners of Woods and Forests (whose action, to its eternal shame, was endorsed by the House of Commons) recommended that Hainault Forest should be completely destroyed and converted into arable land. Two years later all the old oaks, including the remains of the Fairlop Oak of ancient memory, were dragged up by steam ploughs, and in six weeks the beautiful forest had disappeared, the only portion left untouched being a small and very pretty wood by Lambourne.

As an act of criminal vandalism, the disafforestation of Hainault stands almost alone, as will be realised when it is stated that more than a hundred thousand trees were cut down on the Crown farm alone, and what formerly had been a tract of great woodland beauty was converted into one of the most uninviting-looking districts possible—scarcely a tree being left to relieve the dreary uniformity of the long, rigid, rectangular roads.

To return to the subject of the Epping Hunt. Gradually the hunting days narrowed down to the one day, on Easter Monday, when the hounds used to meet at "The Bald-faced Stag." Regular hunting men then began to laugh at the whole thing, and for many years before the Easter Monday hunt had become a mere cockney carnival it was frequently declared that the main object for keeping it up was to serve the neighbouring inns and public-houses,

and to put something into the pocket of the huntsman, for whom a collection was made.

In the early nineteenth century the usual attendance, upon the most moderate calculation, was from two to three thousand horsemen, and seven or eight hundred vehicles of different descriptions, in addition to numbers of pedestrians. Pugilistic encounters succeeded each other in different rings for the amusement of one class, whilst the E.O. gentlemen, and other owners of gambling concerns, entertained their friends in booths erected for the purpose. The usual hour for the commencement of the hunt was half-past twelve, at which time the deer was liberated amidst the crowd, the hounds being close up to his haunches. With great difficulty the poor animal would make his way between coaches and carts, and through every description of horse and foot, till at length he broke view, by gaining the covert. Some years the deer gave the assembled company much pleasing and unexpected gratification, by leading the chase over the open part of the Forest, in view. Those in charge of the hounds, however, seldom continued to run him for more than half an hour, when, if, as usually happened, he took soil, they drew off the hounds and left him to enjoy his ease, their idea being that they would take him with a good run on the following morning, when the cockney Nimrods should be sleeping in their beds.

In 1810 the Easter Epping Hunt was rendered more interesting than usual by Colonel Thornton, who gratified the cockney sportsmen by allowing a stag to be turned out before his hounds.

It was a very fine day, and vast numbers assembled to see the sight. The ladies in carriages surpassed in number, splendour, and beauty all that had ever appeared there before. Several real sportsmen, friends of Colonel Thornton, together with many Newmarket men, taking the opportunity of hunting on that day, on their way to Newmarket Races, added sporting lustre to the scene. By those accustomed to attend this annual assemblage the numbers were estimated at above thirty thousand, the very trees being occupied by persons of all descriptions, eager to view the gay crowd of horse and foot.

At twelve o'clock the Colonel arrived in a sporting barouche, drawn by four cream-coloured Arabians, together with ladies who, like himself, were dressed in scarlet. Before opening the hunt he pledged the assembled company in a gold goblet shaped like a fox's mask, a trophy, it was rumoured, won by the Colonel in consequence of a wager as to the powers of his pack of hounds.

Much excitement was caused by the arrival of the huntsman, whippers-in, and helpers, mounted or leading six high-bred chestnut horses, said to be descendants of Eclipse, and with them the hounds, all of the same colour, fawn and white.

The deer (which was a celebrated animal known as Mrs. Clarke) was now ordered by the Colonel to be uncarted, which was done with great difficulty, the populace being so extremely anxious, and leaving no opening for it to get off. The quarry (renowned as having furnished an extraordinary run over Salisbury

Plain) was ornamented, according to the old custom, of the Epping Easter Hunt, with gay-coloured ribbons, which many of the cockneys, who had but an imperfect sight of the animal, supposed to be part of its natural hue. In clearing a way through the people, this deer leapt over a gig and horse, creating much alarm, and then dashed into the Forest. The huntsman was compelled, from the concourse of people, to make a considerable circuit before he could lay on his hounds.

The deer, as may be imagined, was headed at every instant. The hounds, however, settling to their scent, drove him out of the Forest, which induced the Colonel to order them to be stopped, to prevent that mischief which, as he said, must unavoidably happen to many an honest farmer, should the hunt find its way over their land.

The hounds, returning into the Forest, soon ran into a herd of deer, when a fine old one was singled out, and after a run of great speed and close hunting, through clouds of dust, on roads hardened by easterly winds, and baked by an intense sun, in about three hours was gallantly run into and killed, to the admiration of every good sportsman, who had conceived it impossible that any hounds could have afforded sport under such circumstances.

The deer that was first turned out escaped from the cause before-mentioned, but was followed for ten or twelve miles by horsemen who conceived the hounds to be coming in their rear. The game then taking soil, some of the London sportsmen, anxious

to see a red deer, and more so such a famous one as "Mrs. Clarke," made all speed towards the pond, and a few, in attempting to gratify their curiosity, tumbled into the water, and on the animal's bounding out, some of their horses ran away, whereby many falls were experienced. Many horses were lamed, but no serious accident took place, which, considering the number present, was very remarkable.

For some years after this, in the early part of the nineteenth century, the meet of the Easter Hunt, often attended by as many people as frequented Epsom Races, was at the "Roebuck" at Buckhurst Hill. The usual custom at the Easter Hunt was that if the deer were killed the huntsman was allowed to sell the skin to the cockneys, who eagerly and dearly purchased bits of it. If the deer was taken alive a collection was made for the huntsman and whippers-in. A good Forest buck was generally selected, its antlers being dressed with ribbons according to immemorial custom, and the whole affair was a real hunt, a good run being generally ensured in spite of the motley crowd who flocked to the chase.

About 1825 the open plains bordering the Forest abounded with deer, which were a delightful sight for the passengers on the coaches going out of London to the Eastern Counties on a fine summer's morning.

In 1830, however, the Epping Hunt had sunk to a low ebb. At that time the Forest authorities ceased to supply the buck, the place of which was taken by a tame deer bought or hired by the local publicans.

At the time when the hunt had for years past been falling into the sear and yellow leaf, Hood published his humorous poem about it. The hero, John Huggins, a concentration of all that was respectable as a citizen of *Cheap* and unfortunate as a hunter of *deer*, may be indeed called a worthy rival to John Gilpin of historic memory.

The description of the field is witty in the extreme.

> A score were sprawling on the grass,
> And heaven fell in showers;
> There was another *Floorer* there,
> Besides the Queen of Flowers.
>
> Some lost their stirrups, some their whips,
> Some had no caps to shew,
> But few like Charles at Charing Cross
> Rode on in *statue quo*.

The peroration is as amusing as the rest of the poem. The great day over, the proud sportsmen describe to each other how the stag stood at bay.

> And how the hunters stood aloof,
> Regardless of their lives,
> And shunn'd a heart whose very horns
> They knew could "*Handle*" knives.

The old form of the hunt was completely ended by the enclosure, in 1853, of that part of the Forest where the meet had always been held. The Epping Hunt was o'er!

A parody of the Easter Hunt, however, endured for many years later, and in the early seventies of the last century a miserable deer was uncarted late in the

afternoon at the "King's Oak" at High Beech, the landlord of which advertised the real original Easter Hunt with considerable ultimate profit to himself. An even more pathetic and ludicrous hunt was about this time provided by a rival publican. The whole affair had become pitiable in the extreme.

Meanwhile the old Forest had suffered greatly from encroachments and neglect.

Mr. Howard, one of the Commissioners of Woods and Forests, stated before a Committee of the House of Commons, in 1863, that of the nine thousand acres of which Epping Forest consisted in 1793 not more than seven thousand remained—two thousand acres had been lost by enclosures, but at what time could not be ascertained.

In 1793 Epping Forest was well stocked with both red and fallow deer. Sir James Tylney Long, Warden of the Forest, although he could not ascertain the exact number, issued a report which showed that bucks and does were then numerous. In 1863, however, Mr. Howard told the Committee of the House of Commons, "There are no longer any deer in Epping Forest; practically they do not exist . . . there may be a dozen, perhaps."

In the course of the investigation into forest rights it was discovered that the City of London, contrary to the general impression, had never claimed the right of hunting in Epping Forest on Easter Monday, but did claim the right of hunting there, though not on a particular day. At one time the Corporation greatly prized its hunting privileges; and the Office

of "Common Hunt"—an office of dignity and emolument—was only abolished in 1807, on the death of the holder.

When the abolition of the Office of Common Hunt was first proposed one member of the Court of Common Council protested that it was as necessary as that of Recorder. Though admittedly a sinecure, it was, he said, necessary to preserve it as one of the ancient rights and privileges of the citizens of London. The law officers of the City also gave their opinion that it was highly inexpedient to take from the establishment of the Lord Mayor an office which could be traced to the days of Richard II. Common Hunt, it should be added, ranked as the second esquire of the Lord Mayor's household.

In 1882 the evil days, during which the ancient Forest had suffered so grievously from depredations and enclosure, came to an end, and on May 6th of that year a public ceremony—upon which heaven itself seemed to smile, for it was a lovely day—marked the completion of the measures by which the Corporation of the City of London, at a cost of £250,000, had saved Epping Forest for all time, the declaration that the vast expanse of woodland was now for ever safe being made by Queen Victoria herself amidst a scene of the greatest enthusiasm.

The incalculable benefits produced by the generous and public-spirited action of the Corporation in preserving this sanctuary of sylvan life so close to the metropolis can hardly be overestimated. Would that many more of the vast sums spent upon philan-

thropic enterprise, often of dubious utility, had been diverted towards the purchase of national playgrounds of the same kind.

Had Enfield Chase and Hainault Forest been preserved intact the people of London would have possessed a vast expanse of woodlands unequalled for its beauty, and fitted to afford healthy recreation and enjoyment to countless generations.

The after results of the dedication of Epping Forest—"the loveliest forest in the world, and the pleasantest especially in summer," so George Borrow called it—have been wholly admirable. It now consists of some six thousand acres, to be preserved for the public in perpetuity, a staff of verderers, at the head of whom is Mr. E. North Buxton, maintaining the woodlands and everything connected with them in a most efficient manner.

It should be added that in 1899 Mr. Buxton very generously presented twenty-eight acres known as "Yardley Hill," to serve as a connecting link between the outlying portion and the main block.

A pleasing feature is the flourishing state of the fallow deer, which at the latter part of the last century had become practically extinct.

In 1873 there were scarcely a dozen left. In the autumn of that year an old woodman knew of three, but very rightly would not say where they lurked.

At the time when the Forest came under the admirable system of conservation which now prevails, it is said that but one buck and a few does survived!

From these, however, greatly to the credit of

the Verderer and his officers, has sprung a herd of some 150 head, all of them the descendants of the few harried survivors of forty years ago. In addition to these there are a certain number of roe deer which some time ago were introduced by Mr. Buxton. These, however, lie more on the outskirts than in the Forest itself.

The fallow deer of the Forest, so happily preserved from extinction, are comparatively small in size, of a uniform dark brown colour, almost black, with very attenuated antlers.

In colour and other characteristics they differ from herds in other parts of the country, and are animals of considerable scientific interest. For this reason, apart from the dictates of humanity, it is all the more important that the descendants of the deer who furnished Mr. Mellish's "lemon pyes" with many a good run in the old days of the eighteenth century should be preserved from the attacks (unfortunately frequent of late) of the numberless dogs owned by persons living close to the Forest. After the many vicissitudes which this herd has gone through, it is surely entitled to live unmolested amidst the sylvan glades, where it is said to have first been introduced by the Romans.

III

A CENTURY or so ago the roads running through Epping Forest were favourite haunts of highwaymen. There on occasion lurked the famous Dick Turpin and his associate, Tom King, who once robbed five coaches in one day. Turpin's memory is still preserved in the Forest by a little inn called "Dick Turpin's Cave," just below High Beech, and here some rusty weapons, said to have belonged to the famous highwaymen, are to this day preserved.

Turpin's celebrated ride to York is, I believe, a fiction. The highwayman who performed the famous ride was a man called Nevinson, known as "Swift Nick." He robbed a sailor on Gad's Hill about dawn one summer's day in 1676, and by contriving to get to York bowling green the same evening established a successful alibi.

In the days before railways were dreamt of numbers of people who frequented the races at Newmarket went and returned by way of Epping Forest, and as they often carried a good deal of money with them, some daring robberies were committed.

In 1793 John Wiltshire was executed at Chelmsford for highway robbery in the Forest, where, with a couple of companions, one night in April, he had

stopped two gentlemen—Mr. Howarth and Mr. Montolieu—and robbed them of cash, bank-notes, and bills to the extent of about two thousand guineas.

The victims were so sound asleep when the chaise stopped that neither of them waked till the ruffians began to rifle their pockets. After receiving from them their watches and gold, they insisted upon their pocket-books, which demand not being instantly complied with, they forced open their waistcoats, within which they discovered and took both their pocket-books.

Wiltshire was caught at Beaconsfield, and at his trial some evidence was given showing the connection which existed between certain innkeepers and highwaymen.

Johnson, a retired bruiser, who kept a singular kind of sporting coffee-house, in a street near Lincoln's Inn Fields, proved, with apparent reluctance, that the prisoner was at Newmarket on the day of the robbery, he having lost a considerable sum at hazard in his (Johnson's) company; and also that, on that very day, he lent the prisoner his bay rat-tailed mare, on which, with his companion, Broughton, still at large, Wiltshire was supposed to have committed the robbery. The pugilist hung back during all his examination, displaying that kind of shift at every question which was better calculated for a bruising stage than a court of justice.

The evidence of this man cast a startling light upon the connection which was known to exist between the keepers of certain low-class houses of refreshment

and the highwaymen whom they on occasions sheltered and assisted. Some of the latter, however, relied upon themselves alone, and, leading double lives, would ostensibly follow some respectable calling in the intervals of adventure on the road.

Such a one was the individual who kept a glove shop on the northern outskirts of London. Though a cunning rascal, he was once thoroughly frightened by a lady.

Going out of town towards Barnet, she found that she had forgotten her gloves, and so stopped at this man's shop and bought a pair, and after paying for them from a purse well stocked with bank-notes, stepped into her post-chaise and proceeded on her journey.

She had scarcely reached Finchley Common, when a highwayman stopped the chaise and demanded her money. He entreated her not to be alarmed, he had no intention of hurting her ; if she surrendered her property it was all he wanted. Penury alone urged him to the desperate act, and he was determined to obtain money or perish. The lady gave her purse, and the depredator rode off.

After he was gone, and the fright had subsided, the lady imagined that in the address of the highwayman she recognised the voice of the glover she had some time before dealt with. This idea struck her so forcibly that she ordered the post-boy to drive back to town, not choosing, as she said, to venture farther over the Heath.

On her arrival at the glover's, she knocked and

gained admittance; the glover himself opened the door. The lady desired to speak with him in private. The glover showed her to a back parlour, when she exclaimed, " I am come for my purse, which you have robbed me of this evening on Finchley Common!" The glover was confounded. The lady proceeded, " It is of no use for you to deny it; I am convinced, and your life is at my mercy. Return me my property, and trust to my humanity!" The glover, overcome with guilt, shame, and confusion, returned the purse, confessed his crime, and pleaded his distress.

The lady, after a suitable admonishment, gave him a ten-pound note, bade him mend his way of life, and keep his own counsel, adding that she would never divulge his name or place of abode. She kept her word; and though the robbery was spoken of in the papers, no allusion was made to the discovery of the thief.

As a matter of fact, ladies often gave more trouble to highwaymen than did men thoroughly able to defend themselves.

Two well-known prize fighters, John Ward and William Treble, on their way to town in a chaise, were one night stopped by a single highwayman, who demanded their money; and notwithstanding Ward telling him to whom he was talking, still persisted in his demand, saying he paid no respect to personages, and obliged the two mighty heroes to deliver the contents of their pockets, which amounted, on the part of Ward, to half a crown and some halfpence, and on that of Treble, to one guinea

and a silver watch. They had proceeded a very little way farther, when they were attacked by three more footpads, but these being informed by the crestfallen pugilists that they had just been "spoken to," let them proceed on their way.

Finchley Common was the favourite haunt of Dick Turpin and Jack Sheppard, the latter of whom was captured there in 1724 disguised in a butcher's blue frock and woollen apron, with a stolen watch concealed under each armpit. Turpin's Oak, on the Barnet road, had its trunk full of pistol balls, fired at it by passing travellers in order to scare away highwaymen.

Blackheath was also a notorious resort of these knights of the road, as was Wimbledon Common, and Shooter's Hill seldom lacked the ghastly ornament of some miscreant swinging in the wind. Here Jerry Abershawe was hung in chains, having first been hanged in the ordinary way on Kennington Common.

Some people carried bad money especially for the benefit of highwaymen, one of whom, who stopped a party at the gate of Twickenham Park, in October, 1781, to his great disgust got a purse full of it from Lady Browne, who, anticipating attack, had taken care to provide a supply.

Lord Berkeley, being driven over Hounslow Heath, was awakened from sleep by his coach being brought to a standstill and a threatening face looking in at the window.

"I have you at last, my lord," said a gruff voice,

"though you said you would never yield to a single robber. Deliver!"

"Certainly," was the Earl's reply; "but tell me first who is that looking over your shoulder."

The highwayman turned his head to look, and at the same moment Lord Berkeley shot him dead.

At Purser's Green, where the Fulham and Parson's Green roads separate, is, or was, an inscribed stone commemorating a highwayman's singular death. It was let into the wall near the entrance to Park House, on it being put "Purser's Cross, 7th August, 1738."

In that year a highwayman who had committed a robbery on Finchley Common, being recognised in an inn in Burlington Gardens, managed to get to his horse, mount, and ride off. He was, however, pursued by a crowd, who followed him through Hyde Park, where a number of gentlemen and their servants joined in the hue and cry. By the time the fugitive reached Fulham Fields he was so closely pressed as to realise that escape was hopeless, so having flung the contents of his purse to some men working there, he put his pistol to his ear and fell dead before he was captured.

His name was never discovered, and, according to the custom of the day, he was buried at the cross-roads with a stake through his body.

The extraordinary ease with which highwaymen succeeded in robbing travellers is the more remarkable insomuch that many of them exhibited great cowardice on occasion. In August, 1819, Lady Stanley, travelling from York, accompanied by her maidservant, was

stopped by a highwayman, when the maid, in her alarm, took up a bottle of ginger-beer, and the cork flying out made such a report that the highwayman instantly galloped off in great alarm.

Hounslow Heath was another dangerous district for travellers. A terror here was Ned Halloran—a perfect Macheath in real life, surrounded by doating mistresses, yet ultimately betrayed or sold to the officers of justice by a favourite Dulcinea. This dashing knight of the road one evening, in the course of his professional avocations on the Heath, stopped a goldsmith and refiner, a man of considerable property and importance in the city of London, and took from him, without any resistance, his cash, gold watch, chain, and seals, and also his buckles, and then very politely wished his victim a good evening. Ned, thinking it was all right and safe, after making a small circuitous round over the Heath, put up his horse at an inn to take refreshment. His repast being ended, and just as he was ready to mount his horse, the refiner rode into the yard, but did not recognise him. Halloran left the inn without the slightest agitation; and in the course of a few days afterwards, strange to say, had the effrontery to go and offer the stolen articles to the refiner, upon his counter, when the latter looked up at Halloran, without betraying any appearance of recollection, and immediately saw the man who had robbed him upon Hounslow Heath. With the utmost coolness and in a business-like manner, the man paid him the worth of them, and Halloran retired from the shop in safety!

As a matter of fact, the refiner was what the thieves termed a fence, or receiver of stolen goods, and Ned must have been directed to his shop by some of his own fraternity. For this reason the man pocketed the affront, for fear, if any noise had been made about the matter, his own iniquitous practices might have been discovered. At a subsequent period the refiner in question put an end to his existence, to avoid the disgrace of a public trial for forging the Goldsmiths' Company's mark.

Quite a number of highwaymen were Irish, and endowed with a fair share of that wit for which natives of the Emerald Isle are noted. A conspicuous instance of this was Brennan, a most desperate individual who, when he was eventually captured in the south of Ireland, drew to the gaol numbers of people all agog to see the man who had long been a terror to the country loaded with irons. Amongst the crowd was a banker, whose notes at that time were not held in the highest estimation. In a jaunty way he assured the prisoner that he was very glad to see him there at last. Brennan, looking up, replied, "Ah, sir, I did not expect that from you—indeed I did not; for you well know that when all the country refused your notes I took them."

At one period in Ireland highway robberies were perpetrated by regular armed bands, and during the rebellion of 1798 it became the regular practice of certain bodies of insurgents to stop mail-coaches and plunder them of all the property they were conveying.

Of all the loyalists in Ireland, Mr. John Claudius Beresford, a banker of Dublin, was the most obnoxious to the rebels, from the circumstance of the rough treatment often inflicted by him and his corps of yeomanry, in his riding-house, on many of their number. Whenever, therefore, they discovered any of his notes, they always burned them to vex him; by which means he would have become a very rich man had not other unsuccessful speculations ruined him.

Though the majority of highwaymen seem to have been drawn from a low class of the population, there were a few cases of men of good position taking to the road through desperation. One young subaltern in a cavalry regiment, for instance, having been reduced to great distress by extravagance and misfortune, determined to risk a last reckless coup, and, having heard that a rich baronet would be passing a certain spot after having received a large sum of money, waited there till his carriage came along, and then, stopping it, bade its occupant stand and deliver. The Baronet, noticing a certain gentlemanly air in the robber, presented his purse, watch, and a diamond ring, adding, " I think, young man, you are unaccustomed to this trade, which 'twere most desirable you should quit for ever." The robber, in anxious trepidation, but not uncourteously, returning the property, said " that he must have the larger sum, which was concealed in the bottom of the carriage." The Baronet at once acknowledged the accuracy of the highwayman's information, and

without hesitation produced it, when the robber politely bowed, and ordered the carriage to proceed. The Baronet, however, expressing his conviction that some circumstances of no common kind had induced this flagrant breach of the laws, asked, as a favour, that he would grant him an interview at some future period. The officer readily answered that he knew he could trust his life upon the word of Sir ——, and appointed the London Coffee House, on Ludgate Hill, as the place of meeting, precisely at eight o'clock in the evening, a few days forward, stipulating that both parties should be unattended. As the day drew near the Baronet felt somewhat uncomfortable at the solicited rencontre, and acquainted a military friend, whom he entreated to accompany him, with the circumstances, taking his solemn assurance that he would not divulge anything of what he might become acquainted with. The Colonel, though he ridiculed the idea that a man who had robbed another of some thousands would so absurdly place his life in his hands, consented to go with him to the place of meeting. As the time advanced, his banter of the Baronet's credulity increased, until, St. Paul's clock striking eight, the door opened, and a gentleman, enquiring for Sir ——, was shown into his room. Wine was ordered, a conversation on general topics ensued, and, at the close of an hour, the gentleman rose, evidently under the most severe feelings of embarrassment, which the Colonel seemed to partake, and politely took his leave. The Baronet hastened to accost his friend with, " Well, Colonel, what think

you of my robber now? Is he not a gentleman?" The Colonel coolly answered, "So, sir, this is the highwayman! On my word he shall swing for it; he is a lieutenant in my own regiment." The Baronet now reminded the Colonel of his solemn word, saying that for all the world he would not permit it to be broken, and desired to know what was the general tenor of the young man's conduct. The Colonel stated that it would give him the greatest pain to lose him; that he was a most excellent and indefatigable officer, an incomparably affectionate husband and father; that he had but one vice, to which he attributed his destruction, viz. gaming! that he could not screen so flagrant an offender; and that the law, however painful to his own mind, must take its course. Sir —— assumed a very serious tone, and stated that Colonel —— must be personally answerable to him for any disclosure, adding, "As you have given the young man so high a character except in regard to one point, suppose we try to reclaim instead of punish him. Will you lend your assistance?" The Colonel expressed his readiness, but that the magnitude of the crime utterly precluded it. The Baronet continued, "Leave that to me. He went out in extreme though suppressed agitation, and not a moment must be lost. If you know his haunts, fly to save him, assure him not only of my forgiveness, but that if he will pledge his word to forsake this dangerous vice, he shall hold what he has obtained as a gift, to which I will add whatever may be necessary to extricate him from any other trivial

embarrassment." The Colonel set out, confident that he should find him taking leave of his wife and family. He made such haste, however, that, entering the house soon after the culprit, he found him surrounded by his family, in an agony of despair. The arrival of the Colonel convinced him that all was lost; and, falling on his knees, he supplicated, if possible, that his fame, not his life, might be spared, on account of his innocent and injured family. The surprise with which he received, after a severe lecture, the joyful intelligence of which the Colonel was the bearer was naturally great. His repentance was keenly sincere, and he lived to repair his error, and be a distinguished ornament to society, rising in the course of a successful career to a position of high military command.

Between the highwaymen and the bucks of the middle of the eighteenth century there was often little to choose, and the peaceful citizen dreaded both alike. The Mohawks, for instance, who beat men and insulted women were worse than any robber, for in their case the excuse of necessity was wanting. Reckless, cruel braggarts, they were denounced in verse as—

> Heroes mischievously gay,
> Lords of the street, and terrors of the way;
> Flush'd as they are with folly, youth, and wine,
> Their prudent insults to the poor confine;
> Afar they mark the flambeau's bright approach,
> And shun the shining train and gilded coach.

Not a few of these truculent and bullying blades made bad ends. A notorious instance of this was

Fighting Fitzgerald, who was eventually hanged. He once fought an extraordinary duel in Galway, where he was quartered as a captain of dragoons. One day he espied a pretty girl seated behind the counter of a tobacconist's shop in that town, and under pretence of buying snuff, got into conversation with her. Whilst she was delivering his box to him, the fire-eater seized her by the arm and snatched a kiss. He was then proceeding to further liberties, when a tall, stout man, who had witnessed the whole transaction from his own shop on the other side of the street, entered and seized Fitzgerald's arm as he was pulling off the young woman's neckerchief.

"Hullo! ye villain of the world!" exclaimed the man, "that little girl is my own property, for I'm betrothed to her these five weeks; and if any rascal dares to lay a finger on her, he shall fight me without any delay at all."

"That is not so certain!" replied Fitzgerald, eyeing his athletic opponent. "I am a captain in his Majesty's service; therefore, if I had given you offence, it is beneath the dignity of a gentleman to fight with a common shopkeeper, which I take you to be. I shall merely wish you good morning!"

"Shopkeeper here, or jontleman there!" returned the man, "that won't save ye, my darling. My name is Cornailius O'Brien; I'm a leather-cutthur by thrade; and I'll have satisfaction this minute, or I'll brake every bone in yer skin. So now, my dear," continued he, as he shut the door, and placed his

back against it, "ye'll just be plaised to tell me yer good-looking name."

"I am Captain Fitzgerald, sir, and I desire you instantly to open that door."

"Captain Fitzgerald, or Captain Divil," replied O'Brien, "I'll not do that same until ye promise to gi'e me satisfaction."

"Upon my honour, sir," returned Fitzgerald, "I meant no affront either to you or the lady; and if I have done so, I am sorry for it."

"Bigorra! then, my dear," said Cornelius, "ye convince me that ye have no honour at all, at all; for didn't I see ye ill-thrate the darling, with my own eyes? Therefore, as ye have tould me a lie, why, d'ye see, I'll make ye conform to the rules of the little county Galway, by fighting me directly; for I won't take yer promise to give me satisfaction, at no price."

Fitzgerald, seeing that there was no alternative, set his wits to work to devise how he should overcome the leather-cutter, or come off unhurt. Having adjourned to a room upstairs, he received a pistol from his opponent. They then tossed up for the first shot, which fell to O'Brien, upon which the latter seated himself across a table, and levelled his pistol so exactly at Fitzgerald's head that there appeared little chance of his escaping instant death.

Watching his opportunity, however, when the tradesman was drawing the trigger, Captain Fitzgerald, at that instant, roared out "Boh!" and the ball passed over his head into the ceiling. It was now

Fitzgerald's turn, but he declined firing, on condition that O'Brien should ask his pardon; which, after some hesitation, he agreed to do before the young lady in the shop, who had all this time been quivering with terror at the probable result of a duel so singularly conducted.

At the time of the Napoleonic wars military men were occasionally quite ungovernable in their behaviour.

In July, 1810, Margate was much disturbed by a fracas at the Assembly Rooms caused by two officers who, during a dance at the Assembly Rooms, opened the centre window of the room, which being objected to by the ladies, the master of the ceremonies remonstrated with one of the officers, who exclaimed, "Never mind the ladies, we will have a dance of our own." As the time had closely approached when the dances were to terminate, according to the regulation of the assembly, the master of the ceremonies ordered the waiter to put out the lights; but when the servant approached to fulfil his duty, one of the officers seized the extinguisher from the man, which he broke, and threw out of the window, being very rough with the man at the same time. The master of the ceremonies, seeing his local authority thus openly violated, approached to make a second remonstrance, when the offending party threatened to throw him out of the window after the extinguisher!

As the master of the ceremonies found his personal influence at an end, and even his life in danger, he thought it prudent to retire as fast as he could, which

he did, followed by the musicians, when the officers ordered in a military band and organised a dance of their own.

Many superior officers were very authoritative in their methods; probably the most autocratic of all was Sir John Sherbrooke. In the Peninsula he was especially stern with the officers of the Commissariat Department, and would fly into a thundering passion if rations were not ready for his men after a day's march. Sir John was actually reported to have hanged a commissariat clerk on a branch of a tree by the roadside for disobedience in not furnishing a quantity of provisions at a given time!

Once, when within a day's march of Wellington's army, no rations at all were forthcoming, and Sir John, who had been fuming and raging like a mad bull, received the commissary, when he did arrive, in anything but a polite manner, ending after a stormy interview with "Get out of my house this instant, or I'll kick you downstairs."

The indignant commissary, in high dudgeon, galloped off to head-quarters, where he complained of the treatment he had received, winding up by describing how Sir John Sherbrooke had actually threatened to kick him downstairs.

"He threatened to kick you downstairs, did he?" said Wellington.

"Yes, my lord." (The Iron Duke was Lord Wellington then.)

"And he did not carry his threat into execution?"

"No, my lord."

"Then, sir, allow me to congratulate you upon being a very fortunate individual, for ever since I have known General Sir John Sherbrooke, which is now upwards of a quarter of a century, he has always been a man of his word, and my only astonishment is that he did not kick you downstairs!"

Though military bucks were a good deal given to swagger, they occasionally met with severe rebuffs.

An officer of the Blues, for instance, when that regiment was quartered at Brighton at the end of the eighteenth century, after an evening's amusement, happened to jostle against a doctor whom he met in West Street. The man of war drew his sword, and was disarmed in a short time by the hero of the lancet.

After a short scuffle with fists, victory declared in favour of the doctor, who did not give the military man the usual grace of capitulation, namely, that "the officers shall retain their swords," for he took it home with him as a trophy of his victory.

Another officer, well known for his extravagant bragging, once received an effectual set-back. Having boasted that he had fought seven duels, and killed his three different men, one of the company drily replied, "That is nothing, sir. I have had eleven duels, in every one of which I killed my man, and in a twelfth—but perhaps, sir, you would like to hear the story.

"As a young man I was, I fear, very wild; being very rich I plunged into all sorts of dissipations, drank hard, and played deep. One night, being palpably cheated of a large sum, I detected my rascal—called

him out—killed him. I did not fly! I had pinked a scoundrel, and I knew the world would thank me. The business, however, brought me into trouble; for, thinking my courage a flash in the pan, every puppy that could look fierce was determined to try it. I saw it was a concerted thing among them to hamper me with several affairs at once; however, I sustained many affronts unmoved, and once very placidly wiped my face before hundreds of people, after a coxcomb had spit on it. Eventually, however, I determined to act, and seeking out five of the bravest that had insulted me, and, challenging them at different times and places, I killed them one after the other, and escaped to the Continent. About a month after I was in a coffee-house, where a gloomy Swiss officer, as he pored over the papers, seemed extremely offended at the vacant silliness of a young Frenchman, whom he called out and killed in ten minutes. On the victor's return to the coffee-house, I called him out, when by the help of an expert lunge, I killed the Swiss. This was my seventh man. The eighth was a Dutchman, whom I was obliged to fight with knives over a table. Two years had elapsed since I left England. I returned, and got entangled with a lady, whose brothers determined to massacre me. As I challenged and killed them all three the father was resolved to have a bout with me—a fine old man, ruddy complexion, silver hair. Well, gentlemen, what was to be done? We fought—I lunged in tierce; but not being able to recover from an artful feint I had made, he put in an expert lunge in carte, over arm, and KILLED ME!"

The boaster, for whose correction the story was invented, swore he would not believe it. This caused roars of laughter, and the swaggerer sneaked out of the room quite dumbfounded.

During the early part of the last century, when many Englishmen were in France, French fire-eaters often attempted to hector them. Tours then, as now, was largely resorted to by young Englishmen desirous of learning French; and one of them of Irish extraction, Captain Fitzpatrick, having a dispute one night, in a ballroom, with a Frenchman, the latter gave him a pat on his cheek, telling him he would understand what he meant. The Captain assured him he did and immediately left the room. The next day no tidings were to be heard of him. He had not taken post horses, nor could his friends find out in what way he had quitted Tours, but he was gone. In consequence of this, strongly worded notices were stuck up at the different places he frequented, informing him he could not again be received in the society which he had so disgraced. A month passed away, and the affair was almost forgotten, when, during a grand match at billiards, the door opened, and in walked Captain Fitzpatrick. Striding up to the Frenchman with a thundering stick in his hand, he gave him what he called " a botherer," in return for the pat on the cheek, and then called on him to draw. No sooner had their blades crossed each other than the Frenchman was seen to leap half a yard from the ground, and to fall dead on the spot. " I've killed him ! " remarked the Captain. " My favourite thrust ! "

It must be admitted that the Frenchman got only what he deserved.

When swords were generally worn some knowledge of fencing was almost a necessary qualification. There were at that time places in and about the metropolis which were practically recognised as duelling-grounds, but nevertheless the duel was never such a recognised institution in England as abroad; very rightly it always seemed more or less repugnant to all dowered with the national common sense.

The whole system of duelling is an absurdity never probably better demonstrated than by the brave Dutch Admiral Van Tromp. This hero, a large, heavy man, was once challenged by a thin, active French officer. "We are not upon equal terms with rapiers," said Van Tromp, "but call upon me to-morrow morning, and we will adjust the affair better."

When the Frenchman called, he found the Dutch admiral bestriding a barrel of gunpowder. "There is room enough for you," said Van Tromp, "at the other end of the barrel; sit down. There is a match, and, as you are the challenger, light the powder."

The Frenchman was quite thunderstruck at this terrible mode of fighting; and as the Dutch admiral told him he would fight in no other way, a reconciliation was arranged.

Probably the most novel kind of duel ever fought was the one which took place in Paris about 1808. Two gentlemen, M. de Granpree and M. Le Pique, having quarrelled about Mademoiselle Tirevet, a celebrated opera dancer, who was kept by the former,

but had been discovered in an intrigue with the latter, a challenge ensued. Being both men of elevated mind, they agreed to fight in balloons, and in order to give time for their preparation, it was determined that the duel should take place on that day month. Accordingly, on May 3rd, the parties met in a field adjoining the Tuileries, where their respective balloons were ready to receive them. Each, attended by a second, entered his car, loaded with blunderbusses, as pistols could not be expected to be efficient in their probable situations. A great multitude attended, hearing of the balloons, but little dreaming of their purpose; the Parisians merely looked for the novelty of a balloon race. At nine o'clock the cords were cut, and the balloons ascended majestically, amidst the shouts of the spectators. The wind was moderate, blowing from the N.N.W., and they kept, as far as could be judged, within about eighty yards of each other. When they had mounted to about the height of nine hundred yards, M. Le Pique fired his piece ineffectually. Almost immediately after the fire was returned by M. Granpree, and penetrated his adversary's balloon, the consequence of which was its rapid descent, and M. Le Pique and his second were both dashed to pieces on a house-top, over which the balloon fell. The victorious Granpree then mounted aloft in the grandest style, and descended safe with his second about seven leagues from the spot of ascent.

Combe, the eccentric author of *Dr. Syntax*, in his spirited satire, *The Diaboliad*, introduced a

curious story of a duel. Among its subjects were an Irish peer and his eldest son, who had a quarrel that extinguished any little natural affection that might have ever subsisted between them. The father challenged the son to fight; the son refused to go out with him, not, as he expressly stated, because the challenger was his own father, but because he was *not a gentleman.*

This was written out of revenge, for Combe had married the mistress of a noble lord who cheated him out of a promised annuity.

This author, who wrote the *Dance of Life* and the *Dance of Death* when he was nearly seventy, was as remarkable for the wildness of his youth as for the industry of his life, after his fortune of some sixteen thousand pounds, left him by an uncle, had been squandered. Educated at Eton and Oxford, Combe, as a young man, was very popular in fashionable society, where his handsome appearance and courtly manner gained him the nickname of "Duke Combe." It was, however, not very long before he paid the usual penalty of extravagance and became steeped in poverty to the very lips, being eventually driven by lack of even a morsel of bread to enlist. Billeted as a soldier at an inn in Wolverhampton, he hurt his foot, and was limping painfully along the high street of the town, when he was met by an acquaintance who had known him in all his fashionable glory. This individual had himself seen better days, having exchanged a sub-lieutenancy of marines for an engagement in Mr.

Kemble's company. " Heavens ! " said the astonished historian, " is it possible, Combe, that you can bear such a life ? " " Fiddlesticks ! " answered the ex-duke, taking a pinch of snuff, " a philosopher can bear anything." His theatrical career, however, was short, and before very long he became known in the place through his conversational talents. A gentleman passing through a public-house had observed him reading, and, looking over his shoulder, saw, with surprise, a copy of Horace. " What," said he, " my friend, can you read that book in the original ? " " If I cannot," replied Combe, " a great deal of money has been thrown away on my education."

Combe also served for a time in the French army, while from a more cogent reason than piety he afterwards entered a French monastery, and lived there till the term of his novitiate expired. He returned to Britain, and took service wherever he could get it ; but in all these dips into low life, he was never in the least embarrassed when he met with his old acquaintances. A wealthy divine, who had known him in the best London society, recognised him when a waiter at Swansea, actually tripping about with the napkin under his arm, and, staring at him, exclaimed, " You cannot be Combe ? " " Yes, indeed, I am," replied the eccentric author without the least embarrassment.

Many of the authors and actors of old days were thoroughgoing Bohemians, and not a few, following the fashionable Corinthians of the day, very ready for rows.

One of them, going into an inn in an especially cantankerous mood, strolled into the parlour, where, before a large fire with his coat tails under his arms, stood a pitiful imitation of buckism, very deficient in cleanliness and costume. His face was grimy, and his neckcloth of the same tint, which, nevertheless, was rolled in various folds about his throat; his hair was matted and turned up under a round, greasy hat with narrow brims, conceitedly placed on one side of the head, which noddled under it like a shaking mandarin. Thus equipped, the filthy fop straddled before the fire, which he completely monopolised. At length he caught the eye of the tragedian, who, in silent amazement, for the space of half a minute examined him from top to toe, then burst into a hoarse laugh and roared out, "Beau Nasty, by Jove." He then rose from his seat and, taking up the skirts of his coat, in imitation of the other, turned his back to the fire. "Warm work in the back settlements, sir," said he; then, approaching still nearer, as if he had some secret to communicate, whispered, though loud enough for every one to hear, "Pray, sir, how is soap?"

"Soap?"

"Yes, sir, soap; I understand it is coming down."

"I am glad of it, sir."

"Indeed, sir, you have cause, if one may judge from your appearance."

Here was a general laugh, which the stranger seemed not to regard, but noddling his head, and hitting his boots with a little rattan, rang the bell with an

air of importance, and enquired "if he could have a weal kitlet or a matton chip."

"What do you think," said the actor, "of a roasted puppy? Because," taking up the poker, "I'll spit you, and roast you in a minute."

This had a visible effect on the dirty beau; he retreated towards the door, his assailant following, and saying, "Quit my sight; thy face is dirty, and thy hands unwashed. Avaunt! avaunt! I say." Then replacing the poker, and returning to his seat, he burst into laughter, in which every one joined.

Most of the well-known inns were enlivened by the presence of some local character. "The Horns," at Kennington, at one time celebrated for the burlesque oath taken there, for many years sheltered a particularly striking example in the person of Mr. Joseph Capper, who died there in 1804, at the age of seventy-seven. This individual was born in Cheshire, of humble parents, and came up to London, where he eventually amassed a fortune in business, after which he settled down to a sedentary and eccentric life. His disposition was curious, for, although he possessed many amiable qualities, yet he was the most tyrannical and overbearing man living, and never seemed so happy as when placed by the side of a churlish companion. For several days he walked about the vicinity of London searching for lodgings, without being able to please himself. Being one day much fatigued, he called at "The Horns," at Kennington, took a chop, spent the day, and asked for a bed in his usual blunt manner. He was answered in the same churlish

style by the landlord that he could not have one. Upon this Mr. Capper determined to stop, if he could, all his life, to plague the growling fellow, and refused to retire. After some altercation, he was accommodated with a bed, and never slept out of it for twenty-five years.

During that time he made no agreement for lodging and eating, but wished to be considered only a customer for the day. For many years he talked about quitting his residence the next day. His manner of living was so methodical that he would not drink his tea out of any other than a certain favourite cup. He was equally particular with respect to his knives, forks, and plates. In winter and summer he rose at the same hour, and when the mornings were dark he was so accustomed to the house that he walked about the apartments without the assistance of any light. At breakfast he arranged, in a peculiar way, the paraphernalia of the tea-table, but first of all he would read the newspapers. At dinner he also observed a general rule, and invariably drank his pint of wine. His supper was uniformly a gill of rum, with sugar, lemon-peel, and porter mixed together. His bill for a fortnight amounted regularly to £4 18s. He called himself the champion of government, and his greatest glory was certainly his country and king. He joined in all subscriptions of a conservative kind. Extremely choleric, nothing raised his anger so soon as any one declaiming against the British constitution. In the parlour he kept his favourite chair, and there he would often amuse himself with

satirising the customers, or the landlord, if he could make his jokes tell better. It was his maxim never to join in general conversation, but to interrupt it whenever he could say anything ill-natured. Mr. Capper's conduct to his relations was exceedingly capricious; he never would see any of them. They were chiefly in indigent circumstances, and he had frequent applications from them to borrow money. "Are they industrious?" he would enquire. When being answered in the affirmative, he would add, "Tell them I have been deceived already, and never will advance a sixpence by way of loan; but I will give them the sum they want, and if ever I hear that they make known the circumstance, I will cut them off with a shilling." Soon after a new landlord, Mr. Townsend, became landlord of "The Horns," he had an opportunity of making a few good ready-money purchases, and applied to the old man for a temporary loan. "I wish," said he, "to serve you, Townsend; you seem an industrious fellow. But how is it to be done, Mr. Townsend? I have sworn never to lend; I must, therefore, give it thee." Which he accordingly did.

Mr. Townsend proved grateful for this mark of liberality, and never ceased to supply his eccentric guest with every comfort the house could afford. What, however, was perhaps more gratifying to the old man, he indulged him in his eccentricities. Mr. Capper was elected steward of the parlour fire, and if any persons were daring enough to put a poker in the fire without his permission, they stood a fair

chance of feeling the weight of his cane. In the summer-time a favourite diversion of his was killing flies in the parlour with his cane; but, as he was sensible of the ill opinion this would produce among the bystanders, he would with great ingenuity introduce a story about the rascality of all Frenchmen, "whom," says he, "I hate and detest and would knock down just the same as these flies." This was the signal for attack, and presently the killed and wounded were scattered about the room.

After Mr. Capper's death his will was found written on the back of a sheet of banker's cheques, which directed that his fortune of more than £30,000 should be divided amongst his poor relations, £8000 being left to two nephews nominated executors.

* * * * *

A century or so ago eccentric characters were to be found in all ranks and classes of society, and even quite a number of divines and University Dons were very unconventional in their habits. The principal feature of University life, however, was the leniency with which the authorities treated undergraduates, who were often allowed extraordinary licence. It was a rough age and Town and Gown rows, rowdyism, and what is now called "ragging" were in full swing. Though at times a show of firmness was made, the chief culprits generally escaped punishment, especially if they were gentlemen commoners. Where possible their ebullitions of spirit were overlooked altogether,

even when serious damage was inflicted upon college property.

Up to 1819 there stood in the Quadrangle of Christ Church, Oxford, a leaden statue of the god Mercury, which from time immemorial had presided over the fountain. It had always been the butt of the undergraduates, in whose profane hands it had more than once put on the garb of a gentleman commoner, walked forth from its pedestal, and knocked at the door of the Deanery. In the middle of the Lent Term of that year, however, the statue fell to rise no more, an occurrence which supplied the University with jests, small talk, and wonder for months after.

There had been a sharp frost for some time, and sporting undergraduates were at their wits' end what to do—some, indeed, did not scruple to say that if the weather did not change they should take to reading! No hunting to be had; shooting was over; and it was far too cold for the river. When such men had nothing to do, mischief sooner or later was sure to follow. One dark night a rope was procured openly in High Street, and, concealed under the silk folds of a gentleman commoner's gown, smuggled into the rooms of a sporting baronet, who had a supper party that evening for the conspirators. By holding up the ends of the rope at each extremity of the piece of water (which was intended to give ample protection to its tutelar deity), and, by advancing round the circle, two good turns were made round the body of the image, which, after some slight show of resistance, was pulled up with violence,

and in the fall was broken to pieces—the hunting men facetiously shouting, "How the Mercury has fallen! We shall have a thaw." This, by the by, really occurred, and enabled many a hunting man to witness a capital run with Sir Thomas Mostyn two days after. The scene that took place in the Quad the next morning, the horror and dismay of the Dons, the surprise and laughter of the younger members of the college, defied description. The hunting men forgot their usual lounge to Randall's and Sadler's stables, and the reading men their Aristotle, to gaze on the figure which lay prostrate in the fountain. The local Press was filled with poetical effusions for a month after, but though a great commotion was aroused, little attempt was made to discover the culprits, who escaped the retribution they deserved.

In those days most undergraduates with any means thought more of sport than of work. One of them, working away at an equation, was asked by an examiner how he was getting on. "Why, sir," was the reply, "I work *x* pretty well when I get him in the open; but I have just run him to earth under a root, and for the life of me I cannot dig him out."

To not a few a University career meant merely a time of unchecked revelry and enjoyment. Some verses on Oxford life, written in the early part of the last century, give a good idea of the unedifying existence then led by those known as "riding men."

> Think not they came in Oxford's shades to seek
> The love of learning, or the grace of Greek:
> Accuse not them, too innocently dull,

Of harb'ring knowledge in their cocoa skull.
Full many a youth, whose cheek turns pale to look
On shunn'd Castalia, clears the wintry brook,
And though Parnassus makes his courage quail,
Braves the broad horrors of the post and rail,
Then home returning, o'er the festive board
Where witless songs of ribaldry are roar'd,
He stuns the ears of wond'ring freshmen well
With moving accidents of flood and fell,
Or joins the chaunt, and warms the Phallic strain
With spurious bumpers of unpaid champagne.
His courage rising as the liquor flows,
He boasts each art, and ev'ry science knows;

. . . . .

No gun like his through Wytham's covers rang,
No dog like his can face the badger's fang,
None won but he the Woodstock glover's smile,
None bilked the turnpike in such topping style;

. . . . .

In vain he sees his tradesmen's bills expand
In fearful length from Bond Street to the Strand,
While yet no gold can buy the art to wear
The costly gewgaws with a Brummel's air,
While Hoby's boots for him refuse to shine,
As if his scout had black'd them with port wine,
And doomed of fortune to be twice the sport,
He swallows blacking, tho' he's dunn'd for port.

It was a thoughtless age, and many reckless jokes were played. One of the most novel of these was perpetrated by an undergraduate, who, after a pleasant dinner one evening, was so much struck with the irregularity of the steps in a staircase at his college as to decide on rolling them. With the assistance of some companions he contrived to drag

a huge garden roller to the topmost landing, and from thence started it on a downward career. In the course of its descent the roller would certainly have killed any one it might have met. As a matter of fact, a studious undergraduate, who looked out of his doorway to ascertain the cause of the tremendous row the roller made, would have been annihilated had he not just drawn back in time to allow it to pass as it came crashing down.

The life of a subaltern in many a smart regiment was much of the same sort as that led by sporting undergraduates. The younger officers were often wild spirits who subjected newly-joined comrades to ordeals,—sometimes burlesque, sometimes serious—when, for some reason or other, they felt doubtful as to the new-comer being a welcome addition to their number.

Though the whole system of ragging is morally indefensible, in some cases the process in question probably improved a few rough diamonds, whilst, when the intended victim showed true mettle, he was, as a rule, soon left in peace.

A good many years ago the officers of a certain smart cavalry regiment were much disturbed to hear that a subaltern, of whom no one seemed to know anything, was about to join, and their irritation was not at all lessened when he appeared, his general turn-out not being, in their eyes, up to the regimental standard.

During the first two or three days after his arrival several attempts were made to draw him out, but these invariably met with complete lack of success,

for, though the new lieutenant answered civilly enough, there was a reserve about his replies which completely baffled his interlocutors. After mess he retired early to his quarters; and very soon his unsociable habits were bitterly denounced, and at length it was decided to give him some forcible intimation that the regiment had decided he must leave.

Accordingly, on a certain evening, when, as usual, the unpopular officer had gone to his rooms, a select band of subalterns went to deliver the ultimatum.

Opening the door of his sitting-room, they found the object of their dislike sitting in an arm-chair, smoking a pipe and reading. A spokesman, who had previously been selected, then advanced, the others remaining grouped about the door.

" We have come," said the spokesman, " to tell you that, all things considered, we have decided that you are not quite the kind of man ever likely to suit this regiment; from what you have seen of us you must realise this yourself, and so the best thing you can do is to go. I may as well add that if you don't choose to understand this hint, we shall make it so hot for you that you will have to — so take your choice."

Whilst the spokesman was delivering this speech the unpopular young soldier sat perfectly unmoved in his chair, puffing at his pipe, apparently still reading his book, which, however, when the spokesman had finished, he shut with a bang. Then, rising to his feet, he said:

" Now you shall hear what I have got to say. I am

going to give you and your friends a choice too. There," he said, pointing to the other side of the room, "is the window, and there," pointing to the group of officers, "is the door. Out of one or the other the lot of you will go, so you had better make up your minds quickly as to which of the two you prefer."

This was said in a most determined manner, and there was so much fire in the young fellow's eye, his whole appearance being threatening in the extreme (for he was a powerful man), that after a whispered consultation it was decided to withdraw. The result of this interview was that the spirited defender of his own privacy gained a good deal of prestige, and before very long, his manly characteristics being generally recognised, he became one of the most popular officers who had ever served in the regiment.

In this case, of course, the subalterns had totally mistaken their man, whom they were quite wrong in attempting to rag, but there have been instances in which young fellows have pretty well deserved what they got—as did the hero, or rather victim, of the following, which occurred not very many years ago.

A conceited young puppy, who belonged to the militia battalion of a certain Highland regiment, boasting of a particularly glorious record, being asked to a ball in Scotland, got into his head the ridiculous idea that, as uniform was to be worn, he might just as well remove the metal M from his shoulder straps—the distinctive badge of militia battalions—and pass himself off as an officer of the regular army.

As, however, luck would have it, some of the officers of the two line battalions chanced to be present at the ball, and after a careful inspection of their sham colleague, realised the trick he was trying to play. Determined to give him a lesson, they contrived to get him into the rooms of one of their party after the ball was over, tied him hand and foot, and then, having procured one of the militia metal M's and heated it red-hot, branded the letter he had discarded upon both of his knees, after which unpleasant operation they kicked him out into the street, with the remark that in future, whenever he might wear a kilt, every one would be able to see exactly to what branch of the service he belonged without bothering about looking at his shoulder straps!

IV

THE love of gambling would seem to be ineradicable, and those addicted to play will indulge their passion even when reduced to the last limits of poverty.

It is said that a party of highly speculative paupers, not being able to obtain cards, actually improvised a pack out of their old pawn tickets, the various articles indicated on the tickets taking the place of the usual suits.

"Hang it," said one of the players after losing a game, "how unlucky I am; but there, I never seem able to win when trousers are trumps."

A certain writer wrote an able pamphlet against gaming, in which he denounced its wickedness, and detailed its horrible consequences. The work was just ready to appear, and the last proof was sent to the author for correction, when the printer's devil, having waited a long time, was unable to find him. He returned next day, and learnt that this enemy of gambling had been out all night, and had lost at play the sum which his publisher had paid him for the work!

As a matter of fact the school of stern experience is the only one which ever teaches wisdom to those imbued with a passion of gambling.

A nephew of old Lord Leicester was seized with a great desire to go to Newmarket, and asked permission of his uncle. "Tom, my boy," said the latter, "you had better keep away." But Tom was not of that opinion. After some discussion, Lord Leicester said, "Well, Tom, if you do go, you must go in proper style"; and he gave him a capital horse to ride, a servant to ride with him, and made him a present of a handsome sum of money. Thus equipped, Tom sallied forth. After some days had passed he re-appeared at Holkham, but not in the same style in which he left it; he came back alone and on foot.

Lord Leicester said to him, "Tom, where is the horse?"

"It is gone, sir."

"Tom, where is the servant?"

"He is gone, sir."

"Tom, where is your money?"

"All gone, sir; and I give you my solemn word of honour, I will never go to Newmarket again."

"It was money well spent," he used to say in after days. "I kept my word, and I have never been near Newmarket since."

Some there are whom even stern experience cannot teach; lack of means alone can deter such gamblers as these. Paucity of cash is generally recognised by even the most determined votaries of chance as a bar to play. An individual, asked to play cards, said to such a one, "No, I have fourteen good reasons against gaming." "What are those?" "In the first place,"

answered he, " I have no money." " Enough," was the reply ; " if you had four hundred reasons you need not name another."

As a matter of fact, many men like gambling not merely from the excitement of play, but because of the atmosphere of amusement and vivacity with which it is so often connected.

Even the ways of sharpers are sometimes highly amusing. One of these men, who had attained a most unenviable notoriety at foreign casinos, was one day being interrogated by a cheerful Bohemian, and spoke with amazing frankness of the various methods which he employed. " My most successful coup," said he, " was the coup de whisky and soda." " What was that ? " asked the somewhat puzzled enquirer. " I will tell you," said the sharper. " Having secured a bank at baccarat, I would, after dealing once or twice with none too conspicuous success, deal both sides an eight. This being done, I would ask the waiter for a whisky and soda, delaying the game whilst I drank it in a leisurely manner, turning round in my seat away from the table. As a general rule the punters, having looked at their cards, and found on each side a natural eight, would unfairly determine to profit by my inattention and largely increase their stakes. My whisky and soda finished, I would then turn up my own cards, and display the natural nine, which I had taken care should be there, with profitable results to my own pocket."

An insolent scamp at Spa used to cheat in open daylight, and carry the thing through by dint of

brass. Being once told by a stander-by, "Mais, monsieur, vraiment vous trichez," he coolly answered, "Cela se peut, monsieur; mais je n'aime pas que l'on me dise," and looked so furious that the trick passed off without further observation.

Another swindler, who used to make a point of winning his way into private gambling parties whenever he had lost more money than he could pay, turned his back upon the company, and going off, cried, "Kick away, gentlemen, for I have no money." This *argumentum a posteriori* so astonished the circle that the knave effected his retreat unhurt.

High gambling at cards in England is now, except upon rare occasions, almost unknown. The days when thousands could be risked upon a throw of the dice are over, and most rich men fond of excitement now speculate instead—generally, let it be said, with equally disastrous result.

In any case, they have at least the satisfaction of knowing that they would have received their gains if stocks had gone up, a satisfaction often denied to the lucky gambler, who in all ages has found difficulty in getting paid.

It was an observation of the celebrated Earl of Chesterfield, when he was observed playing at picquet, at Bath, with a little crook-fingered baron, whose reputation was not of the best, "that he preferred playing with a sharper to playing with a gentleman; for though he might not often win of the former, he was sure when he did win to get paid."

As a matter of fact, many of the younger members

of the British aristocracy in Lord Chesterfield's day and later were so obsessed by the spirit of gaming that some of them undoubtedly preferred playing against sharpers to not playing at all. A large number of unscrupulous individuals made their fortunes out of this destructive craze.

A hundred years ago and later the West End of London was full of gambling houses, some of them of a very dubious description.

The proprietors of these hells were very cunning in their methods, and besides making a parade of as much gold as could be brought into the field, folded up their bank-notes, from one to one hundred, in the most attractive and tempting form, and laid them in admirable array on the table. They were experts in knowing how to display their forces, so much so, that whenever a bank-note was sent into the pocket of a pigeon, it might be considered as on a voyage of discovery, whence it would be sure to return increased and multiplied to a certain extent. Some of the houses had notes issued by particular bankers wholly for their service. They found them more convenient than the ordinary ones, being drawn for guineas instead of pounds.

Flattery then, as now, was the most efficacious weapon of sharpers. "If," once said one of these gentry, "I wanted to catch one simpleton, I would hook him with a bribe; if I wished to catch twenty, I would bait them with promises; but if I desired to catch a hundred, I would poison them with flattery."

The following is a complete list of West End gaming resorts between 1810 and 1828:—

Where Situated.	Game.	Bank.	Stakes.	Hours of Play. Morning.	Night.
No. 81 Piccadilly (Watier's Club) .	Hazard and Macao	£10,000	10s. to £200	Play began at 9 in the evening and went on all night.	
" 50, 51, 52 St. James' Street (Crockford's) . . . . There was no "Bank" here from July to October when Crockford used to say, "Ve are closedfor the saison." The sharps and flats amongst his members, however, could play any game they liked amongst themselves.	Hazard	"	"		
" 12 Park Place . . . (Called the "Melton Mowbray Club")	f.h.	£2000	5s. to £ 50		
" 75 St. James' Street . .	r.n. & e.h.	£1000	5s. to £100		
" 6 Pall Mall	r.n.	£2000	" "		8 to 2
" 58 "	"	"	" "	2 to . . .	2
" 71 "	"	£1000	" "		9 to 2
" 32 "	"	"	" "	1 to . . .	2
" 55 "	r.n., u.d.c., & r.	£200	2s. 6d. to £20	1 to 4 . .	7 to 12

No. 33 Pall Mall	r.n. & r.	£200	2s. 6d. to £20	1 to 4	7 to 12
„ 16 Waterloo Place (Called the "Fox-hunting Club")	f.h.	£2000	5s. to £100		9 all night
„ 5 and 6 King Street	r.n.	£1000	„ „	2 to 5	7 to 2
„ 8 „	„	£400	2s. 6d. to £30	1 to 5	7 to 12
„ 10 „	„	„	„ „	„	„
„ 28 Bury Street	„	£1000	5s. to £100	2 to 6	
„ 6 „	„	£400	2s. 6d. to £30	1 to 4	7 to 12
„ 7 „	„	„	„ „	„	„
„ 15 „	r.n. & r.	£100	„ £10	„	„
„ 16 „	„	„	„ „	„	„
„ 9 Bennett Street	r.n.	£1000	5s. to £100	3 to 6	9 to 2
„ 3 Cleveland Row	„	£400	2s. 6d. to £30	1 to 4	7 to 12
„ 4 Pickering Place	„	£50	„ £5	„	„
„ 77 Jermyn Street	e.h.				9 all night
„ 8 Oxendon „	„				„
„ 13 Leicester „	„				„

No. 10 St. James' Square and 40 Pall Mall, known as "Rougier's" from the name of the proprietor, were also gaming houses. At the latter the stakes varied from 5s. to £100.

f.h. French hazard; r.n. rouge et noir; r. roulette; u.d.c. un, deux, cinque; e.h. English hazard. Other games were of course occasionally played.

Each player was supposed to confine himself within the limits specified above, though, as may be imagined, they were often departed from.

These hells,* generally, were fitted up in a very splendid style, and their expenses were very great. Those of Crockford's, known as Fishmongers' Hall, were not less than one thousand pounds a week. The next in eminence, one hundred and fifty pounds a week; and the minor ones of all (with the exception of those where English hazard was played, the expenses of which were trifling) varied from forty to eighty pounds.

The inspectors, or overlookers, were paid from six to eight pounds a week each; the "croupiers," or dealers, three to six pounds; the waiters and porters, two pounds, and a looker-out after the police officers, to give warning of their approach, two pounds also.

In order to safeguard themselves against unpleasant visits from the authorities the hells were well fortified with strong iron-plated doors, to make an ingress to them a difficult and tardy matter. There was one at the bottom of the stairs, one near the top, and a third at the entrance to the room of play. These were opened and closed one after the other, as a person ascended or descended. In each of the doors there was a little round glass peep-hole, for the porters to take a bird's-eye view of all persons desirous of admittance, in order to keep out or let in whom they chose.

Sometimes the gaming-house keepers were robbed by their employés—one was swindled by his son. He was a partner in the management of No. 75 St. James'

* Full details of the games played and anecdotes of the principal frequenters are given in the author's *Light Come, Light Go*, published last year.

Street, and, on going into the country, left one of two sons in charge of his interests in the concern. He was a gay, wild young man, and he had formed acquaintances with the players of his father's hell, as thoughtless as himself. The young man used, occasionally, to deal. It was agreed that two of his acquaintances should come, prepared with a little money, in order to play upon some sure coups that he would pack for the purpose. The cue was given when they were coming off. This was practised a few times before it was found out. Upon its being detected a despatch was sent off to the father, who came to town immediately. The son remained in disgrace with his father a long time afterwards.

The existence of so many gaming houses, at not a few of which the play was open to suspicion, of course produced a certain amount of crime and also of suicide.

The most curious instance of this (said by some to have been unintentional) happened in the year 1818.

A Polish nobleman, who received his income from home quarterly, took lodgings in Bury Street, St. James', and soon began regularly to lose his income in the hells, which sprang up in that locality like mushrooms.

A week after his allowance had arrived he was generally without a guinea, after which he depended upon the goodness of his landlady for all that he required, she being regularly paid out of the next quarter's receipt. This Count was quite a sinecure to No. 5 King Street, where he constantly played. His landlady, who knew that he gambled, and often

noticed him wretched and unhappy, remonstrated with him on such occasions upon the dreadful pursuit, but all in vain. He would laughingly observe, in his foreign accent, "Ah! my dear ladee, you tink I shall shooter myself trough de head." One day he returned home, after losing his remaining money, and went into his bedroom for a pistol, a brace of which he always kept by him. His landlady came into his apartments to deliver some message, to whom he said, "Now den I shall shooter myself," upon which he put a small quantity of powder into the pistol. In his nervous agitation, while losing at the play table, he had formed a habit of twisting a rouge et noir marking card in his fingers, till he had made it round and hard. One of these crumpled cards he had brought home, and this he proceeded to put into the pistol. "Now den," he exclaimed, "I shall shooter myself," and then fired into his breast. He instantly fell. The card bullet had penetrated, and made a deep wound, of which the poor Count lingered a few days and died. Before his death he declared that he had no intention of destroying himself, and the unfortunate affair had been but a joke to frighten his landlady.

Another unsuccessful gamester was more lucky. This was a certain captain, aide-de-camp to Lord Hutchinson, who, after losing his money at No. 5 King Street and No. 77 Jermyn Street, went home and, in a fit of desperation, cut his throat, but did not do it effectually, though it was rumoured throughout the hells that he was dead. On his recovery,

he paid a visit to one of them, and met a friend, who, upon seeing him, exclaimed, "Well, I'm glad to see you; I never expected to find you at rouge et noir again. Why, they told me that you had cut your throat, and were dead!" "Oh, no," replied the captain laughingly, "it's been a case of 'cut and come again.'"

A well-known character at the West End hells was a captain in the Navy, who, after losing, used to go up to the mantelpiece and make an angry oration.

"Oh, you thundering thieves!" he would say. "You cheating vagabonds!" Going up to the glass and striking his head with his hand, "Aren't you a villain? Didn't I tell you you would lose all your money?" grinning at himself horribly. "You consummate blockhead! you've undone yourself."

Sometimes his rage knew no bounds. On one occasion he broke the hand-rakes, threatened violence to the people of the house, and walked up and down the room in the greatest agitation. At length he approached the door, and, turning round, exclaimed, "You cursed villains, I wish I had you on board my ship; I'd have you all rammed into one of my stern-chasers, and I'd blow you all to hell." The captain then flew out of the house like a madman, foaming at the mouth, leaving the playroom convulsed with laughter.

The prevalence of the now obsolete game of hazard was responsible for the break-up of many a fine estate.

About the highest player at this game was Colonel

Mellish, who once, it is said, risked £40,000 upon a throw!

Another well-known gambler of past days was Colonel Aubrey, who literally passed his life at play. It was computed that he had paid an enormous sum for card-money at various clubs! He was a very fine player at all games, and a shrewd, clever man, having been twice to India and made two fortunes. According to report, he lost the first on his way home, transferred himself from one ship to another without landing, went back, and made the second. His whole existence, owing to love of play, was a continual alternation between poverty and wealth. He it was who originated the saying that the greatest pleasure in life—next to winning at cards—was losing.

Such men led a very pleasant existence whilst their money lasted. Their whole life was one long gamble—cards, cock-fighting, or racing. The latter sport was then in all probability more enjoyable—and less of a commercial business—than it is to-day.

About the most sporting meeting of all in old days was Doncaster, which for a time was unique, and one of the most striking sights in England. All the county families went there in state, and the display of beautiful animals, and of fine carriages with four or six horses, must have been wonderful to behold.

A great feature of this race meeting for many years was an eccentric character, James Hirst, the self-styled "Squire and Banker of Rawcliffe, near Snaith." This highly original individual avowed his hostility to all Government measures, as far as re-

garded the levying of imposts, and by every means consistent with human ingenuity avoided the payment of direct and indirect taxes. The drag in which he drove on to the course much resembled the carriage of a chaise, with four large, light cart wheels of equal size, but of more rude workmanship than any timber carriage ever seen. The body of the vehicle was composed entirely of hazel sticks, platted and secured with strong cord ; it had a head imitating, and of the height of, a phaeton, but covered with the most miserable patched check servants' bed furniture. A curtain of similar materials shaded his visage from the sun. The seat was also as high as the oldest-fashioned phaeton ever seen. His servant, or groom, was seated on the bottom of the body of this Robinson Crusoe carriage, with his feet near the horse's hocks, and drove one horse, going at the rate of nine miles an hour. Hirst made a practice of attending at least one day in every Doncaster meeting, and did so in this or a similar conveyance for years, even beyond the memory of man. At eighty-seven he was of very agreeable countenance and prepossessing manners, with long, white, hermit-like beard and hair ; fair complexioned. His hat, of large dimensions, was composed of lamb-skin, thrown over the back of his carriage. He wore a pair of plaid trousers. No one knew whether to say he had on shoes or boots ; they were perfect nondescripts, with soles made of cork an inch thick, and shod with iron. This singular character had been a great sportsman in his time, and not liking to pay the tax on horses, at one time

drove two mules, sometimes accompanied by a wolf, secured by a chain under his carriage, at others by a fox, both of which followed as orderly as would a dog secured in similar manner. He hunted several seasons, occasionally with the Badsworth hounds, riding a bull, which he had trained to carry him. He taught a pig to find his game, and point when shooting, and on such occasions was accompanied by a boy on a mastiff dog, carrying a sort of pannier or game-bag. He was esteemed a good shot, and in his latter years was a would-be banker, and, to the extent of his business, did it better than most men of that trade. His bank-notes were ornamented with a curious device, and were issued by his groom at sixpence each, though only payable for five half-pence. The signature and his age, written by this old man of eighty-seven, were drawn out as being issued for the Governor and Company of the "Escumhorn Bank of Rawcliffe," and the notes were regularly paid on presentation by any curious passing traveller. He had for many years his coffin in his house; it was fitted up and used as a cupboard. He was as eccentric in everything else, and on one occasion, when his stackyard was on fire, though it was so contiguous to his house that the whole was in danger, he sat with great composure, and could not be prevailed upon to move, either to secure his own safety or property, his observation being "he was satisfied to die when and as Providence should ordain."

Hirst had originally been a tanner, but, finding that his business much interfered with his odd ways,

had freed himself from its trammels, and devoted his life entirely to his whimsical and eccentric propensities. His habitation was one of the most curious places in Yorkshire, the rooms being hung round with agricultural implements of every description, and pieces of old iron, nails, and other rubbish. The inmates consisted of himself and a man and a woman servant, to which he added a tame fox, an otter, and a bull. This he rode during his shooting excursions, being then also attended by pigs and dogs, the former, as has been said, trained to scent, the latter to carry the game. He set the greatest value upon a waistcoat which he had formed from the front parts of the drake's neck, and to obtain which he had solicited the surrounding villages. He had three bulls, which were kept for the sole purpose of baiting at country feasts, after which his man generally collected from the populace.

James Hirst died, aged ninety-one, at Rawcliffe, in October, 1830, and his funeral was a most extraordinary one. It was his express wish to be carried to the grave by eight old maids, each of whom was to be paid 10s. 6d. for her trouble ; and if this could not be effected, eight widows were to be engaged at 2s. 6d. each to perform the same service. The former wish, however, could not be complied with, either from want of a sufficient number, or from a desire of not publicly acknowledging a designation of such a contumelious and appalling import. The funeral proceeded from the house to the chapel, about four o'clock. The corpse was borne by eight

widows, and a solemn tune was performed the while with a bagpipe and fiddle, the former being played by a Scotch shepherd, and the latter by an inhabitant of Rawcliffe. During the ceremony, the chapel was crowded to excess ; and the crowds of spectators from the surrounding villages flocked to witness the obsequies to a man whose eccentric habits had become proverbial throughout the district.

With reference to Hirst's pointing pig—another man, a keeper in the New Forest, also broke a pig to point game, and various conjectures were made as to how this was effected. One man stoutly maintained "that the pig, from the time of his being farrowed, was fed on nothing but partridge bones" !

A great character, though quite in another way, was Lord Barrymore, whose turf career began in 1787.

Lord Barrymore was considered the best gentleman rider of his day, but nevertheless he was not a very keen sportsman. He was too impatient of gratification in all his undertakings to excel in those which entailed patience and fatigue. He could ride boldly, but did not always display courage out hunting, when he sometimes retreated from leaps which his associates went at. As a rider to hounds, indeed, he was highly inconsistent, and one day would plunge with his horse into the Thames and swim to the other side, and a few days after hesitate to fly over a small hedge.

The turf proved fatal to his purse, and during four years cost him some hundred thousand pounds, after which he set out to better his judgment with the

most abandoned boxers, and adopted both the principles and practice of his Bohemian friends and contemporaries.

These necessitous and rapacious sharks, having once secured the weak side of this reckless peer, never abandoned him (nor he them) to the day of his death.

Lord Barrymore's disreputable friends introduced him to a curious circle. He became one of a learned company of disputants in a sixpenny debating society in the country town of Reading. Here Lord Barrymore gave one hundred and twenty pounds to enlarge the room of a public-house where the meeting was held, at the very moment when as many solicitous claimants were clamouring for payment.

In this debating society he would hold forth in vindication of the conduct of that Parliament of which he had "the honour to be a member," respecting the "slave trade," and animadverted largely upon justice and humanity. Recalling his political experiences in the House of Lords, he said that he "remembered having attended an important debate in the House, but unfortunately had forgotten on which side he had given his vote."

A very few weeks before his tragic death, which occurred through the accidental discharge of a musket, he submitted for discussion the following question :

"Whether it would be a derogation of dignity for a British senate to interfere with the executive power of France, to spare the life of Louis XVI, late King of the French ?"

His lordship, in an opening speech, called upon one of his Bohemian cronies (who he said had come purposely from London) to open the debate. The individual in question rose, determined to attract general attention, which he did, by somewhat unexpected means, addressing the chairman as follows:

"My worthy friend, the noble lord on my left, possesses every virtue that can possibly adorn the human heart."

Attended by the same man, Lord Barrymore frequented low billiard-rooms, where, during the progress of a game, he indulged in all sorts of pranks. Sometimes, for instance, he would produce a couple of fowls from the poulterer's, suspending each by a string, stripping to his under silk jockey waistcoat, making the egg sauce, laying the cloth, drilling the landlord, smoking (at the same time) his Dutch pipe, and indulging in all those brilliant effusions of fancy that in one of inferior order would have been deemed the effects of intellectual sterility, or in plainer language, downright stupidity.

His last effort of local popularity was the institution of a catch club or bacchanalian society at the little town of Wokingham, upon the verge of Windsor Forest, to which, at the distance of thirty-two miles, his musical toadies and Bohemian dependents were occasionally summoned to spend an evening.

A very different kind of noble sportsman was "Old Q," whose unvarying successes on the turf, when Lord March, not a little disconcerted the knowing ones. They falsely calculated on the usual quantum

of folly to which lords were generally supposed to be entitled, chiefly owing to their neglected education. In Lord Anson, on the other hand, they found a rich harvest. The treasure of the Spanish galleon became the prize of some sharpers at Bath ; on which occasion it was observed " that Lord Anson had been round the world, and over the world, but never in the world."

Another noble supporter of the turf was the twelfth Earl of Derby, who not only delighted in racing, of which he was a supporter for nearly sixty years, but was also without question the most celebrated cocker of either ancient or modern days, and in this light never had his equal. During his life he fought more mains, and very generally successfully, than any person ever known. His birds, to which he was extremely partial, were by judicious breeding brought to the finest possible perfection ; and nothing inspired the noble lord with more pleasure and gratification than the English game cock. Indeed, favourite birds were occasionally even brought to him in the splendid drawing-room at Knowsley !

In the early part of the nineteenth century Tattersall's presented a very comprehensive picture of the sporting world. Here assembled peers, baronets, members of Parliament, turf gentlemen and turf servants, jockeys, grooms, horse-dealers, gamblers, and spies, and here could be seen the oldest and some of the best blood in England, rigged out like coachmen, or like the whippers-in of a pack of hounds. In one place master and man consulted about the purchase or the sale of a horse ; in another a person of rank

would be taking advice of a horse jockey or a dealer on the subject of some match or race. A prominent figure was the fat grazier or flashy butcher, aping the gentleman, in flash sporting rig and new boots, come in order to pick up a bargain. One corner displayed the anxious, disappointed countenance of a seller; the opposite one discovered the elate, yet perhaps completely gulled, buyer, who was paying cent per cent for fashion, or half as much again for a pedigreed horse as he was worth, the pedigree in question having probably been made out only by the horse-dealer. In the centre of the crowd stood idlers, loungers, gentlemen who had nothing to do but to attend sales without purchasing, and to promenade the parks without knowing or being known to any one. These were discernible by the apathy of their unmoved features. A little aside stood some parliamentary characters, talking of the last night's debates. There two puppies were conversing about their mistresses. Just by the entrance was a band of gaudy ruffians canvassing the merits of some racehorse; and without stood a knot of exquisites, discussing the charms of the latest beauty. At the sale itself there was generally a sprinkling of the military—half a dozen dragoons and some life-guardsmen, dressed half *en bourgeois*, half *à la militaire*, together with a crooked gambler or two and a sporting parson.

The founder of Tattersall's was also the owner of the celebrated Highflyer, and at one time the Hammer and Highflyer, in allusion to Mr. Tattersall's vocation, was a very favourite toast.

The original Subscription Rooms were first opened about 1789, with about seventy-six subscribers belonging to the racing aristocracy of that day. Only about 1800 were some dozen bookmakers admitted, amongst them Crockford, the two Blands, Jerry Cloves, Andrew Simpson, and others. The whole dozen made fortunes, and ended their lives as rich men, which is not to be wondered at considering the reckless wagering of those days. Crockford's memory still survives owing to the celebrated gaming house in St. James' Street, which brought him so much wealth in the forties of the last century. As a turf speculator he possessed an extraordinary facility for calculation, and is said to have been the first to introduce betting about "double events," with considerable profit to himself. Though an uneducated man, he was agreeable and pleasant in his dealings, besides which he seemed to know the business of everybody else as well as his own, without being obtrusive or pushing. Of all games of chance he had a thorough and undisputed knowledge.

Jem Bland, though he could scarcely read and could not write, had a marvellous memory, which enabled him to remember every bet he had made during the day. In the evening, when he went home, he would tell his wife what he had done, and she would then register the bets. A mistake in his accounts was scarcely ever known.

Jerry Cloves, in spite of having started life as an ostler, was a man of refined manner, very quiet and unpretending; he was considered a very safe man at the Corner—good for any amount.

Amongst the original subscribers were the Dukes of Grafton, Kingston, Portland, and Beaufort, Lords Darlington, Scarborough, Fitzwilliam, Clarendon, and Oxford. Sir Charles Bunbury, a pillar of the turf of that day, was of course a member, as was Captain (afterwards Colonel) Mellish, who cut such a brilliant figure on the turf for a few years, and died at the comparatively early age of thirty-seven.

At Tattersall's, too, might be seen the celebrated Colonel Dennis O'Kelly, owner of Eclipse.

Mr. Tattersall himself, curiously enough, was his exact opposite in most things. Of this celebrated sporting character the following epitaph—a good specimen of a particular sort of *jeu d'esprit* very popular in the past—was written :

Of the turf when he quits it O'Kelly may say—
Of its pleasure and profit have I had my day ;
And on it have Charlotte and I danc'd the Hay :
But what by this turf in return will be said,
When beneath its cold surface O'Kelly is laid !
Why, that he who once had all the turf to himself,
And suffer'd no shares in ill-gotten pelf,
But hedged off and on till he always rose winner—
This militia man bluff, this chairman so rough, and this jockey so tough,
Of turf now possesses not more than enough
To cover the body of one wretched sinner !

Another epitaph, that on Tetherington, a well-known betting man and contemporary of O'Kelly, was more terse :

The ups and downs of life he knew,
Yet always full of whim,
Upon the turf he wealthy grew,
But now the turf's on him.

Billiards, now seldom, if ever, used as a medium for gambling, was very popular for wagering purposes in the past. At one time its principal exponent was a highly curious eighteenth-century character named Andrews, whose whole existence was centred upon the game, to attain proficiency at which he sacrificed days, nights, weeks, months, and years.

Eventually he arrived at such a degree of perfection in the theoretical as well as in the practical part of the game, that there was no player in England, and it may be added, with equal truth, in any part of the world, who could equal him, except one, the celebrated Abraham Carter, who kept the tables at the corner of the Piazzas, Russell Street, Covent Garden.

Andrews was the most devoted adept of this game that ever nature produced; he seemed but to vegetate in a billiard-room, and, indeed, he did little more anywhere else. He was a perfect billiard valetudinarian, in the most rigid signification of the expression. He ate, drank, slept, walked, nay, talked but to promote the system of the three balls. His régime consisted merely of tea, toast, and butter, which formed his breakfast, dinner, and supper.

Owing to his great skill, Andrews won considerable sums of money, and this caused him to despise small stakes, and when he was playing for five or even ten pounds a game, he would not take the least pains to win. There was a latent finesse in this, but it did not operate to his advantage. He was always lying by for great bets, but as they were but seldom offered, the strength of his play being very well known, the small

sums which he was perpetually losing ran into a very considerable amount.

Andrews, as a matter of fact, played for larger stakes than any votary of the cue who had preceded him. With one amateur player, a certain colonel, he had a standing match of a hundred pounds.

From him one night he won more than a thousand pounds, when the colonel begged Andrews to accompany him to the City next morning in order to transfer stock to him of the amount lost.

The couple started in a hackney coach, and, when the time came to get out, tossed up who should pay for it. Andrews lost, and upon this small beginning he was excited to continue till he had lost the whole sum he won the night before at billiards. When the coachman stopped to set down, he was told to get up again, and drive them back, as they had no occasion to get out.

By these pursuits he lost very considerable sums which he had won at billiards, and in a few years hazard, and other games of chance, stripped him of every shilling he could command. He had still left a small annuity, which he endeavoured to dispose of, but it was so secure that he could not sell it, otherwise it is most probable that it would soon have been disposed of at the gaming table. It might be said that he was compelled to eat in spite of his teeth. In his last days he lived in a retired manner in Kent, where he declared to an intimate old acquaintance that he never knew contentment while he was rolling in money, but when he was obliged to live on a scanty

pittance he thought himself one of the happiest men in the world.

Not content with losing their money by the usual and unfailing channels of the turf and the gaming table, sporting men were fond of queer wagers in old days, some of which, made more in the spirit of true sport than from greed of gain, deserve not to be forgotten.

In the month of August, 1813, Lord Charles Kerr made a match with J. Cock, Esq., jun., to play a game of cricket, his lordship backing his servant, James Bridger, and his dog Drake, against Mr. Cock, with Wm. Wetherell. The match, which was for fifty guineas a side, was played at Holt Pound Cricketing Ground, near Farnham, Surrey, on Monday the 16th of August, 1813. The post assigned to Drake was that of catching the ball, the only way, indeed, in which he could be serviceable; but as he always caught it at the first bound, he was, perhaps, a more expert and efficient partner than many bipeds.

The following was the result of the game:

FIRST INNINGS, LORD C. KERR.

Bridger	50	caught out by J. Cock.
Drake	0	
J. Cock	6	caught by Bridger.
Wetherell	0	run out by Drake.

Mr. Cock then gave up the match, and paid the wager. The way in which Drake ran Wetherell out was this: Wetherell hit the ball smartly for a run,

but Drake ran after the ball so much faster than the former expected, stopped it so well, and delivered it so quick to his partner Bridger, that Wetherell was thrown out without getting a run.

At the commencement of the nineteenth century shooting matches between sportsmen came into great vogue. In October, 1819, for instance, a contest of this sort took place at Puckeridge, Herts, between a Mr. Bretts and Mr. Stebbing, of Heston, who had challenged any man in England at a day's partridge shooting. The two competitors began their operations at daybreak, each of them having with him a friend of his rival, a boy, and a pony.

Mr. Bretts won the toss for the choice of direction, both being strangers to the country, and he shot on the south-west side of the London road, towards Wadesmill, and brought to bag sixteen and a half brace of birds in twenty-five shots. Mr. Stebbing took a direction north-west, bordering on the Stanley enclosures, then doubling in a direction towards Cambridge, and killed eighteen brace of birds in thirty-one shots. They shot till dark, and tired two brace of dogs each.

A few days later a similar match took place between Captain Thornhill, one of the best shots in Hampshire, and Strong, the keeper to J. A. Thorn, Esq., of Melbourn Manor, Oxon, who should bag the greatest number of pheasants and partridges by four o'clock in the afternoon. They began two miles from Watford, Herts, the Captain taking his course toward Wycomb, and Strong a course between Barnet and

St. Albans. It was a challenge of the Captain's against all England, taken up by Mr. Thorn producing a man. The keeper bagged nine hares, seven pheasants, and eleven partridges; and Captain Thornhill killed sixteen partridges, five pheasants, and six hares, making a tie. Each competitor had a pony and a brace of dogs. A renewal of the match between the same parties took place on Thursday, October 21st, the bet being doubled between Mr. Thorn, for his keeper, and the Captain. The spot selected to start from in this match was within four miles of Maidenhead Thicket, on the road to Oxford, and each had his pony and his adversary's friend as an umpire. Captain Thornhill bent his course towards Hare-hatch, on the Reading road, and had good "pheasant sport," and from thence went on to Hurst Manor, a distance of about twenty-six miles. He had thirty-two shots, and bagged eleven pheasants, fourteen partridges, and five hares. Strong directed his course towards Henley Mills, close to General Conway's Park, and from thence he crossed the Thames to the Oxfordshire hills, and closed his day's labour there. He bagged nine hares, seventeen partridges, and three pheasants in twenty-eight shots, and lost the match by one only. There were some heavy even-money bets on the result.

Another shooting match took place on September 1st, 1825, at Hatfield, the Marquis of Salisbury having betted Sir John Sebright he would name four gentlemen who should kill one hundred brace of birds in one day, only one gun in use at a time. Sir C. Cuyler, the Hon. M. De Roos, Mr. Delmé Ratcliffe, and

Samuel Whitbread, M.P., were named as the men. Sir C. Cuyler took the field at six o'clock, and on the Marquis' farm killed twenty-four brace in one hour and a quarter. Mr. Whitbread followed in the Home Park, and in an hour and a half killed eleven brace and a half. Sir C. Cuyler then shot on Pope's Manor for one hour and twenty minutes, and killed twenty-seven brace and a half. Mr. Whitbread re-entered the Park, and in one hour and a half killed fourteen brace. Mr. Ratcliffe shot upon Pope's Manor for twenty minutes, and killed eight brace. M. De Roos, in the Park, one hour, killing sixteen brace. Mr. Delmé Ratcliffe afterwards killed in twenty-five minutes ten brace more, when he was informed the match was already won, sufficient being killed. It should be observed that no parts of the Park were beat where the birds might be supposed to be tame. The Marquis of Salisbury, Colonel Robarts, and others witnessed the whole of the sport.

The account of this sporting day concludes with the remark that Sir John Sebright discharged the bet with great promptness and good-humour.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century, after Captain Barclay had won his bet of walking a thousand miles in a thousand successive hours, eccentric wagers were all the fashion. Not the least curious was the one which was proposed by an old woman, a nurse in one of the City hospitals, who offered, for the bet of a pound of Scott's snuff, to keep awake with any one for a twelvemonth to come, without winking or blinking.

Eighty or ninety years ago pigeon-shooting was a very popular amusement, whilst not, as now, supposed to be a cruel form of sport—if sport is a permissible word in connection with pigeons shot from traps.

Perhaps this was because it was not unusual for a number of the birds to escape unscathed. What might be termed a perfectly humane pigeon match took place on the Bowling Green, Guildford, in January, 1822.

On the occasion in question, four local sportsmen of considerable repute as shots met to shoot at two birds each from a trap, sixteen yards distance, for a good jollification for themselves and a dozen of friends, to be provided at the expense of the two who killed the fewest birds. Extraordinary as it may appear, every bird escaped untouched but the last, which, by accident, was pinioned, and fell out of bounds. The competitors, apparently quite delighted, retired to the Bowling Green Inn and partook of an excellent dinner. After "Success to the Trigger" and a number of other appropriate toasts had circulated very freely, they again sallied forth to wage war with the poor pigeons, by way of shooting off their ties, and determining the match; but whether the rosy god had played them an ugly trick, and caused them to see double, or some wicked wight had bent their gun barrels, sure enough the pigeons again escaped, and stole home to the dove-cot from whence they were that morning conveyed, with no other injury than a single fright.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the Old

Hats Club at Ealing was a celebrated resort of pigeon shooters. The first verse of the Club song reads quaintly to-day:

> Who has e'er been at Ealing must needs know the Hats,
> There's a club of good fellows without any flats,
> With their great guns and pigeons so blue;
> To kill Venus's bird it is all their delight,
> And worship the charms of her sisters at night;
> For medals and sweepstakes they try all their skill,
> And when they miss fire 'tis plain they don't kill,
> With their great guns, etc.

Whilst a good many original wagers harmed no one, some were of a dangerous nature.

One of the most singular and hazardous of these was a bet laid by a well-known sporting resident of Kensington, in 1811. This gentleman undertook, for a wager of one hundred and fifty guineas, to drive his tandem at full speed against the wheels of the first seven vehicles he might meet on the road, so that his wheels should absolutely graze the others without becoming locked, or the tandem upset, in either of which cases the wager was to be lost. Precisely at one he started from the Greyhound Inn, a vast number of equestrians accompanying him. The first object that presented itself was a Brentford coach, the wheels of which the intrepid charioteer grazed in a neat style, much to the surprise of the coachman, who, pulling aside as usual, and finding himself, as it were, pursued, poured forth a volley of abuse at what he considered lack of coachmanship. In this manner three more coaches, one coal wagon,

and two gigs were passed, and their respective wheels touched without the least accident. The whole was accomplished in twenty-five minutes from the time of starting. Never, in the opinion of all present, was life or limb in greater danger than in this singular and hazardous attempt. The odds, at starting, were as high as five to two on the tandem driver.

Amongst the curious wagers of the past, that made by the Duchesse de Berri (whose determined disposition caused her to be called the only man in her family) should not be forgotten.

At the time when a public company had first been formed in Paris to run the then newly invented omnibuses, the innovation did not meet with satisfactory support from the French public. The Princess, however, expressed her approval of the vehicles in question, and made a bet of 10,000 francs with the King that she would ride in one—which she did do. The result was that the omnibuses became popular, being for a long time after known as "Carolines" out of compliment to the sporting Duchess.

A highly whimsical wager was one made about smoking at the end of the eighteenth century. Sir Henry Liddle had a black servant, a regular glutton at his pipe; and mentioning this propensity to Mr. Baker, of Elemore Hall, near Durham, a well-known sporting character, expressed his conviction that Sambo could smoke a whole pound of the weed in the short space of an hour. This Mr. Baker disputed, and bet Sir Henry a hundred guineas he could not perform it. In order to create some fun over the

feat, it was appointed that Sambo should exhibit in the market-place at Durham; and there a stage was fixed near the Water Fountain, with the tobacco and a quantity of pipes, together with a table and seat, all in readiness. At the hour of twelve o'clock at noon, on a market-day, the man of colour mounted, with an attendant to fill his bowls, and by the hour of one, incredible as it may seem, " Othello " had finished the work of " his occupation," to the cost of Mr. Baker. Sambo was allowed as much drink as he chose to partake of, and was honoured by an immense audience, who loudly cheered him at the conclusion of his task.

The loser of the bet, Mr. Baker, died, aged eighty-three, on May 15th, 1807. He was a typical old-fashioned English sportsman, and was descended from a very ancient family, who for centuries have held considerable estates in the county of Durham, one of his direct ancestors being Sir George Baker, Knight, who was one of the loyal defenders of Newcastle-upon-Tyne during the Civil Wars. As a schoolboy of fifteen he was placed at a school some sixteen miles distant from Epsom, and the tempting announcement of " the Races," with the celebrated Eclipse enrolled among the engaged, induced young Baker to propose to his fellow-playmates a visit (without leave) to the Downs, which met with a very hearty response; and at early morn on the day of running, all took their departure, and reached Epsom in good time. " Here," Mr. Baker said, " I first saw Eclipse, very like the prints which are published of his portrait; but the

figure of his jock I was then most amused at. There," said he, "was old John Oakley on his back in a pair of quarter boots, or rather shoes to the ankle, coarse, blue worsted stockings, leather breeches, and an immense profusion of strings at the knee!"

Mr. Baker was buried in his family burial ground at Hall Garth, near his residence, the only inscription on his monument being, by his own request:

"THE LAST OF THE GEORGE BAKERS,
OF ELEMORE HALL,
DURHAM."

His ancestors had borne the name of George Baker for some centuries, and he was the last male descendant of his race.

Sporting exaggeration probably reached its highest pitch at provincial mess tables in Ireland on guest nights, when the rage for speculation had been generated by the removal of the cloth. The six-feet walls, "coped and dashed," that were to be jumped next morning, "without laying a toe to them"; the hecatombs of the feathered world to be brought to bag ere another sunset; the fish to be hooked; and the punch to be swallowed, made the hair of most new-joined subalterns fairly stand on end.

On one such occasion an Irish squire bound himself either to forfeit fifty pounds or produce alive in the messroom that day month a fox, a badger, a hawk, and an eagle, all the capture of his own proper hands. Exactly a month later as the day, to quote an Irish expression, had just "gone iligant," the town of

Newry was thrown into an uproar by an extraordinary sight. Preceded by a band, who were most zealously extracting sounds from villainously discordant instruments, and surrounded by a body-guard of bare-headed, bare-legged tatterdemalions, approached the squire, bestriding the skeleton of an antique grey mare. On either side of his steed were suspended two large wicker creels, one containing a wild mountain fox, the other a fierce-looking hirsute badger, that grinned as amiably as a Cheshire cat; upon his head was perched a hawk, manacled by the legs, the chains passing under the captor's chin and fastening around his neck; while the triumphant entry was closed with an eagle which he drew after him as Achilles drew the body of Hector. The triumphant squire and his unique collection were given a royal reception, the captives being paraded and the fifty pounds duly paid over.

The eagle, it appeared, had been captured in an eyrie in an almost inaccessible cliff in the Mourne Mountains, the squire having been lowered by a rope over the face of a precipice.

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IT is all very well to compare the present with the past to the disadvantage of the latter, but when all is said and done there is no doubt but that the populace generally, though they had fewer pleasures, enjoyed them more thoroughly, besides being entirely absorbed by their comparatively simple interests.

In order to enjoy the present, it is necessary to be intent on the present. To be doing one thing, and thinking of another, is a very unsatisfactory mode of spending life.

A great number of people of the present day are always wishing themselves to be somewhere but where they are, or thinking of something else but what they are doing, or of somebody else than to whom they are speaking. This is the way to enjoy nothing, and to please nobody.

Merry England is no more, and many of the sports and pastimes that once obtained for her this enviable appellation have disappeared.

Where are the May-Day revels and the simple festivities of the harvest home ? Some vestiges of the latter, I believe, still linger here and there in remote parts of the country, but the old-world rejoicings in question are now only kept up by a few who love the traditions of bygone days.

The morris dances, however, which but a short while back seemed likely to be completely forgotten, are now in a fair way to be preserved, owing to the most praiseworthy movement which, initiated at a working girls' club in the East End of London, is now spreading throughout the length and breadth of the land. The credit for this is entirely due to one lady, Miss Neal, the founder of the Espérance Guild of Morris Dancers, to which the author heartily wishes all success.

Would that the quaint local customs, which not so very long ago flourished in various parts of the country, had also been carefully investigated and preserved for the benefit of those yet to come, who, if the promise of civilisation be fulfilled, will most certainly take the greatest interest in everything connected with the social usages and customs of the peasantry of a bygone and simple age.

In the south of England many curious customs were formerly connected with the close of the harvest. The old Sussex harvest home, as it once existed, has now ceased even to be a memory, for as long as fifty years ago nearly all the quaint usages connected with it had fallen into disuse. Nevertheless, at one time this festival was celebrated with much rustic ceremonial, amongst which "turning the cup over" played a great part.

The labourers of a farm and the men who had assisted in harvesting would assemble in the kitchen of the farmer, where, at the head of the table, one of them occupied the position of chairman. In front

of him stood a pail, as clean as wooden staves and iron hoops could be. On the man's right sat four or five others who led the singing with great gravity. The appearance, indeed, of the whole company was solemn in the extreme, except at moments when some unlucky rustic failed to "turn the cup over," and was compelled to undergo the penalty. "Turning the cup over" was as follows: The chairman, standing behind the pail with a tall horn cup in his hand, filled it with beer from the pail. The man next to him on the left stood up, and holding a hat with both hands by the brim, crown upwards, received the cup from the chairman, on the crown of the hat, not touching it with either hand. He then lifted the cup to his lips by raising the hat, and slowly drank off the contents. As soon as he began to drink, the chorus would chant—

> I've bin to Plymouth, and I've bin to Dover,
> I have bin rambling, boys, all the wurld over—
> Over and over and over and over,
> Drink up your liquor and turn your cup over,
> Over and over and over and over,
> The liquor's drink'd up and the cup is turned over.

The man drinking was expected to time his draught so as to empty his cup at the end of the fourth line of the chant; he then had to return the hat to the perpendicular, still holding it by the brims, then to throw the cup into the air, and, reversing the hat, to catch the cup in it as it fell. If he failed to perform this part of the operation, the fellow-workmen, who were closely watching him, made an important

alteration in the last line of their chant, which in that case ran thus :

> The liquor's drink'd up and the cup *ain't* turned over.

When this occurred, the cup was refilled, and the unfortunate drinker compelled to go through the same ceremony again. Every one at the table took the cup and "turned it over" in succession, the chief shepherd keeping the pail constantly supplied with beer. Visitors who came to see this ceremony generally took part in it, without, however, being subjected to the full penalty in case of failure.

Many old customs prevailed throughout rural England. According to West Country fashion, on Twelfth Night (old style) a band of rustics would join hands round an old apple tree and sing :

> Here's to thee,
> Ould apple tree,
> For to bear and to brew
> Apples anew
> These year, next year, and the year arter teu ;
> Hats vull, caps vull, and bushell bag vull ;
> But if thee want bear neither apple or core
> Down wi' thy tap, and up wi' thy mor.

After which there would be much cheering and firing of guns, and a feast in the evening.

Some queer customs which once prevailed would now be considered at best highly indecorous. Such a one was the struggle for the bride's garters, which at one time went on in the church itself, all the young men present striving to obtain the coveted trophies.

The bride was generally gartered with ribbons for the occasion. Whoever were so fortunate as to be victors in this singular species of contest, during which the bride was often obliged to scream out, and was frequently thrown down, bore them about the church in triumph! This custom was similar to one which prevailed in Normandy, where the bride would bestow her garter on some young man as a favour; in some cases it was taken from her.

A number of quaint usages of old England were originally brought from across the Channel, having originated in that Normandy which irresistibly reminds the Englishman of the ancestors of such a number of his race. The country there is yet more like England than is any other part of the Continent. The architecture of the village churches, the greensward, the cut of the woods and old pollards, the gates, the stiles, the footpaths, hedgerows, and orchards, the shape and size of the fields, the cottages with their thatched roofs, the arrangement of the farm homesteads, and the well-tended gardens of the country mansions, all remind one of England, whilst the names of towns, villages, and hamlets read like a leaf out of *Domesday Book*. In Normandy, with some slight differences of spelling, brought about by eight centuries of time, is to be found the origin of countless English families.

A salient feature of old English country life was the good feeling which prevailed between the upper and lower classes of society, who as children met more frequently than they do to-day.

A young nobleman, having been sent to a local school near his home in the country, was invited by the mother of one of his schoolfellows, who happened to be the butcher's son, to a feast, one of the principal attractions of which was a large apple-pie. The young peer was very civilly treated, and went away highly pleased. Some time after the peer went to college, and the butcher to his father's shop, and they never met for years; but it chanced one day that as the butcher was driving his market-cart he met the peer in his curricle, who instantly recognised his old friend, pulled up, and shook him very cordially by the hand, to the great surprise of the spectators, and enquired why he did not come to see him. "Why, my lord," replied the butcher, "about the same time you went to the House of Lords I went to the slaughter-house; I thought your lordship might not be very proud of the acquaintance." "You have been mistaken in that," replied his lordship, "and I hope you will take an early opportunity of dining with me; for the happiest day of my life I owe to you, and to your mother's great apple-pie."

The ingenuous spirit of that age, which banded all classes together, is shown in a thousand instances. One of the most characteristic, perhaps, is the incident of Fox at Holkham. He had then grown very fat, which caused people to laugh at him, as they said, for weighing so much. The host, indeed, declared that he wondered which weighed the most—Fox or his fat cook. "Let's go and see," was the general cry; and the party, surrounding Fox, hustled him off

to the kitchen, where, amidst general merriment, Charles James Fox and the portly cook were weighed one against the other.

The position of a peer with great landed possessions in old days was totally different from that of most of the peers of to-day. As a rule he was a local magnate in the true sense of the word, and looked upon as one of the institutions of the county. To-day all is changed, and a great number of peers having (not unwisely, perhaps) parted with the homes and acres of their ancestors, the House of Lords can hardly be said to be as representative of the landed interest as of yore. And what of the new peers who, within the last sixty years, have been created with such unfailing regularity—what do they represent? The majority, alas, nothing but money. They are indeed the products of the infamous and out-of-date party system which demands that peerages shall be bestowed upon a certain number of rich men every year in order that the party war chest may be replenished!

The class of individual on whom these peerages have during the last few years been bestowed has sometimes been anything but high, and not a few of these ennobled money-bags indulge in small meannesses of an incredible kind. "Personally," said one of these noblemen, "I consider mineral waters much too dear, especially the still ones. Indeed, I take care to make my own supply of them—my butler has some old bottles which he keeps filling up with ordinary water when any of my guests ask for them!" The peer in question, it should be added, is a public-spirited and

generous man in many ways; nevertheless the above incident shows his lack of mental dignity.

Another peer of recent creation known to the public by occasional princely munificence, and to his acquaintances by an unvarying course of petty economies, openly glories in his undignified tricks.

At one time this nobleman took to collecting cigar bands from his friends, who were very much puzzled what he might propose to do with these small strips of coloured paper. At last one day he told his secret to a casual acquaintance who had been drawing him out as to his wonderful aptitude for small economies.

"Most people," said the band collector, "know nothing whatever about cigars, but have a great respect for certain brands. My plan, therefore, is to buy very ordinary and inexpensive cigars for my guests, and these cigars I convert into all sorts of high-priced brands by the addition of the little bands which I am always collecting; in this way I afford my friends great enjoyment at small cost to myself."

Such men as these are, of course, utterly out of touch with their dependents in humble life—a class who in other days cherished a real respect for the great local landlords, the squires, and the parsons, the modern representatives of which class have undoubtedly driven many of their rustic parishioners into the Nonconformist camp owing to their not infrequent lack of tact.

They should have taken to heart the lesson taught by Whitefield, the famous field preacher, in the early part of his career. He was addressing a number of

people, when a drummer, who happened to be present, made a point of interrupting by loud rub-a-dub-dubs. Whitefield spoke very loud, but was not so powerful as the martial instrument; the field preacher therefore called out to the drummer, " Friend, you and I serve the two greatest masters existing, but in different callings. You may beat up for volunteers for King George, I for the Lord. In God's name, then, don't let us interrupt each other; the world is wide enough for us both, and we may get recruits in abundance." This speech had such an effect that Methodism became triumphant; the drummer and party went away in great good-humour, and left the preacher in full possession of the field.

The ideal country parson of old days was one who mingled with the villagers and was their friend; such a man possessed considerable influence. Charles II told his council "he had a chaplain that was a very honest man, but a great blockhead, to whom he had given a living in Suffolk, that was full of that sort of people. He had gone about among them from house to house, though he could not imagine what he could have to say to them, for he was a very silly fellow; but he believed his nonsense suited their nonsense, for he had brought them all to the church, and in reward of his diligence he had given him a bishopric."

The change between the country gentleman of to-day and one of the past is very great. The one, eighty or ninety years ago, rode over his grounds in the mornings, conversed familiarly with his tenants,

and was looked up to by them as a friendly superior, one who would afford them consolation and advice in the hour of difficulty and distress; he resided among them, and, with his wife and family, was an example of nuptial harmony, correct conduct, and well-regulated benevolence.

Those were the days when men of moderate fortune were content to pass all their lives in the country, the sole pleasures of most of them being hunting, shooting, and fishing. Leading a simple and healthy life, many a squire was as happy as the day was long.

Hope and strength went forth with him in the morning, whilst hunger said a short grace before his welcome shoulder of mutton or potato pie, which were despatched with far greater relish than the luxurious dishes of a pampered gourmet.

On his lawns the sturdy oak displayed its stately limbs, and the croaking music of the rooks which circled around was sweeter to his ears than all the melodies of the Opera. The Emperor of Russia once said that he considered an English country gentleman the most happy being in the world. So he was—with his horses, dogs, and game for his amusement; adjusting disputes amongst his neighbours; interchanging civilities with the clergyman of his parish; recognising with a smile his tenants, who did not fail to doff their hats when they met him. It was a great day when the squire's eldest son attained the important age of twenty-one; bonfires illumined his park, "glasses sparkled on the board," and the cheerful

huzza resounded in the hall, denoting the interest the neighbourhood felt in the family.

No doubt most of the squires were not very refined in their ways, but it must be remembered that the habits and language of the sportsmen of the past must not be measured by the ideas of to-day. Even in the best and most refined society at that period much passed current which would now be considered insufferably gross.

The country gentlemen of old England were, in spite of several failings, a manly race hardened by rustic sports and exposure to all weathers ; lovers of mountain, moor, and forest, the majority, unlike townsmen, loved to hear the lark sing rather than the mouse squeak.

A stage lower in the social scale, the farmer's life, in general, from the least to the highest, was a healthy and a hardy one ; they had exercise in plenty, without being bowed down by ceaseless toil, enjoyed their work, and being almost constantly in the open air were exempt from many of the ailments of townsmen.

The old farmers were, as a rule, anything but progressive in their ideas, and when patent foods for cattle were first introduced many of them denounced the innovation. One farmer, at a cattle show, bluntly took his landlord to task for indulging in modern fads. "Why dunna yea show 'em," he exclaimed, "fedden in a nateral way, and bring your cattle as they should be seen on your pasters. It's all my eye and Betty Martin, geeing 'em your nice kickshaws, and sugar, and milk! Squire, you're throwing hundreds of

pounds away in pampering your beasts up like aldermen, and Christians, and corporations, with your oily cakes, dainties, and tit-bits! I tell you all, gentlemen, for it comes to nothing. We wanten good sound mate; and none of your greasy and sugary flim-flams."

The agricultural labourer, however, was badly housed and miserably poor; indeed, the condition of the English peasantry before the passing of the Reform Bill, in 1832, was very far from good.

It was all very well for those who rattled through the country on the top of a stage coach to talk of the rose-covered cottages and blooming faces they met, and declare how happy the poor of England must be. There were two sides to the picture, and they saw the bright one. Had they looked into those cottages, which with their roses and woodbine had such a picturesque effect, and seen the want, the misery, and too often vice to be found within, they would have had good reason for some not very consoling reflections. Indeed, most of us would have been appalled by the squalid faces, mud floors, rags, and disease. Manifestations of wretchedness were all too plain—children crying for the bread their poverty-stricken parents could not give, and parents upbraiding each other for the misery they could not alleviate.

The poverty of the lower classes was generally regarded as being inevitable, and any complaint deemed almost wicked.

A poor man, complaining to his landlord of the largeness of his family, lamenting that it generally

happened that poor people had the most children to keep, was answered that God never sent more mouths into the world than food to supply them. "Very true," was the reply, "but the food is at your house and the children at mine."

Though little effort was made to improve the conditions of rustic life, a considerable amount of rather false sentiment was attached to existence in the country.

A young lady, who had never been out of the sound of Bow bells, and whose ideas of a country life were formed from reading Thomson's *Seasons*, and sentimental literature of the artificial kind popular at that time, received an invitation to spend a few weeks with her aunt, about fifty miles from London, and was extremely disappointed at the total absence of that moral elegance, that Arcadian simplicity, which she had pictured to herself as being part of rural life. One day, however, she considered herself fortunate in encountering a shepherd returning from the fields, with crook in hand, quite *à la* Croydon. "Youth," said the fair votary of romance, "why have you not your pipe with you?" "Bekase, ma'am," answered he, "I han't got no backee."

Countrymen, in truth, were not much given to romance, though occasionally the simple sentiment of other days was expressed in very quaint terms. When, for instance, a charming lady had presented a set of regimental colours to a volunteer corps in Lancashire, the ensign, a gallant young Lancashire lad, received the boon with ardent devotion, and replied: "Madam,

I receive these colours with sincere gratitude, and will defend them with fortitude; and, when au' th' silk's shot away, I'll bring you the pow (pole) whoam again."

The quaint outlook upon life, and even upon death, which prevailed in the countryside at times led to great outspokenness, which sometimes found a place in monuments to the dead. A remarkable epitaph on a tomb in Horselydown Church, in Cumberland, ran as follows: "Here lie the bodies of Thomas Bond and Mary, his wife. She was temperate, chaste, and charitable; but she was proud, peevish, and passionate. She was an affectionate wife and tender mother, but her husband and child, whom she loved, seldom saw her countenance without a disgusting frown, while she received visitors whom she despised with an enduring smile. Her behaviour was discreet towards strangers, but imprudent in her family. Abroad, her conduct was influenced by good breeding, but at home by ill-temper." And so the epitaph runs on to a considerable length, acknowledging the good qualities of the poor woman, but killing each by setting against it some peculiarly unamiable trait.

There was a good deal of rough humour about the rustic of the past which sometimes manifested itself at most inopportune times.

A well-to-do north countryman, having just been married, went up to the rector after the ceremony and said, "Sur, what mun I pey?" The rector said, "Seven shillings." "Sur," said John, "it's a grate deal of money, will na ye gi' me something back for luck?"

The rector, out of patience, walked off. John, turning then to his bride, bid her prepare to go. The bride, however, looking her sweet spouse steadily in the face, said, " Dear John, you've highly insulted the parson to-day. I'm ashamed of you." " Jane," said he, " hawd your noise ; I don't like to drop old customs—I never bought a pig in my life but I got something back for luck."

In the Court of Quarter Sessions a petty case was being tried. A well-known criminal lawyer, who prided himself upon his skill in cross-examining a witness, had an odd-looking rustic upon whom to operate. The witness was a shoemaker.

" You say, sir, that the prisoner is a thief ? "

" Yes, sir ; cause why, she confessed it."

" And you also swear she bound shoes for you subsequent to the confession ? "

" I do, sir."

" Then "—giving a sagacious look to the court—" we are to understand that you employ dishonest people to work for you, even after their rascalities are known ? "

" Of course ; how else could I get assistance from a lawyer ? "

Another hectoring counsel, brow-beating a witness about the profession of another person, concluded by saying, " You are sure, then, that your friend does not impose upon the world by pretending to keep a public-house ? " " No," replied the witness, " he has got a better way than that of cheating them." " What's that ? " " Oh ! " replied the fellow, " he follows the law."

On the other hand, there were villagers whose simplicity was extraordinarily quaint.

"Doctor," said an old woman one day to the doctor, who had come to see her, "kin you tell me how it is that some folks is born dumb?" "Why, hem! why, certainly, madam," replied the doctor, "it is owing to the fact that they come into the world without the power of speech." "La me!" remarked the old lady, "now jest see what it is to have a physical edication. I've axed my old man more nor a hundred times that 'are same thing, and all I could ever git out on him was, 'Kase they is.' Well, I'm glad I axed you, for I never should a died satisfied without knowin' it."

The penniless condition of the agricultural labourers of the past largely contributed to fill the ranks of the army.

The crimps might boast of their extraordinary talent in obtaining men to serve the King, but, after all, the most successful recruiting sergeant was—Necessity. Hunger, indeed, turned drummer, and beat a tattoo upon so many empty stomachs that many a man became a hero in spite of himself, his only alternative being—Death or Glory.

Nevertheless, not a few individuals made their way to affluence from the very humblest beginnings. Such a one was Mr. Brunskill, who died in the fifties of the last century. Born without a shilling, he died leaving a fortune of £200,000 to three children, boys of tender age. For the first seven years of his life as a tradesman he worked seventeen hours a day.

He boasted " that he was the only man in Exeter who could ride forty miles a day and 'cut out' for forty men." In addition to his tailoring business, which returned above £25,000 a year, in later years he became a money-broker, and made speculative ventures occasionally with young men of expectations, by which he often realised large sums.

Whereas the majority of people in former times seem to have been more short-lived than is at present the case, a certain number lived to very great ages in full possession of their faculties. Though fresh air, temperance, and exercise would seem to be the great preservatives of health, there appears to be no fixed rule for attaining long life. Whilst some octogenarians attributed their span of years to a careful régime, others boasted of their contempt for rules.

In a trial before Lord Mansfield a witness called John Elm, who gave evidence at the age of eighty-six, attracted attention by his freedom from infirmities of any kind. Upon a question from the court, he said " his life had been a scene of tranquil regularity; he lived chiefly upon milk diet, drank no tea or spirituous liquors, always went to bed early, and rose with the sun." His lordship, addressing himself to the junior barristers, said, " There, gentlemen, is an example of health and long life for you; it is an admirable lesson, and I hope you will follow it." The very next witness called in the cause proved to be James Elm, the brother of (and a much more healthy and venerable-looking man than) the former.

After having given his evidence, his lordship, with a handsome apology, requested to know " if he was brother to the preceding witness." Upon answering in the affirmative, his lordship was induced to ask his age. " Ninety, my lord." " Indeed ! that's a great age, Mr. Elm. You have kept your health well, I presume ? " " Never was ill a day, or took a dose of physic in my life, my lord." " Astonishing ! But you live regularly mostly upon milk diet, and go to bed early, I suppose ? " " Never live by any rule, my lord ; eat and drink whatever comes in my way, except milk, which I cannot bear." " In short, then, although you indulge your appetite in this way, I conclude you never drink to excess ? " " Why, to tell your lordship the truth, I do not very well comprehend the meaning of drinking to excess, but I have not been to bed sober any one night this forty years." Upon which one of the young barristers, jumping up, exultingly asked his lordship " what he had to say to that." " Say ? " replied his lordship. " Why, that Elm, wet or dry, will last for ever."

Here and there in country districts linger individuals who give a fair idea of what the old English of a hundred years ago were like—fine, sturdy, happy men, thoroughly content with their lot. With such a one the writer had the pleasure of talking a short while ago. A fisherman himself, and the son, grandson, and great-grandson of fishermen, he lives in the old thatched cottage built over a hundred years back by forbears who had helped to run many a surreptitious cargo across the Channel from France.

A decade or so ago, whilst scaling a height to hoist the Union Jack on the occasion of some public rejoicings, this man had fallen and sustained terrible injuries to his back, which for a time had caused partial paralysis, the traces of which still remained—yet a happier or more contented creature never lived. Sitting engaged with his tackle, his countenance fairly radiated happiness as he spoke to the writer of the old smuggling days and of his ancestors, whose lives had been so thoroughly identified with the little fishing village, now to his regret developing into a so-called pleasure resort. Without doubt, in spite of his terrible accident, this man's life is far happier than that of any Park Lane millionaire, whose existence is often merely a sordid struggle for wealth.

* * * * *

A great English institution of old days was the Fair, which, originally a well-recognised medium for commercial exchange, gradually changed into an occasion for much unlicensed revelry and amusement, and then sank into the somewhat squalid if staid affair which in certain places still exists to-day.

In bygone days, when travelling was difficult, fairs were absolutely necessary to enable persons living at a distance from large towns to purchase their commodities; but the case is now far different, and the facilities with which persons can travel from one place to another render fairs entirely unnecessary. In former days the way in which fairs were conducted was very different from the present. Then there was

the harmless merrymaking, and, at the close of the day, the little dance on the green, everything being conducted and regulated with propriety and decorum. With the dawn of more sophisticated times everything in connection with fairs was entirely altered, and they tended to become scenes of every kind of vice and debauchery. Organised bands of pickpockets and gamblers now made their appearance, for the sole purpose of preying on the simple and unwary, who flocked in from every side.

The modern fair is merely an assemblage of roundabouts, swings, and the like; there is little life or amusement in it, and the unrestrained gaiety which was such a feature of fairs in old days is entirely absent. As a matter of fact, a very large number of the inhabitants of places where fairs are still held would heartily welcome their abolition on account of the undesirable characters which such gatherings naturally attract.

Barnet Fair—up to quite a short time ago, and to some extent even to-day, a real horse fair—still exists. Mitcham Fair yet maintains a precarious annual existence, in spite of having long been threatened, and, I believe, officially prohibited. The old London fairs, however, have now long disappeared.

It is now almost impossible to realise the licence permitted to the people of London at the time when such public carnivals were tolerated. For years before its abolition Bartholomew Fair was bitterly denounced on the plea that it encouraged loose characters and pickpockets. In defence, however, it was with some

justice urged that it lasted but three days, and as the objectionable persons in question had the usual public amusements open to them all the year round, such an argument could not be seriously considered.

The opening was attended with considerable ceremony. In 1811, for instance, the Lord Mayor left the Mansion House before noon on August 3rd, and proceeded in his state coach, attended by the Sheriffs and City Marshals, to the Old Bailey, where, conformable to ancient custom, he stopped at the door of Newgate to partake of a cool tankard presented to him by Mr. Newman, the keeper. He then proceeded along Giltspur Street to proclaim the fair. The moment the civic procession was discovered approaching, all the instruments of music, from the gong to the octave flute, sounded a salute sufficient to have drowned the noise of Bonaparte's cannon at the battle of Marengo. After the proclamation had been made at the great gate leading to Clothfair, the Lord Mayor returned with the same state.

The fair itself presented an extraordinary appearance; Richardson, Scowton, Gingell, and others reared their portable theatres with most elaborate decorations. All the emperors, heroes, harlequins, columbines, Punch, and even the Devil himself, appeared in splendid attire. Fire-eaters, conjurers, and rope-dancers performed their feats in public, to attract the spectators to their exhibitions; and while the gaping multitude lifted up their eyes to gaze on the wonders, pickpockets were busy in removing, by legerdemain, watches, handkerchiefs, and pocket-

books. The chief delicacy provided was an abundance of sausages, but there was something for every taste. The numerous stalls for the sale of gingerbread contained, among other dainties, Burdett's Scotch kisses, Perceval's game nuts, Lord Wellington's alla campaign, Albuera sweetmeats, Sadler's balloon puffs, ministerial lollypops, and a variety of sweets bearing the names of various public characters.

The Lord Mayor's comitatus were stationed over the fair to preserve order, and the Court of Pie Poudre, established in Clothfair, was held for the trial of all petty differences and offences committed contrary to the regulations laid down in the proclamation read at the opening ceremony.

At one period of the eighteenth century a sort of perpetual fair was carried on in St. George's Fields, where the lower classes met to smoke tobacco, but this was not their only amusement. Mr. Shanks, near Lambeth Marsh, occasionally amused his customers with a grinning match. The prize was a gold-laced hat, and the competitors were exhilarated by music and dancing. The hour of exhibition, twelve at noon, the admission sixpence, and in the evening another portion of the same class were entertained with contortions of another and different description, the performances of a posture-master, as described in the following advertisement: "At Mr. Shanks' great room, near Lambeth Marsh, is to be seen the famous Posture-master of Europe, who far exceeds the deceased Posture-masters, Clarke and Higgings; he extends his body into all deformed shapes, makes his

hip and shoulder bones meet together, lays his head upon the ground, and turns his body round twice or thrice without stirring his face."

Old London rang with the cries of itinerant vendors delivered in a peculiar sing-song voice, only a trifle less disturbing than the very unmelodious tones of the itinerant street-singers who up to about seventy or eighty years ago abounded in London. Most of these had voices shrill and hoarse as a penny trumpet or an old tin kettle.

" One hundred and fifty new and pop'lar hairs for a ha'p'ny," or, " Three yards of new and pop'lar songs for a ha'p'ny " were ordinary cries.

The following were some of the best known ditties of that period :

" ' Mary, I believed thee true '—' Hookey Valker.'

" ' Vhy did I love '—' Miss Bailey.'

" ' Giles Scroggins courted Molly Brown '—' Hon the banks of the blue Moselle.'

" ' Hif I had a donkey vot vouldn't go '—' Hover the hills and far avay.'

" ' My love is like the red, red rose '—' D'ye call that nothin' ? '

" ' The merry Swiss boy '—' Vot a shocking bad hat.'

" ' Nancy Dawson '—' I met her at the fancy fair.'

" ' His there a heart wot never loved ? '—' Miss Rose, the pretty shroudmaker.'

" ' Barclay and Perkins' drayman '—' He was famed for deeds of arms.'

" 'That lovely girl'—'Judy Callaghan.'

" 'Do you ever think of me'—'Alice Gray.'

" 'The Fireman Vaterman'—'Billy Tailor'—and 'The Dandy Dogs'-meat Man,' with 'Sally in our Alley.'

" 'Poor Marian'—'Flare up,' and 'Oh, say not voman's love is bought.' "

Not only did such vendors sell and sing songs, but after executions they cried harrowing accounts about for weeks.

" 'Ere you 'as it, 'ere the full and true partic'lar account of the unfort'nate individ'al wot was hexecrated this morning at the 'Old Billy,' for the small charge of one ha'p'ny."

> Draw hither now, good people all,
>   And let my story warn;
> For I will tell to you a tale
>   Wot'll rend those breasts of your'n.
>
> On Monday morn at eight o'clock,
>   Right opposite Newgate,
> John Jones was hung, his horrid crimes
>   All for to expiate.
>
> The clock struck eight, the knot was tied,
>   Most dismal for to see!
> The drop did fall, and launched him right
>   Into eternity.
>
> Take warning, then, all you who would
>   Not die like malefactors,
> Never the company for to keep
>   Of gals with bad characters.

The sports at Bachelor's Acre, Windsor, were a great occasion for much animated enjoyment.

They usually began about three in the afternoon, with a match between six boys who were to eat a roll and treacle for a hat with their hands tied behind them on a specially erected platform.

The rolls, having been well dipped in treacle, were suspended so that they could just reach, standing on tiptoe, to bite at them. Their endeavours to bite them soon set the whole in motion, and the faces of the competitors being quickly besmeared with the treacle, so plentifully as to conceal every feature, exhibited a most ludicrous spectacle. The contest ended, a bag of feathers was produced; these were plastered with a very liberal hand on the faces of the performers. This reward for their exertions was not much coveted by the roll-and-treacle eating professors, some of whom left the platform with greater precipitation than they had ascended it, entertaining the crowd with a somersault in their descent. The conductors of the sports were thus quickly left alone, when they had a set-to among themselves, smearing each other's faces with treacle, and covering them with feathers, and thus ended act the first.

Six boys with their hands tied behind, as before, next amused the crowd by dipping for oranges in as many pails of water. The contest was quickly over, as the pails being overset, the oranges were instantly devoured.

A jingling match followed, and to that succeeded the amusement of grinning through horse-collars.

To these diversions succeeded the amusements of jumping in sacks, after which the entertainment

concluded with a display of fireworks on the Acre.

The fair at Harlesden Green was another scene of great jollity. A description of it, in 1811, shows the characteristic amusements of that day, pony racing, jumping in sacks, and some matches at single-stick, which, as the chronicler declares, doubtless delighted the numerous and elegant assemblage.

The following was the programme of some rural sports which took place at Farnham, in Surrey, in 1814, to celebrate the peace:

"At that well-known sportive and beautiful spot, Tilford Green, near Farnham, Surrey, on Friday, the 29th day of July, 1814, will be the following fashionable amusements: Racing by colts for a sound pair of breeches, the best of three heats; by fillies, for a best Irish smock, flounced, the best of three heats; the second filly to be entitled to a pair of inexpressibles, with a ridicule attached. By donkies, for a bridle, to be rode by gentlemen. No celebrated jockies, such as Bill Arnold, Jack Cock, Young Tattersall, Will West, Dick Goodisson, &c., will be allowed to ride any of the above races. Single stick for an old hat, not much the worse for wear, with a shiner added. Wrestling for a cheese. Jumping in sacks for a real Belcher handkerchief. A gingling match for a bat and ball. Driving a wheelbarrow blindfold for a whalebone whip. Drinking red-hot tea, by old women, for a lb. of black and all black. Straddling by ditto for 2 lb. of treble refined molasses. Smoking for a pound of black shag. Dancing for ribbons, by

ladies; and bobbing for oranges, by gentlemen. Wrangling (if any) to be decided by a committee of ladies, all the go: President, Poll Eastcock. Vice-President, Nan Trusler. Every possible accommodation at the Barley-Mow, on the Green. Beef roasting and peas boiling from twelve o'clock at noon till twelve o'clock at night. Barley broth and soda water in the highest perfection. Wines of all sorts and spirits of every description. The sports to commence at eleven o'clock. Generals Wellington, Blucher, and Platoff are expected."

Fairlop Fair, which originated about 1767, was a favourite resort of the mast and block makers of Wapping, who regularly visited it on the first Friday in July, riding there in fully-rigged model ships mounted on wheels and drawn by horses. This custom endured even after the destruction of the famous Fairlop Oak, and as late as thirty-five years ago the blockmakers on the same day used to visit the scene of past revelry still drawn in model ships, like their forefathers, after which they would dine at the "Maypole" or some other inn.

I am unaware whether anything of this old custom still survives.

Another festival, which was largely attended by Londoners, was Harrow Fair, held on the first Monday in August, at one time the resort of all the gay and beautiful in the neighbourhood. The proximity of the great school produced lively scenes at times.

Harrow has been famed in ages past for the valorous spirit of its youth; and, in the old days of the

eighteenth century, the Head Master of the School on the Hill had been seen leading forth his best boys to try their mettle at cudgels, and wrestling, in the rings of the neighbouring villages. A boy named Julian was especially famed for his powers in this direction.

There were always boxing booths at fairs, and a regular prize-fight not unusually closed the day's entertainment. As a rule the local champion fared badly at the hands of the Fancy, one or two of whom were generally ready to fight all comers for a purse.

At one of these country fairs, at the close of the day some young bucks, hearing there was a celebrated pugilist from town on the ground, saw the occasion for a bit of fun, and amongst themselves collected a purse of £50 for a fight between the professor of fisticuffs and any adventurer willing to enter the ring with him. At first, several countrymen, attracted by the purse, came eagerly forward to contest the prize, but on learning from some good-natured bystander of the awkward customer they would have to deal with speedily withdrew. Indeed, it seemed as if the hopes of the philanthropic bucks were to be disappointed, when a good-looking young countryman, whose dress bespoke neatness struggling with poverty, stepped forward amid the cheers of the populace, at all times ready to applaud anything conducive to their own gratification, however much at the expense of others. Some humane bystanders in vain tried to dissuade the novice from a contest in which defeat must be certain; he was determined to fight. A

ring was soon formed, and bottle-holders and seconds named who began to assist the respective combatants in stripping for the unequal fray. The pugilist went through this ceremony with the coolness of one accustomed to the ring, and, when stripped, showing an athletic frame, in which every muscle appeared developed, unencumbered with useless flesh, the spectators knew not which most to wonder at, the Herculean form which stood before them, or the temerity of the almost beardless youth, who obviously could have no chance of victory.

The pugilist, who was not a bad fellow, tried to dissuade his opponent from fighting. " What," said he in a low voice, " can have induced you to risk yourself against a practised hand like me ? Take my advice and retire before it is too late." " Never ! " emphatically rejoined the excited youth. " My mind is made up for the worst." " At least, then," said the pugilist, who now commenced sparring, " give in after a few rounds, which will be enough to save your credit. I will not punish you much, and will give you a share of the prize." " All or none," was the reply ; and the contest now commenced in earnest, to the satisfaction of the populace, which was becoming very impatient.

At first the trained boxer had much the best of the contest, but after some rounds, by accident rather than design, he received a blow which felled him like an ox, with the result that he could not be brought to time, and the youth was declared the winner.

The poor young man, however, was terribly

battered, and sinking exhausted to the ground, in a faltering voice begged that the £50 might be given to his mother, who, he entreated, should not be told how he had won the dear-bought gold.

In a moment or two it was clear that he had burst a blood-vessel, and he soon sank into a stupor which gradually merged into the sleep of death.

The money was duly given to the disconsolate mother, and then the motive which had prompted the brave youth became clear.

She was a poor widow, who had known better days, and the dead boy had been her only support. Driven almost to madness by a distress warrant put into her cottage for rent, and hearing of the £50 prize, this devoted son had snatched at the chance of saving the little homestead from ruin, and by so doing had forfeited his life.

VI

LIKE all human institutions, good, bad, and indifferent, the prize-ring had many ups and downs. Prize-fighting flourished in Broughton's time, but after him, till Mendoza, Jackson, and others of their time, fell into disrepute. These great boxers, however, raised the ring to as high a pitch as ever; after them it degenerated again, till Belcher's time. About 1822 it again began to decline.

Broughton's amphitheatre, in Oxford Road, was formally opened in 1743, when a regular code of rules was drawn up. These, seven in number, must have formed the basis of all subsequent regulations dealing with fighting or boxing.

These rules, here briefly condensed, were as follows:

I. That a square of a yard be chalked in the middle of the boxing stage, and on every set-to after a fall or being parted each second should place his man opposite the other, till which time no blow might be struck.

II. A second had to bring his man up to time within the space of half a minute, otherwise he was deemed beaten.

III. No one except principals and seconds was allowed upon the boxing stage, though in minor fights Broughton might stand there to preserve decorum, though not allowed in any way to interfere.

IV. No boxer was deemed beaten unless he failed to come to time or his second declared him vanquished. No second might question his man's adversary or advise him to give in.

V. In bye-battles the winner took two-thirds of the money given, the division to be publicly made on the stage.

VI. To prevent disputes the principals, on coming on to the boxing stage, should choose two gentlemen present as umpires to decide all disputes. If these two disagreed, they had to choose a third, whose decision was final.

VII. No boxer was to hit his adversary when he was down, or seize him by the hair, the breeches, or any part below the waist. A man on his knees to be reckoned down.

Broughton's height did not exceed five feet eleven inches, and his weight was sometimes above, sometimes under, fourteen stone. He was remarkably well formed, but more calculated for strength than action; he had a good eye.

Broughton was superior to all the other pugilists of his day in mental powers; his sagacity in discovering the weakness of an adversary, and ability in covering himself from the most dangerous blows, enabled him to overcome many to whom he was inferior in bodily force. His favourite blows were straight. He used round blows particularly when he wished to strike his antagonist under the left ear. When a blow was directed at his body he beat it down; when his head was aimed at, he caught his opponent's fist in his open

hand. The cross buttock was known long before his days, but he considerably improved it and brought it into notice. Whatever state the science was in at that period, Broughton, it must be admitted, exceeded all other fighters in a knowledge of the principles; for his great talents soon led him to discover much of the theory that was before unknown. Many were his superiors in strength and activity, but none in science and courage. He is deservedly placed at the head of the boxers of his own time. In private life he is described as having been a civil and amiable man.

Another pillar of the ring in its earlier days, Big Ben, whose real name was Bryan, was born in the year 1753, at Bristol, and passed the early part of his life at that place, where he worked as a collier. Being of an athletic make, and of good bottom, he distinguished himself as a capital boxer in that part of the kingdom in several bruising matches, particularly by beating Clayton, the famous Shropshire man, and the noted Spaniard Harris, of Kingswood. About the year 1782 he came to London, and worked as a coal porter at the Adelphi Wharf. The first battle he fought of any note in London was on October 31st, 1786, when he beat a grenadier of the Guards in the Long Field, Bloomsbury. He soon after fought and beat Tring, at Dartford Brimp; in this fight they both exhibited great courage and endurance.

Big Ben fought many successful battles, notably one with the hitherto unconquered Johnson, whom he

completely vanquished. No less than £20,000 is said to have depended upon the result of the fight.

Big Ben died in 1794, it is supposed in consequence of some inward bruise which he had got in one of the many desperate battles in which he had been engaged; his body was opened for the purpose of ascertaining the fact, when it was found that the liver was affected in such a manner that no human power could have saved his life.

After Broughton's time some buying and selling of fights took place, and most of the gentlemen abandoned the ring. The sporting aristocracy were the real supporters of boxing, and while they saw that all was fair and right the thing went on well. They alone were able to maintain prize-fighting as a more or less reputable sport in the face of numberless attacks. Even from the very earliest days of the modern prize-ring there were not wanting many who protested against what they termed "unprovoked combats" between individuals unknown to each other, productive of idleness, riot, and immorality, which it was declared demoralised thousands of the lower classes.

In more recent times boxing has of course been constantly denounced by impressionable faddists, nurtured on sentimental papers, and by fanatics who hate from their hearts all sports and pleasures.

The absurd outcry raised as to the exhibition of cinematograph pictures of the Johnson-Jeffries boxing match almost exactly coincided with what, it is to be feared, is a symptom of the decadence of fisticuffs as

a means of settling disputes, and the rise in popularity of far more savage methods.

Almost on the very day when the County Council was solemnly devoting its time to discussing the desirability of the exhibition of pictures of the American fight, three men of British birth were charged at the Marlborough Street Police Court with stabbing, wounding, and shooting at one another, the weapons employed to settle some difference having been a revolver, a bar of iron, and a knife.

Surely the old English fashion of settling a quarrel by means of the fists was better than this!

No one, indeed, who has studied the records of the old fights can feel sure that the influence on the spectators was entirely evil. The old prize-ring, no doubt, was inevitably connected with much coarseness and brutality, and, of course, owed a good deal of its vitality to the eternal desire of unscrupulous and disreputable characters to extract money from the pockets of wealthy and easy-going fools. The ring, of course, practically existed for the edification of the Corinthians, the majority of whom were ever ready to welcome any diverting method of getting rid of that cash which a number of them found so scarce at the close of their lives. The prize-fighters themselves were generally unedifying and intemperate persons drawn from a very low class.

Nevertheless, the old prize-ring possibly served no bad purpose in its day, the glamour which hung around it spreading abroad a spirit of dogged, if brutal, courage which largely contributed to the

victories of our English soldiery in the Peninsula and at Waterloo. For this reason the author entirely refuses to indulge in sentimental lamentations over the moral degradation induced by the ring, though, at the same time, he admits that its revival in anything like its original form would be highly undesirable at the present time.

To-day a real prize-fight in the old style is practically a thing of the past, though boxing still flourishes.

The fights at the National Sporting Club, for instance, are generally models of what such contests should be. Such prize-fights as still take place in England at the present day are almost invariably hole-and-corner affairs brought off with considerable difficulty. Occasionally, however, a real old-fashioned fight takes place before a select or non-select company in some carefully chosen spot.

In March of the present year (1910), for instance, a prize-fight in quite the old-fashioned style took place one Tuesday afternoon in a quiet spot by Primrose Hill. This was carried to a conclusion without any interference from the authorities, who probably heard of it for the first time from a newspaper account some days later, in which their apathy was roundly denounced.

In the palmy days of the ring most elaborate arrangements for providing spectators with a good view of a fight were made quite openly. A typical instance of this occurred with respect to the combat between Painter and Sutton, the black, in 1817. The sensation produced in Norwich by this encounter was

one of the most lively description. Vehicles and modes of conveyance of every possible kind were all in requisition in that city and neighbourhood the evening preceding the fight, and the march to the field of battle commenced with not a few as early as four o'clock in the morning. At eight o'clock the different roads converging upon Bungay presented a bustling and animated scene; cavalcades, strings of carriages, and long lines of pedestrians, forming a mingled mass, which increased at every step towards the arena, on the Common, near the town. The arrangements for accommodating the spectators, and for keeping the ground, were made with so much judgment and success, that nothing could exceed the good order which prevailed during the whole time among an assemblage of at least ten, and, as some calculated, twelve thousand persons. The outer ring, about eighty yards in diameter, was formed by a circle of forty wagons, chained together; upon this line the multitude, on the arrival of the combatants and their seconds, were ranged back, leaving an ample space clear to the inner ring, in which the battle was fought. The front row of people kneeling, those behind them standing, and the wagons completely filled, constituted the gradations of a regular amphitheatre. The battle in question, which lasted for one hour and forty-two minutes, resulted in the defeat of the black, and Painter was drawn in triumph off the ground in a post chaise through the town of Bungay by an enthusiastic crowd.

The stake fought for was comparatively small, £80 for the winner and £20 for the loser.

Whilst there appears to have been a serious effort to secure fair play, there is no doubt that all sorts of subterfuges were employed by some prize-fighters when they were losing. In the worst cases of all various shifts and manœuvres would be brought into play and time prolonged to its utmost limits. Of a sudden a shrill whistle would be heard, and quickly answered by a simultaneous rush to the ring. The ropes would then be cut, and in the interval occasioned by so much confusion, the beaten man would have a chance to recover by a seasonable prolongation of time. After the usual requisition of whips, sticks, and blows of all sorts had been in force, and the groans of the wounded had died away, tranquillity would generally be restored, and the fight proceed for a short time longer. In some cases, however, any definite termination would be prevented altogether.

All through the eighteenth century fistic encounters were highly popular with all classes. It may not be generally known that Sir Isaac Newton, who died in 1726–7, above the age of eighty, used to strip up his shirt sleeve but a short time before his death, and showing his muscular brawny arm, would relate how dexterous he had been in his youth at the practice of boxing.

Quite a number of learned men were fair boxers, amongst whom was Dr. Johnson, who is said to have been well able to hold his own with his fists.

During the days of the Regency prize-fighting ranked as a sport next to racing. George IV, when Prince of Wales, was a very liberal patron and supporter of the

ring; indeed, it was said that at one time very few amateurs in England could approach him in knowledge of pugilism.

At the time when the Fives Court was a popular lounge, the place was full of noble sportsmen, though naturally shady characters were always abundant enough.

Pugilism was then much on the same level with racing, fox-hunting, and other first-rate sports, and the prize-fighters themselves looked happy, sleek, and respectable on the support afforded by their envying countrymen.

In all the pictures of the Fives Court, the Life Guardsman Larkin is a conspicuous figure. Larkin actually asked to be allowed to leave the Guards, in order that he might go into the ring and contend with Spring, but was, after much conversation with his officers, dissuaded from so doing.

Prominent pugilists excited so much interest that instances of personation were not rare. In 1809 a man arrived at Yarmouth who announced himself as the celebrated Cribb, and that he had come down for the purpose of meeting Gregson at the Globe Bowling Green, Gorleston, to determine a match for one thousand guineas. He was, in consequence, waited on by the knowing ones, who, being fully satisfied he was the person he represented himself to be, sent notice to their country friends to apprise them of what was going forward. About three o'clock next day a large party, on horseback, in chaises, and on foot, steered their course towards the scene of action.

Cribb walked down, accompanied by a number of sporting men, after resisting all entreaties to have a chaise, and arrived at the "Globe" at the appointed time, where he ordered a room and put on his fighting dress. Four o'clock came, and no Gregson arriving, the people began to be impatient, insisted on seeing the said Mr. Cribb, and threatened to toss him in a blanket. He still persisted in his story, insinuated that Gregson durst not meet him, and that he, of course, should claim the forfeit of one hundred and fifty guineas. This not being satisfactory, the mob were proceeding to treat him roughly, when a naval officer recognised him as belonging to the navy, and labouring under mental derangement. He took him under his protection, and the crowd dispersed.

Occasionally some famous prize-fighter would conceal his identity and enter the ring as an ordinary individual. This generally created considerable irritation.

In 1823 a number of the Fancy were collected at one of the Somersetshire race meetings, when it was proposed to make up a purse for a fight on the last day; and accordingly a handsome subscription was speedily raised. A difficulty, however, occurred which was like to have disappointed the amateurs of their intended gratification. One had been named, who had the character of being such a good 'un that the small-hearted aspirants to fistic fame who were present were alarmed at the idea of standing up to the crack man of the country. Amid pipes, porter, good refreshment, and cigars, were the sporting men

collected, in order to attempt, by gentle persuasion, or otherwise, to induce some one bolder than his compeers to give up his body for half an hour to be beaten and hammered by this man of science. Such a one was not to be had. All was perplexity and disappointment, when a person, well known in the sporting world, stepped forward and said that sooner than no mill he would produce a man, whether able or not, at least willing to fight. He did produce him; and such an awkward-looking cub, rigged in a rough great-coat and slouch hat, that the countryman was quite frisky, and the odds in his favour.

As a matter of fact the stranger, though only about two people knew it, was Jem Ward, the Black Diamond of the prize-ring. A good deal of money was laid on the result, and the company dispersed.

When the day for the fight came, some one told the countryman just before he entered the ring who his opponent was. "Black Diamond!" said the brave fellow. "If he was the Black Devil I'd have a shy at him"; and he prepared accordingly.

At setting-to Ward acted entirely on the defensive, with his head hanging, chest contracted, hands merely held out, and every other requisite for appearing awkward and keeping up the hoax. Slow as he appeared, however, he was still awake enough to prevent the countryman from hitting him. At last, after the crack man had made many ineffectual attempts to hit, he lost patience, and sang out, "This is all humbug; they tell me that you're Jem Ward, the Black Diamond. Strike out and lick me as soon as you can." For a

moment he was confused ; but immediately recollecting himself, smiled, gathered himself up, and went into his natural attitude with such an air of conscious superiority that one could almost for a second have thought that it was a hero of romance, instead of a limb of the prize-ring. He did " strike out " ; every blow told like a sledge hammer, and his man was licked to a jelly in a few minutes. When the circumstance became known, the subscribers were so enraged that some wished to recover their money, others that it should be given to the countryman, and all agreed that Jem should receive none. Some did recover their money ; and the remainder, about £20, was eventually divided. It is said Jem gave up his share, excepting two or three pounds to pay his expenses.

A century or so ago pugilism was part of the national life, and if the first gentleman in England insulted the meanest porter, the latter would resent it manfully ; he had been taught from his infancy to fight his own battles, and never to put up with a blow, and the law in this protected him. In the schools the boy avenged openly his quarrel, and his courage, applauded by his master and companions, grew with his growth ; nay, if insulted by a much stouter lad, however hopeless the resistance, honour forbade his submitting, without showing his bottom by a round or two.

The great majority of schoolboys were well skilled in using their fists, and fighting was supposed to promote manliness and pluck in after life. Hence the saying (wrongly, I believe) attributed to the Iron Duke, that the battle of Waterloo was won on the

playing fields at Eton, where many fistic contests took place.

These Eton battles were invariably fought with hats on, which aroused very stinging criticism from the Westminster boys in the days of rivalry between the two schools. The latter declared that the victory generally rested not with the best man, but with the best beaver, against which knuckles stood but a poor chance.

At the Universities boxing was also in high repute amongst sporting undergraduates, and though forbidden to do so, many attended sparring exhibitions given by fistic champions who toured all over England. On one occasion three celebrated pugilists, Randall, West Country Dick, and Purcell, took up their quarters at the Chequers Inn, at Oxford, where for some days they delighted a numerous audience by demonstrating their skill. The undergraduates naturally flocked to the show, which reaching the ears of the authorities, led to the unwelcome appearance of a proctor and his bulldogs. " Fellow," said the former to Purcell, who acted as doorkeeper, " I charge you to say who are those men. As I live, it's a regular boxing match ! "

Purcell, who cared little for any one and nothing for proctors, promptly replied, " West Country Dick, to be sure, and that 'ere other young fellow we calls the ' Nonpareil '—three shillings, if you please." A scene of confusion ensued amongst the gownsmen, but Purcell's obstinacy in demanding entrance money gave many time to escape.

It was no uncommon thing for rival swains to decide who should lead some fair one to the altar by trial by battle. The object of their affection seems in most cases to have been perfectly agreeable to such an arrangement.

In January, 1803, a pugilistic contest took place in a field near Billingborough, in Lincolnshire. The bet was a guinea and a girl, and the combatants were a shepherd of Billingborough and a tailor named Horbling. They met pursuant to public advertisement; and the event excited so much interest in the neighbourhood that crowds from all the surrounding villages flocked to see the scene of the fight. After many severe rounds, and a long running fight, the shepherd was declared victor, and carried off his fair prize in triumph.

A resort to fisticuffs was, indeed, a very common way of settling disputes.

When the Irish giant, O'Brien, was exhibiting himself at the Crown and Mitre Inn, Carlisle, about 1802, a few young men prevailed upon him to spend the night with them. Cards being introduced in the course of the night, one of the company suspected him of unfair play, and boldly charged him with it. The giant, exasperated, rose from his seat. His accuser, no way daunted, stripped off his coat, and prepared for the unequal combat. O'Brien aimed a blow at his antagonist's forehead, which the latter, with the agility of a harlequin, avoided, slipping between the giant's legs and administering a punch in the short ribs, the effect of which caused the giant

to gasp and assume a look which alarmed the whole company. Nevertheless, Goliath had had enough, for he apologised and shook this modern David by the hand, after which the party indulged in conviviality with the greatest good-humour till a late hour. The conqueror of O'Brien was at the time nineteen years of age, and the difference in height was upwards of three feet.

A notorious bully was once done out of an expected triumph by the following stratagem.

The bully had insisted on fighting a man (a stranger), who had done nothing to offend him, and who was scarcely more than half his size. As the bully stripped in preparation for the fray, his unwilling antagonist opened the door of the room, saying he would call in a friend to see fair play. Some one in the adjoining apartment instantly brushed in, and said he would "take care that there should be no foul play." Looking earnestly at the unwilling combatant, " Hark you," said he, " how did you manage about the man that you killed in Wales ? " " Oh," replied the other quite as seriously, " I got clear. I only killed him in fair fighting. They could not touch me." The bully, hearing the first part of this short dialogue, gathered up his clothes, with as little noise as possible ; and, by the time it was finished, having completely secured a retreat, faced his antagonist with, " At any rate, you're not going to kill me," and ran away.

A pugilistic encounter which excited much ridicule was a fight between two famous jockeys, Goodison and Chifney. They made great fools of themselves

flapping and dapping each other over the mazzard and the chaps, like a couple of great awkward girls, and had they been no better jockeys than boxers, their names would never have been entitled to a place in the chronicles of sport.

George Morland, the painter, was fond of boxing, and at one time hired a large room which he kept as a school for sparring; but the pugilists soon did so much injury to the premises that the landlord was glad to get rid of such mischievous tenants. While this academy was supported, he took great delight in the sport; he would often give prizes to the combatants, and provided them with plenty of good cheer. The pugilists, of course, were always taking advantage of Morland's good-nature. One day Ward applied to him for a horse to ride to some fight; Morland assented, and the boxer proceeded to the stable, selecting one which, exclusive of the saddle, was worth about twenty guineas. A week had elapsed before the animal was missed, from among so many; and Ward being questioned concerning him by Morland, when next they met, the pugilist impudently informed him that the horse was sold. When Morland was asked if he did not reprove him for his dishonest conduct, his answer showed that he feared the consequences.

Morland seems to have been very averse to respectable society, and particularly disliked meeting people of high rank, even when they shared his vulgar propensities. On one occasion, having made an appointment together with Bob Packer, the prize-fighter, to

meet some congenial pillars of the ring at the Rummer Tavern, Charing Cross, the expected party did not arrive, but in their place entered the Duke of Hamilton who, looking at the artist, said to Packer, " Who is he ? " Bob replied, " Morland, the painter." " Can he spar ? " " Yes, your Grace." The Duke then bade him stand up, and Morland obeyed ; but the first blow knocked him across the room ; and he afterwards declared he was so upset by the name of the nobleman, that, had he possessed the utmost skill, he could not have employed it. His Grace next ordered a coach, and after enquiring of Morland where he was going, desired him to get into it, with Packer, and said he would set him down. The noble Duke then mounted the box, and the coachman got behind. When they arrived near Morland's mansion, the Duke stopped and asked which was the house. On being told it was three doors farther, he abruptly bade the painter get out, and in a manner that did not a little hurt his pride ; for he often observed, when speaking of this incident, that he never was so chagrined at any insult he had ever received. In fact, Morland had a considerable share of pride, which was exceedingly mortified when, from being treated disrespectfully, he felt the effects of his dissipated and careless life.

Notwithstanding the popularity of the ring, there were from time to time—especially in 1820—rumours that prize-fighting was to be rigorously suppressed by fresh legislation. When one of the pillars of the ring, Scroggins, was told this, he said he could not understand such a thing at all. " He'd lived all his life by

fighting—either the enemies of his country, abroad, or his friends at home; it was all alike to him, so as he could get his grog; and what harm there was in a bit of a set-to he could not discover. Howsomedever, he hoped as the Prince Regent would think better of the thing, and let them go on in the old way."

Scroggins had been reared in a real fighting school, his nursery being a British man-of-war, and no tar in the ship was more good-humoured or accommodating. He was found to be equally ready and expert in boxing the compass or in boxing his shipmates, and in this practice he continued till the arrival of peace, when an opportunity was no longer afforded him to correct his friends or to chastise his enemies. On quitting his natural element he at once determined to make fighting his trade.

In consequence of the apprehension which the proposed restrictions excited amongst the Fancy, a heated debate was held at the Castle Tavern, Holborn, which some time was the head-quarters of the prize-ring, kept by two of its heroes, Tom Belcher and Tom Spring. Here was instituted the Daffy Club, as the assemblage of all the prominent prize-fighters was called. The long room was adorned with sporting prints and portraits of pugilistic heroes, including Jem Belcher, Burke, Jackson, Tom Belcher, old Joe Ward, Dutch Sam, Gregson, Humphries, Mendoza, Cribb, Molineux, Gully, Randall, Turner, Martin, Harmer, Spring, Neat, Hickman, Painter, Scroggins, and countless other pillars of the ring.

In 1827 Belcher retired, being succeeded by Tom

Spring (whose real name was Winter). Spring, who boasted the proud title of being the immediate successor of Cribb, as Champion of England, prospered at the "Castle" many years.

Cribb presided at the meeting held to discuss the dangers which seemed to threaten the very existence of the prize-ring.

> "Brave Tom, the Champion, with an air
> Almost Corinthian, took the chair,
> And kept the coves in quiet tune,
> By showing such a fist of mutton
> As on a point of order soon
> Would take the shine from Speaker Sutton.

Many of the leading prize-fighters made stirring orations—Gregson, in particular, was loudly applauded. He deplored the attempt to interfere with professional pursuits. As far as he could see, fighting in the open air was to be prohibited, and prize-fighters would have to conduct their mills in a confined room, to the injury of their health, and to the exclusion of many of their kind friends—or they could not fight at all; and if they could not fight at all, what was to become of them? Why, they must starve (cries of "Too true"). Was this state of things to be endured? Was the spirit of Britons to be thus cowed? Were they, in spite of themselves, to keep their teeth in their heads, and their heads on their shoulders? It was not to be borne—it was not natural—it was not rational. It was treating them like brutes, and, therefore, he should propose that a petition should be

sent to Parliament, praying that the " milling coves " might be left out of the bill.

Ned Turner made a more ambitious oration. He said that he considered the Fancy, like the political world, to be composed of three distinct bodies; the latter had their Tories, their Whigs, and their Radicals, and the Fancy had their amateurs, their milling coves, and their prigs. The amateurs and the milling coves might always agree, but the prigs spoilt all; and it was from the rascality of the latter that the former were brought into disrepute. He should, therefore, while he agreed to vote for the original motion, beg leave to add another resolution, and that was, that they should one and all unite to eradicate every prig that should hereafter infest the ring.

Though the rumoured restrictions were never put in force, the palmy days of prize-fighting ended about 1822, when most sporting gentlemen became disgusted with the ring and left it, their places being supplied by low horse-dealers, keepers of public-houses and bullies; men who had not the most distant idea of boxing, as it contributed to the maintenance of honour and fair play, but supported it on account of the money they got by the roguery of those they bribed to sell their best friend.

At this period greed of gain had thoroughly corrupted the ring, and prize-fighters sneered at the small sums which their predecessors had gladly received. The following conversation shows the state of things which prevailed in 1826. Jem Ward and Peter Crawley having accidentally met in St. Paul's Churchyard,

Crawley suggested that a projected fight between them should be brought off, upon which Ward replied: "What! fight for a lousy hundred? Why, I owe two fifties already, and where's the use of fighting to remain fifty behind-hand?"

Crawley: "I know, Jem, you'll be glad to fight for a hundred some day, and you may as well fight me as any one else."

A friend of Crawley's here suggested that as both parties appeared to be in want of blunt, they had better agree to spar together, and raise the wind by that means.

As a consequence of this state of affairs the Corinthians began to desert the ring, and in consequence great exertions were made among its humbler votaries to keep up the spirit of the sport, in the hope that the time was not far distant when it might revive under its late powerful supporters, and that "good men and true" might again be found to deserve the patronage once so liberally extended.

In 1830 the Fives Court, once the favourite resort of the sporting aristocracy had fallen in its fortunes, and its frequenters were mostly little pickpockets, dirty-looking mechanics, and butchers. The exhibitions of sparring had then become few and far between, whilst the sporting aristocracy were disgusted with the ring.

As a matter of fact, the real use of the prize-ring, which was to inculcate hardihood and indifference to danger, ended with the close of the Napoleonic wars, and therefore the decadence of mere prize-fighting as

distinguished from scientific boxing was scarcely to be deplored.

Nevertheless, as has before been said, the bellicose spirit, for which the prize-ring had been responsible, was extremely useful in the days when England was struggling against the great Emperor. Many men who had entered the ring fell fighting gloriously. A conspicuous example was Shaw, the pugilistic Life Guardsman, who fell at the battle of Waterloo during one of the desperate charges which his regiment made against the enemy. This hero was born in Nottinghamshire (though some give Witherslack, in Westmorland, as his birthplace) about the year 1788.

Nottinghamshire always has been, and still is, a sporting district; it was the county of "merry Sherwood," and of merry Sherwood's denizens, Robin Hood and his stalwart archers, and of many others, gentle and simple, famed in rustic and athletic exercise, and fitted to wage their country's battles. The gallant Forty-fifth Infantry, one of the most distinguished old Peninsular regiments, was chiefly recruited in the county.

Shaw joined the Life Guards when quite a young man. He was considerably above six feet in height, and his weight, when stripped for fighting in the prize-ring, was about fifteen stone. In general appearance he was a stout-made man, without any particular points. His first effort to become a candidate for pugilistic fame was against a sailor at Combe Warren, in 1812, and this opponent he beat in a quarter of an hour without even a scratched face. Nevertheless, the

sailor, a stout fellow of nearly Shaw's weight, made a good stand-up fight with Molineux, the black, in Tothill Fields. The black won it in an hour, and this combat led to the first battle between him and Cribb. Shaw had often exhibited in the Fives Court to much disadvantage, as he was without science, and in these exhibitions he generally strove to rival Molineux, who had a fine opportunity of showing off his science upon Shaw's head. So pleased was the Life Guardsman with himself on these occasions that, on leaving the stage, he invariably declared, before the amateurs, that he had got the best of his sable rival. At length, however, by repeatedly putting on the gloves, he got some smatterings of science, and daily improving, though never more than a second-rater, he ended by at least knowing how to hit and break away. Shaw was a stranger to fear, as he exemplified at Waterloo, where it was an acknowledged fact that he did much execution after life was half exhausted. As a matter of fact, he received the finishing ball when still fighting. Shaw, a short while before he left England for the scene of hostilities, met some bargemen, in Marylebone, who upbraided him with the colour of his cloth, which led to a street fight. When the Life Guardsman had nearly vanquished one, two others assisted their companion; but all three got a merited milling in a few minutes, very little quarter being shown. A few weeks before his departure Shaw beat Painter on Twickenham Common; the latter was a man as good and as game as any in the ring. Painter, it is

true, was not in his best form, but neither was Shaw. The latter seemed very cool and cheerful, as well as careful. He made his hits at first, and broke away in good style, ready again to receive his adversary. He went in, after well measuring his distance, and won the fight very cleverly, severely beating his man in three-quarters of an hour. There were various opinions after the battle whether Shaw was not able to beat any man in the world. Had he not fallen at Waterloo, it is probable that he would have attained the much-coveted title of Champion of England.

Quite a number of the old prize-fighters were Jews. Of these the most celebrated was Daniel Mendoza—a shrewd, good-looking, and intelligent man, who was one of the most elegant and scientific boxers who ever entered the ring. Mendoza lived to the great age (for a prize-fighter) of seventy-three. Recognised as the father of the ring, in 1820, when he was fifty-seven years old, great interest was at that time attached to his fight with Tom Owen, another veteran, who had beaten Hooper, the tinman, some twenty-years before, after a hard fight of fifty rounds lasting for more than an hour. On this occasion, after Owen had dressed with the utmost indifference, he walked out of the ring.

The betting was in favour of Mendoza, though more than fourteen years had passed since the Star of the East—as he was sometimes called—had appeared in the prize-ring with Harry Lee (19th March, 1806), and more than thirty-three fleeting summers (17th April, 1787) had occurred since Mendoza first distinguished

himself as a boxer, with Martin, the Bath butcher. On 9th January, 1788, Mendoza was defeated after a most gallant fight, at Odiham, by Humphries; but on 6th May, 1789, Mendoza, in turn, gained a victory over his opponent, at Stilton. The third decisive fight between Mendoza and Humphries took place on 9th September, 1790, at Doncaster, when conquest again crowned his exertions. Bill Ward was twice defeated by him, at Smitham Bottom, on 14th May, 1792; also on Bexley Common, 12th November, 1794. In this year Mendoza forfeited a deposit of twenty pounds out of a match of fifty guineas to Hooper.

At Hornchurch, 15th April, 1795, Mendoza was compelled to resign his laurels to Jackson, in ten minutes and a half. At one period of Mendoza's life, a finer subject for an anatomical lecture, it was supposed, did not exist in England; and, although a short man, he weighed 12 st. 5 lb.

The fight on Banstead Downs had originated from an old grudge of three years' standing, and at first it was proposed that the veterans should fight for nothing, merely to ascertain who deserved to be called the "better man."

Eventually, however, it was decided that each side should put up fifty guineas.

Mendoza was fifty-five years old, Owen fifty-one. The former was attended by Cribb and Hudson—the latter by Randall and Harry Lee.

An enormous crowd of people, desirous of seeing the old school at work, flocked to the fight, and loud cheering greeted Mendoza, whose eye sparkled with

confidence. It was noticed that his colours—blue silk bird's eye—were tied over Owen's, which were yellow. Notwithstanding Mendoza's confident bearing—odds of two to one were laid upon him—in the first round he was terribly punished, and utterly defeated by the twelfth; Owen, curiously enough, hardly sustained a scratch. The defeated man was much affected at his own downfall; as a pugilist he was an altered man, and showed none of the fine science for which he had been celebrated.

About 1804 Mendoza, having made a certain amount of money in the ring, determined to retire, and was set up by a firm of brewers in the "Children in the Wood," in the Whitechapel Road, which he changed to the "Lord Nelson." Unlike the great admiral, however, Mendoza was not always at the post of duty, being more occupied with attending fights. This led him into financial difficulties which eventually entailed a sojourn in the King's Bench.

Some six years later, however, the old fighter made a more honourable public appearance, being much commended for his humanity on behalf of a strange girl, whose unfeeling mother he took before the magistrate; a troublesome office, from which the humanity of many would have shrunk.

Another famous Jewish prize-fighter was Dutch Sam. His fight with Nosworthy, at Moulsey Hurst, on Tuesday, 8th December, 1814, caused the keenest excitement, and the unexpected termination of the battle completely overwhelmed the sporting world with disputes. So confident were the knowing ones

of all degrees upon the issue of this fight, that, previous to it, four to one was to be had from Duke's Place to Hyde Park Corner. Nor was this confidence in the least diminished upon Sam's entering the ring, but rather increased, with loud and repeated offers to any amount upon this gallant Jew. Upon Sam's resigning the contest, a general consternation took place among his backers. If the Jews were weighed down with grief, the Christians were equally miserable and crest-fallen. It was computed that in different parts of the kingdom one hundred thousand pounds at least were lost upon the battle.

Amongst Dutch Sam's victories he beat Caleb Baldwin, after a very tough fight. Tom Belcher Sam vanquished three times. The first battle was in February, 1806, at Moulsey Hurst, after a severe contest which lasted upwards of an hour; and till the last round victory was doubtful. On 28th July, 1807, the "Israelite Phenomenon" again beat Tom in thirty-four rounds — one of the most gallant matches that were ever fought. For the third and last time, in consequence of a dispute regarding a blow said to have been foul in the preceding battle, Sam was again victorious, beating his brave antagonist in thirty-one rounds, on Lowfield Common, Sussex, on the 21st of the following August.

Caleb Baldwin,

> As prime a bit of stuff
> As e'er in Tothill Fields was seen
> Exhibiting in buff,

and some of his friends took an active part in the Westminster election.

> When Westminster was fill'd with cries
> Of Burdett! Maxwell! Hunt!
> The swells in power did not despise
> Thy aid, but tipp'd the blunt;
> And placed a band at thy direction
> To guard the freedom of election!

Dutch Sam, though one of the greatest masters of the "noble art," once received a most severe drubbing in a casual encounter with a butcher. Passing in May, 1805, over Wimbledon Common on his way to town from Thames Ditton, where he was training for a fight, he met this man, with whom he became annoyed, and therefore fastened a quarrel upon him. The result, however, was exactly opposite to what he expected, for the strength and resolution of the man of blood prevailed over the skill and dexterity of Sam, who was every time knocked down like a bullock. In the hope of intimidating the butcher, he was told during the fight that he was contending with Dutch Sam. "Be he the Devil," said the butcher, "I will bang him well now I am at it"; and he kept his word. In the course of a dozen rounds he so cut up the Hollander that he could scarce see or stand; and he was obliged to acknowledge himself beaten, for the first time in his life. The butcher's name was James Brown, a native of Wandsworth, who belonged to the first company of Loyal Wandsworth Volunteers.

Less familiar than the name of Dutch Sam is that

of Blascow, another Jewish prize-fighter. In April, 1817, at Moulsey Hurst, he behaved with great chivalry in a fight with "Jack the Butcher," whom he completely vanquished after a contest of seventeen minutes. During this encounter Blascow several times showed himself a good Christian, by walking away from his opponent when favourable opportunities occurred and he might instantly have finished the battle. This manly conduct was much applauded. Blascow had not a mark about him.

Oddly enough, none of the best of the old prize-fighters appear to have been Scotchmen. Scotland, indeed, notwithstanding the strength, activity, hardiness, and courage of her sons, has scarcely produced any prize boxer above mediocrity. On the other hand, though the Scotch peasantry seem to have been rather awkward with their fists, several Scotch gentlemen have shown themselves the best pugilists of their rank and station that the world has probably ever seen. Captain Barclay was generally allowed to be the most formidable of all amateurs of the noble science, and Professor John Wilson could have been little, if at all, inferior to him. The Marquis of Tweeddale, Douglas, Duke of Hamilton, the Duke of Richmond were all fine boxers. The latter, who was a very well-built man, standing some six feet three, once nearly came to blows with the Prince Regent, who in all probability would have fared even worse in such a fistic encounter than he once did with Lord Hertford after a very wet evening. The Duke of Hamilton, moreover, was also a first-rate cricketer.

This nobleman's death was owing, in great measure, to blows received from Big Ben. In sparring with that tremendous pugilist, the Duke, who was comparatively a slight-made man, told him to strike out. Ben took his Grace at his word, and did hit out, inflicting several heavy body-blows, from the effects of which the constitution of his noble antagonist never recovered.

In Scotland itself no prize-fights of any importance seem to have taken place, though Gretna Green, on the border, was the scene of a fistic contest between Carter and Oliver, in October, 1816. On this occasion the famous blacksmith, who was so notorious for marrying runaway lovers, was one of the most prominent spectators. This was quite a different sort of match from those which he was in the habit of attending professionally. As he observed to a friend, he had riveted the chains of many couples, but had never witnessed such hammering before.

This match, added he, differed materially from all the preceding matches on that spot. They began in hugging and ended in sparring; this began in sparring and ended with hugging.

This blacksmith could be witty at times. On one occasion two couples presented themselves at Gretna Green—one of the would-be brides being sixty and the other seventeen. The latter was anxious to have the nuptial knot tied, but the matrimonial Vulcan would not be hurried.

"There is no need for hurry," said he, "you are young and can wait a little; I see your grand-

mother is impatient; let me put on her fetters first."

Three "stars of the ring" attended the coronation of George IV, presumably in order to check any disturbance. These were Cribb, Richmond, and Randall, who moved about Westminster Hall and assumed a somewhat comic air of official confidence.

When the Daffy Club received the application requiring the attendance of a sprinkling of knights of the fist, a most excited meeting was held, at which, though order prevailed, considerable warmth was exhibited.

Cribb, of course, acted as chairman, and set forth the important question which the Club had met to consider. The champion was not much of a speaker;

> But if the eloquence of tongue he miss'd,
> His was the soft persuasion of the fist,

and his oration was listened to with great respect.

Richmond, the black, for his part insisted that the gentlemen of colour should be represented; and Randall was equally anxious that he should himself represent the Irish. Josh Hudson at length moved that Cribb, Richmond, and Randall should be the deputation. Martin proposed his name instead of Randall's; and Caleb Baldwin and West Country Dick wished to petition Lord Sidmouth to permit a turn-up in the Abbey, Dick offering to accommodate any of his lordship's friends, or the coronation champion himself. Josh's motion was at length carried by a ruse. While several of the members had retired to

arrange about including Spring's name in the list, the remainder divided.

For Cribb, Richmond, and Randall ..	16
Against them	12
Majority ..	4

It should be added that during the ceremony considerable attention was excited by the appearance of Cribb, who had been equipped for the occasion in a gorgeous costume of scarlet with a blue sash.

VII

WHILST most of the old prize-fighters are forgotten, the memory of honest Tom Cribb—the friend of Byron and Tom Moore—still endures. Only recently we witnessed an admirable character sketch of this hero in Sir Conan Doyle's manly and thoroughly English melodrama *The House of Temperley*, which came as a refreshing change from the so-called problem plays, most of which stimulate little but morbid fancies.

The two great fights of Cribb's life were with Tom Molineux, a Virginian black, who came to England in 1809. Molineux was what is known as a hurricane fighter, and a man of great strength and self-confidence. So confident, indeed, was he that he despised training, which no doubt greatly impaired his powers in the ring.

The frame of this black was perfectly Herculean. The best judges of anatomical beauty considered his bust a perfect picture. It was a model for a sculptor. In his early days as a fighter he had no aristocratic patron to back him, and first became known by peeling in Tothill Fields with the utmost sang-froid to the first rough customer that showed fight.

An illiterate man, Molineux was by disposition good-tempered and generous, whilst fond of dress

and gaiety to excess. He was also amorous to the end of the chapter. Unfortunately, like most pugilistic heroes, he flattered himself that his constitution was of so excellent a nature as to be almost capable of resisting the effects of every kind of excess.

A fine fighter, it was said that Molineux only wanted an "English heart" to place him at the top of the tree, if not to render him completely invulnerable against any antagonist alive!

The first battle between Cribb and Molineux took place on 18th December, 1810, on Copthall Common, near East Grinstead, Sussex, for two hundred guineas and a subscription purse of one hundred guineas. Such was the anxiety as to the result of this battle that the road to the scene of action was thronged at an early hour on the previous day, insomuch that beds could not be obtained for half the number who required them. At twelve o'clock the combatants met at the appointed spot. Molineux first entered the ring with his seconds, Richmond and Jones, and some time after Cribb appeared with his seconds, Gully and Joe Ward. Betting was three to one on Cribb.

The battle, which was won by the latter, lasted fifty-five minutes, in which forty-four rounds took place, and it was all hard fighting.

If Cribb had superior science, Molineux displayed equal courage, and his bottom at one time caused the betting to be in his favour, as two to one was betted on him in the thirtieth round of the battle.

The two men were so dreadfully beaten that their

sight was temporarily lost, and their bodies were in the most battered state, from the repetition of heavy blows constantly administered. When the battle was decided, sense had left Molineux, and Cribb could not have stayed much longer, but his gameness bore him out.

It was a battle even more sanguinary than that betwixt Gully and Gregson, at Newmarket. It was all hitting, with two as courageous men as ever stripped for combat. Molineux fought all at the head, and the champions were both disfigured. A gentleman, who stood near the ring, reckoned forty-six facers, according to the classical phraseology of pugilism, given by Cribb to his adversary!

The string of vehicles from the field of battle reached six miles. During the contest, lords, nobles, and commoners, to the number of ten thousand, got a complete soaking by heavy rain, which fell at the setting-to of the champions, and continued until long after the close of their performance. The owner of the turnpike tolls near the scene of action took money enough to pay the rent of the gate for a whole year.

In fairness to the memory of Molineux it should be said that he had very hard luck during this fight, and does not appear to have been accorded an entirely fair chance of winning.

The second fight took place on 28th September, 1811, at Thistleton Gap, in the parish of Wymondham, Leicester, near Crown Point, where Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, and Rutlandshire join. This fight was for £300 a side.

Directly the place appointed was known, amateurs in great number began to crowd to the spot. Not a bed could be had within twenty miles of the seat of action on the night previous to the fight. As soon as dawn appeared on the Saturday the spectators were on the move in the direction of the scene of action, and by six o'clock scarcely standing room could be procured within any reasonable distance of the stage. The crowd kept increasing until about half-past eleven, when, it was calculated, upwards of fifteen thousand people occupied the ground, one-fourth of them consisting of nobility and gentry. The field chosen was a stubble ground, on which a twenty-five-feet stage was erected without the slightest interruption.

Before twelve o'clock the appearance of the field where the stage was erected was of the most unusual and interesting description; several rows of people on foot surrounded the large rope ring, behind which were innumerable horsemen, mingled with every species of carriage, from the chariot to the dust-cart. The backs, boxes, wheels, and roofs of these actually swarmed with spectators, and few of the horsemen were content to sit on their saddles; most of them stood, circus fashion, a proceeding, in this instance, attended with but little danger, for the living mass was so closely wedged that, when once fixed, there was no moving. The assemblage of sporting characters, from the peer on the coach-box to the more gentlemanly-looking pickpocket, was very complete. All the fighting men and fighting amateurs were there

anxious to witness what it was understood was to be an historic fray.

Shortly before twelve o'clock the excitement of the immense crowd was further increased by the appearance on the stage of the seconds and bottle-holders. Gully and Joe Ward attended to assist Cribb; Richmond, the black, and Bill Gibbons assisted Molineux. They stripped and put on jackets in preparation for their principals. About twelve Molineux appeared within the ropes, but his alert antagonist was the first to spring on the stage, which he did with great gaiety, and made his obeisances to the spectators amidst shouts of applause which caused the air to ring. Molineux followed, and actively jumped over the ropes; he also made his bow, and was greeted with cheering which, if not quite so hearty as that accorded to his opponent, was yet sufficient to show that he had many friends, for love or money, among those present. Cribb was well dressed, in a brown great-coat, and boots—and his appearance altogether was very respectable. He seemed to stand about six feet high, looked smiling and confident, and appeared in high condition. Molineux was not so tall as his opponent, but yet a finely-built man—broad and brawny—capacious of chest—and with arms formed for hammering. He eyed Cribb with a vengeful, sulky look, and seemed bent on doing desperate things.

The preparation of the two antagonists had been widely different—the one careful, the other reckless.

On the morning of the fight Molineux, who despised

all training, bolted a boiled fowl, an apple pie, and a tankard of beer for breakfast; viands by no means the most proper for the occasion. Cribb, on the other hand, restricted himself to two slightly boiled eggs.

The first four rounds were contested with furious and unequalled desperation. Cribb's hits were insupportable to the hardest frame, and certainly had the black possessed more courage than it is possible for man to be gifted with, he could not have withstood such murderous blows.

Before the fight the odds were about three to one on Cribb, and six to four that he gave the first knock-down blow. This he did in the first round, though the knock down was not clean. In the second round, which was fierce, Cribb was thrown, and the odds on him fell to five to two on. Cribb was again thrown in the third round, but remained favourite, seven to four being still laid upon him. The sixth round, however, in which the black showed fatigue and hit very wildly, ended by Cribb flooring his opponent in such a manner that five to one was offered upon him.

The remaining rounds were entirely in Cribb's favour, and there was no betting, Molineux being obviously beaten.

When all was over Cribb's second, Gully, was so delighted that he danced a reel.

Cribb's countenance was so shockingly disfigured that a report at first prevailed that he was blind, but his sight was not affected, although he was a good deal punished. On the other hand, he had

received no body hit—being scarcely touched except on the face. On being joked with after the fight, about his captivating appearance, he observed that he would sooner go through another such fight than undergo a course of training up in the Highlands of Scotland, with his patron and trainer, Captain Barclay, who, it should be added, was supposed to have won £10,000 on the battle. Cribb, who was said to have benefited to the extent of £400, solemnly declared that nothing should ever tempt him to fight again, and, as a matter of fact, this was the last public prize-fight in which he took part.

At the time of the fight he was a coal-dealer, carrying on business in White Lion Square.

A bet of a rather singular kind was made between two gentlemen of Portsmouth, depending upon the battle between Cribb and Molineux. The winner, by the terms of his bet, got a complete suit of clothes, including every article that could be understood as coming within the meaning of the wager, including a good walking-stick, gloves, and a guinea in his pocket.

A baker in the Borough staked the whole of his personal property, together with the lease of his house (amounting to £1700), on the result of the fight being favourable to Cribb.

The friends and patrons of Cribb presented the champion with a piece of plate in honour of his victories. This took the form of a very handsome silver cup, valued at eighty guineas, on which were engraved the arms designed for the redoubtable

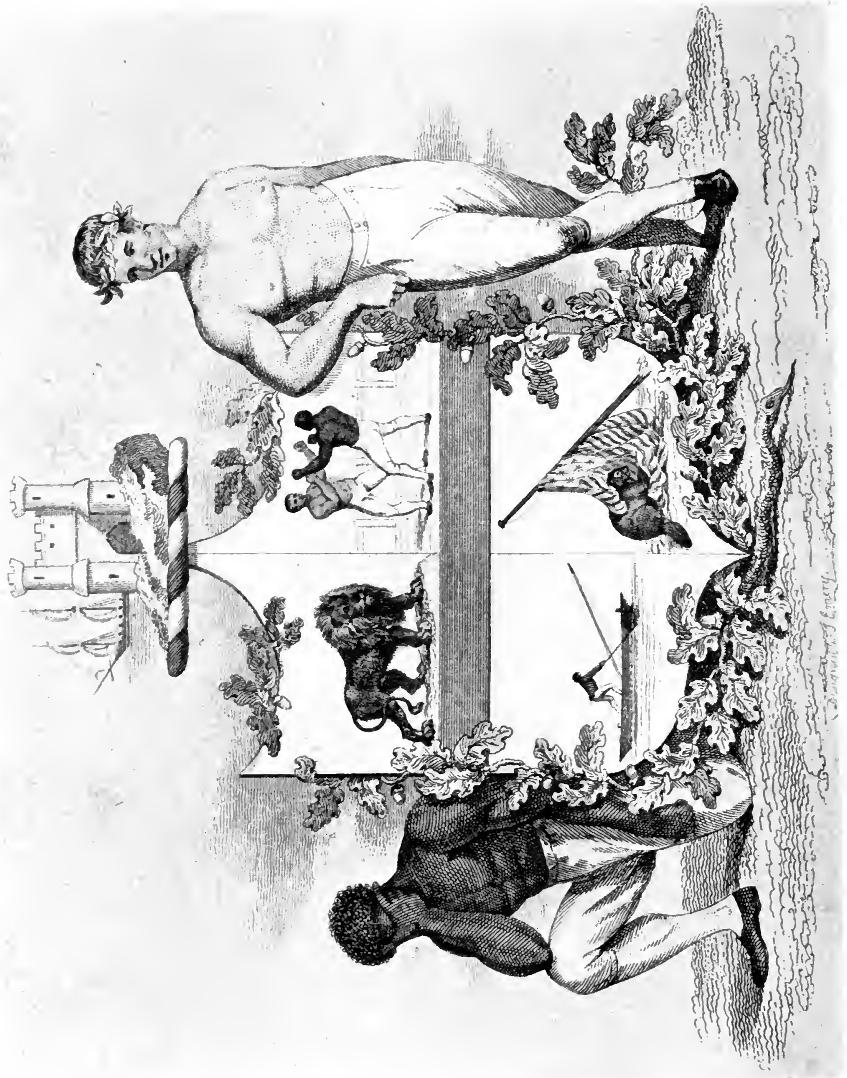
prize-fighter by Mr. Emery, the cup itself being supported by a kneeling black designed to represent Molineux. The arms in question were as follows:

> The CREST—The Bristol Arms, the place of Cribb's nativity.
>
> In the First Quarter, the British Lion is looking down with stern regard on the American Flag, half-mast high (in the Fourth Quarter), the Beaver, symbolic of the latter country, hiding his head under its folds, alluding to Molineux's defeat.
>
> In the Second Quarter, the combatants are setting-to.
>
> And in the Third Quarter Cribb is shown in his coal barge, illustrative of his trade.
>
> The SUPPORTERS represent the champion looking with an eye of commiseration on his vanquished opponent.
>
> MOTTO—"And damn'd be him who first cries, Hold! enough!"

The cup was presented to Cribb after a dinner at Gregson's, the Castle Tavern, Mr. Emery making a speech, to which the champion responded. Mr. Emery also sang a song composed by Mr. Lawson in honour of the heroes of the ring.

The title of Champion of England, it should be added, had been won by Cribb in 1809, when he had fought Jem Belcher on Epsom Downs for a belt and two hundred guineas.

Cribb, though he lived to the age of sixty-seven, does not appear to have been an extraordinarily



healthy man. When still in his prime he was once, whilst in conversation with Belcher at the Castle Tavern, Holborn, suddenly attacked by a sort of apoplectic fit, and dropped his head upon a table near him. During this seizure his tongue hung out, his eyes had a fixed stare, and he appeared totally insensible to all around him. Belcher, much alarmed, instantly took off his neckerchief, opened his waistcoat and shirt collar, and sluiced his face with cold water, loudly calling out, "Time—time!" This expedient had the desired effect, and the champion immediately rose up as if in the ring, speaking rather indistinctly, "I am ready!" but looking confusedly around him, and again relapsing into his former state of stupor. Painter now assisted Belcher in shaking Cribb about, in order to restore animation; and after the application of more cold water to his face, in the course of a few minutes they happily succeeded in restoring the champion to the possession of himself.

Cribb's farewell to the prize-ring took place on 18th May, 1822; his last bow was made at the Fives Court. A host of Corinthians were present, and applauded some excellent bouts which took place before the Champion of England ascended the stage with Spring. Cribb was decorated with the belt, in the front of which were a couple of silver fists, and on each side were two large circles of silver plate, with inscriptions engraved on them. The belt was about four inches wide, and made of fawn skin. Cribb and Spring then set-to and gave a good display,

in spite of the former having a touch of the gout. The moment for the farewell then arrived.

Struggling with his feelings and scratching his head in confusion what to say, Tom at length said, "Gentlemen, I return you thanks for your kindness this day. (A short pause, and confused.) Indeed, gentlemen, I sincerely thank you for all the favours you have conferred on me—I do, indeed. (A long pause, and as if Tom could not get out his words.) Gentlemen, may your purses never fail you." Cribb now retired, amidst long and loud plaudits, accompanied by "It will be a long time before we shall look upon your like again in the prize-ring."

Cribb's latter days were not very prosperous. After having been the landlord of several public-houses, he went to live with his son, a baker, at Woolwich, where he died, in 1848. A fine monument—a lion standing on a rock—perpetuates the champion's memory in Woolwich churchyard. On the plinth is inscribed, "Respect the ashes of the brave." It is pleasant to think that this honest fighter is not likely to be forgotten.

The fate of Molineux was rather sad. Some months after the great fight at Thistleton Gap, while in the Isle of Wight, he challenged Cribb, by letter, to fight a third time, or resign the title of Champion of England to him. The letter was briefly answered by Cribb, who said that he had had no intention of fighting again, until the receipt of Molineux's letter, but, under the circumstances, would fight him for three hundred guineas a side, at a day's notice; and,

if that would not satisfy him, would fight him once a week until he should be satisfied. This answer immediately silenced the negro.

Molineux received his final knock-down blow at Galway, in 1818. The sunshine of prosperity had long since forsaken him ; and it was owing to the humanity and attendance of three people of colour that he was indebted for his existence the last two months of his life. He died in a room occupied by the bandsmen of the 77th Regiment, who had provided a resting-place for him to lay his enfeebled frame.

In the last four years of his life he had been strolling about the country, teaching the art of self-defence. Molineux was only thirty-eight years old when he died. Dissipation alone put an end to his existence ; and for a long time previous to his death he was literally a walking skeleton.

Cribb's successor in the championship was Tom Spring, whose real name was Winter, one of the noblest and most generous-hearted men who ever achieved fame in the pugilistic arena. At eighteen years of age this fine boxer was described as recalling the statue of a Roman gladiator or an Athenian wrestler in the fine determination depicted upon his countenance, which resembled that of Captain Parry, the hero of Arctic exploration. Nature, indeed, seemed to have meted out to these two men a full measure of determination and courage, the indication of which she stamped upon their brows.

Before Spring went up to London, every market day he drove his cart into Hereford, and generally finished

the day by thrashing some booby, which gave him considerable provincial notoriety.

At Mordiford, near Fownhope, Spring fought an excellent battle with a sturdy yokel, and beat him in very good style. At Hereford, also, he fought several times. It was on one of these occasions that he came under the cognisance of Tom Cribb; to this redoubtable pillar of pugilism Spring owed his introduction to the London ring, as also much improvement in the general tactics of the noble art.

When the Duke of Newcastle lived near Fownhope, Spring used frequently to be sent for in order to spar before the Duke's guests. The young boxer was a prime favourite with the Duke, who would often clap him on the back and praise his skill. Pointing to some of the finest oaks in his park one day, he said, "Winter, I would spare a few of these sticks to possess such limbs as yours, or do what you can do."

Spring made his first bow to the London public in the palmy days of pugilism. Love of glory, perhaps, more than a desire for wealth, prompted him to adopt the ring as a profession, for it must be remembered that he left a good and thriving business to follow after comparatively doubtful promises.

At the time when Spring made his first public appearance at the Fives Court, Richmond, the black, pointed him out expressly to a nobleman, at the same time saying, "My lord, here is a young fellow come up among us, a pal of Tom Cribb's, who will be a teaser among the big 'uns at some day not far off. You may be sure there is nothing to hinder his reaching

the top of the tree." Jack Carter, who at that time aspired to the championship also, thought him worth threatening. Consequently he soon took an opportunity to say, within Spring's hearing, "that he didn't care a hang for the biggest butcher in England, be he who he might, or come from where he would." This threat was some time after followed by a battle, which terminated in favour of Spring, Jack Carter, who was a very bullying fellow, having got more than he bargained for.

In private life Spring seems to have been a kind and honourable man. A supporter of the Herefordshire Society for Educating and Supporting Orphan Children, he never failed to make a "neat speech" at the annual dinner held in connection with this charity. Immensely popular when on his sparring tours, if he happened to stop for any "little length" of time on the road, the inn was immediately besieged by a crowd of enthusiastic admirers.

At a fight in Herefordshire between Powell and Parry a remarkable ovation was accorded to Spring. There were about eight thousand persons collected; and when he walked into the arena, and ascended a wagon, where he sat during the fight taking notes, the cheering was absolutely deafening, varied at intervals by such cries as, "The noble Spring!" "Tom Spring for ever!" "Spring and old cider!" He might have led the whole crowd down the crater of a volcano.

On this occasion Spring exhibited two proofs of his manly and straightforward disposition. Previous

to the fight his sympathies had been enlisted for Powell; he was too big a man to second the latter, but it was understood that he wished him success, which alone was considered an asset by Powell's supporters, who, knowing that their man was lighter than his opponent, and leaned back a good deal when fighting, contrived, with the assistance of M'Jubb, of Cheltenham, who was to act as second, to have the stakes placed in the ground in an inverted position, slanting outwards, which virtually made the ring more than twenty-four feet. When the combatants were on the ground, and just before the moment of commencing, Spring walked up, and noticing the ropes and stakes used in this unpugilistic manner, he, notwithstanding a word in the ear from M'Jubb, immediately ordered all the stakes to be pulled up and placed in their proper upright direction in the ground, at the same time very properly inveighing against the unfairness of such a proceeding.

The second instance was even more characteristic of his chivalrous nature.

After the fight was over, Spring left the ground in a gig with his brother, and, as he was driving along, saw two men fighting in a meadow by the roadside. A glance at the combatants convinced him that the pair were very unequally matched, the one being a small man, and supported only by one solitary second, while his opponent, a big bullying fellow, was assisted by a host of uproarious friends. "This won't do, and shan't do," said Spring coolly; and immediately jumping from his vehicle, made for the spot.

Here he found the little fellow, who was thoroughly game to the backbone, terribly beat about and abused, not only by his antagonist, but also by the seconds. Spring arrived just as the men stood up to fight their ninth or tenth round, and, immediately extending his arm, kept at bay the host that had before impeded the little trump. At first he appeared likely to meet with some rough treatment, as no doubt any other man would; but it happened that one of the party recognised him, and straightway the effect was magical. The bullies were frightened out of their five senses,. the fighting man was absolutely paralysed, and the little fellow not only rallied and beat his savage and cowardly opponent to his heart's content, but his solitary second also took courage, and beat two of the other party in most correct style. Spring returned to his gig, after much applauding the little fighter, and, giving him some money, quietly proceeded on his journey.

During a sparring tour in Wales, when he used to box with Langan, the good temper of both men was shown on two occasions.

A provincial fighter, of no mean celebrity, had openly asserted that he was not at all afraid of Spring, and would at any time have a sparring bout in good earnest with the champion, and take all even bets that he had the best of it. Spring was told that this boasting had circulated wide, and, immediately on his arrival in the enemy's country, sent a polite message requesting the pleasure of his company. The fellow, nothing daunted, came; and, putting

on the gloves, commenced milling in no very measured way. It took place in a large room, and Spring's coolness and tact were admirably clever. At first he retreated before every blow of his antagonist until he got close to the wall, and then, launching out, he hit the countryman back every step he had come, to the no small amusement of the spectators. At length, with a good-natured smile, he knocked him completely up to the wall at the farther end of the room. The booby, bleeding at the nose, ears, and mouth, looked as discomfited as a dying fish.

Not very long after a hot-tempered Welshman put on the gloves with Jack Langan, and in the middle of a bout Langan happened to slip down; the Welshman fell to belabouring Jack's back, which only caused Langan to burst into peals of laughter.

Spring was a humane man. Travelling on the box seat of the Birmingham "Sovereign" coach on a terribly cold and frosty day, immediately behind him sat a poor woman with an infant child in her arms, almost starved with the cold. The mother implored the coachman to put the child inside, but he replied that four gentlemen were there, who would by no means admit a baby cold and wet, as it then was, into their presence. Spring threw a coat over the mother and child; and when the coach stopped at the end of the stage, only two miles more, he got down, and taking the child in his arms, presented himself at the coach door, while coachee was boozing in the tap. He begged and prayed in vain. The child was "beastly wet," as the insides

expressed it, and in it should not come. "My name is Spring," returned he; "perhaps you may have heard of me. I do verily believe that the child will perish if longer exposed to the cold." "Hurrah, Tom!" exclaimed a voice waking out of the corner, aroused by the talismanic name. "My old fellow, how are you? Ever engaged in the cause of humanity! Give me the child here." The business was soon settled. The young man, who, it seems, knew Tom well, spread his great-coat on his knees, and, therein ensconced, the little urchin slept securely through a long journey. The good-hearted pugilist then wrapped up in his own coat the poor mother outside, and, having given her something warm to drink, left her comfortable and happy.

On another occasion, Spring was sitting by the side of a coachman, a noted blackguard, who was famed for plying his whip on every living thing he met or passed, and often occasioning much damage, for which he was sometimes hauled up. In this way he set out, but ere long Spring hinted to the uncoachmanlike Jehu that this extra cutting was very unnecessary, and might far better be dispensed with, on which, for that journey, the whip was most unusually idle.

In 1824 a great battle for £1000 was brought off between Spring and Langan, champions of England and Ireland, near Man Wood, in Sussex, about three miles from Chichester.

This contest, which excited great interest, was at first arranged to take place at Warwick race-course;

but interference being threatened, Pierce Egan, in connection with Gentleman Jackson, settled on a spot near Chichester, to which town the former went to superintend the necessary arrangements. The landlord of the Swan Inn there had offered £200 upon condition that the fight took place near the town. Pierce Egan arranged matters with him, and a large ploughed field was chosen as the scene of the fight; one side of the field was bordered by the canal, and it was only approachable from the town by means of a drawbridge, over which all the passengers, horse or foot, must pass. It was here that the toll, intended to be imposed on all comers, with a view to reimbursing the sum promised to the men, was to be collected. The name of the bridge is Birkham Bridge, and from the sums extracted from the passengers, it was for some time called the "double drawbridge."

The farmers in the neighbourhood volunteered their wagons to form the outer ring; and in the course of the Monday fifty-three of the largest wagons were drawn into the field and arranged in a circle of immense magnitude. The stage erected was twenty-four feet square, and six feet from the ground; the floor, deal planks, three inches thick. Round the stage was erected a succession of substantial posts, to which three rails in a horizontal position were attached, so as to render it unlikely that the men could fall from their elevated situation. Everything uneven upon the surface of the boards was removed, and the edges of all the posts and rails were rounded, so as to

counteract, as much as possible, the effects of the falls which might be given to either party.

While the mechanical operations were thus going on at Birkham Bridge, the town of Chichester presented an extraordinary appearance of excitement. Being Whit Monday, it was a sort of jubilee in the town, in which the whole population appeared to be engaged.

The next day a crowd of about twelve thousand people were computed to be present as early as half-past eleven in the morning. The grand stand from Epsom race-course had been bought for the occasion by Jack Martin. Beyond this and other stands were ranged rows of carriages and post-chaises, and, in fact, every place in which vehicles could be stationed was filled. Between the wagons and the stage there was an inner ring, formed of a strong cable, and outside of this the great majority of the spectators on foot were kept, so that an excellent view was thus secured to all. A guinea a head was charged for the grand stand, and five shillings for the wagons.

Soon after twelve o'clock Tom Cribb and Painter, with Belcher and O'Neil, the seconds, entered the ring. They mounted the stage, which had been duly chalked; Gentleman Jackson, accompanied by Lord Uxbridge, Colonel Berkeley, and several other aristocratic patrons of boxing, shortly afterwards made their appearance. Jackson then read the articles of the fight, and the men were ordered to appear.

A few minutes before one o'clock Spring, arm in arm with his backer and a sporting baronet, made

his way through the crowd towards the stage, and was received with loud huzzas, Cribb and Painter close behind him. Spring threw up his hat, which alighted upon the stage. He then ascended the ladder, and jumped over the ropes.

Langan immediately followed, under the patronage of Colonel O'Neil. Like Spring he was cheered. Belcher, Harmer, and O'Neil, his bottle-holder, were in attendance. The Irish champion ascended the stage, and in a very modest manner dropped his hat upon it. He was perfectly prepared for action ; but everything not being ready, he walked up and down the boards with the utmost composure.

All preparations completed, the colours (dark blue with a bird's eye for Spring, and black for Langan) tied to the stage, and Gentleman Jackson having arranged the spectators round the ring in an orderly and comfortable manner, the battle commenced. Betting, two to one and five to two on Spring.

Previous to setting-to, Langan went up to Spring, opening his drawers, and observed, " See, Tom, I have no belt about me." The champion immediately followed his example, and said (also opening his drawers), " Nor I either, Jack ! " This circumstance produced great applause from all parts of the ring.

The fight lasted for one hour and forty-nine minutes, and all through it was evident that Spring would prove the victor.

At the seventy-first round the spectators in general, on the score of humanity, called out that Langan ought not to be allowed to go on fighting, but the

latter absolutely refused to yield. As a matter of fact, owing to Spring's hands being dreadfully swollen, his opponent, as was pointed out, could not now be dangerously hurt. Nevertheless, any success for the Irishman was obviously hopeless—still he kept on.

The seventy-fourth round in particular exhibited his iron resolution. Langan had not then a shadow of a chance; his limbs were fatigued and would not do their duty. Nevertheless, in spite of all these overwhelming difficulties, the brave fellow came again to the scratch, and with efforts of true courage fought till he was again knocked down. While sitting on the knee of his second, Cribb thus addressed him: "You are a brave man, Langan!" "A better was never seen in the prize-ring," rejoined Painter; "but you can't win, Langan. It is no use for you to fight, and it may prove dangerous to you." "I will fight," said Langan; "no one shall take me away!"

In the seventy-sixth and last round Langan was nearly insensible, and fought, as it seemed, merely from instinct.

To the credit of Spring be it recorded, he did his duty towards his backers as a fighting man, whilst acting humanely towards an opponent.

Langan put up his arms in sparring attitude; but they were soon rendered useless, Spring fibbing him down without giving much punishment. When time was called Langan was insensible.

The hat was now thrown up, and Spring declared the conqueror. After being congratulated, the gallant

champion went up to Langan and laid hold of his hand. The Irishman had not yet recovered, but, on opening his eyes, he asked, in a faint tone, "Is the battle over?" "Yes," replied Belcher. "Oh, dear!" articulated Langan. Spring immediately shook his hand again, and said, "Jack, you and I must be friends to the end of our lives; and anything that is within my power I will do to serve you."

Spring then left the stage with his friends, to go to the Swan Hotel, Chichester. He was received with shouts by the populace all along the road, the ladies waving their handkerchiefs at the windows as he passed along. Langan, as soon as he had recovered a little from the effects of the battle, left the stage, amidst very loud tokens of approbation. The Irish champion, accompanied by Belcher and his backer, also received great applause on his return to the Dolphin Inn, at Chichester.

It is a curious coincidence that on Whitsun Tuesday in 1823 Spring defeated Neat, near Andover, and on Whitsun Tuesday in 1824 he overcame the brave Langan. Spring, therefore, won three battles in one twelvemonth.

The champion left Chichester at eight o'clock on Wednesday morning, in an open barouche, accompanied by Mr. Sant. He was cheered out of the town by the populace.

So fine a character does Spring appear to have been that one almost regrets his connection with prize-fighting. Nevertheless, he himself was satisfied that he was fulfilling a high destiny. He was told

by wiser and greater heads than his that he was keeping up the spirit of John Bull, and he believed it.

The highest eulogy upon him was by Borrow, who wrote "Hail to thee, six-foot Englishman of the brown eye, worthy to have carried a six-foot banner at Flodden."

None of those who went before Spring ever attained such excellence in fistic science; none of his contemporaries equalled him.

Never did human being possess such coolness and unshaken stability of temper; never were strength, elegance, and intrepidity so happily blended in one individual before. Though urbane and civil in private life, Spring would allow no liberties, and people soon discovered it.

When pugilism began to decline, Spring retired to the Castle Tavern, Holborn—as the landlord of this hostelry he has been immortalised in the pages of *Lavengro*—and was instrumental in founding the Fair Play Club, which was very strict and uncompromising in the rules for fighting which it laid down.

In later years, after he had ceased to be champion, he retired to what were called his winter quarters, in Hereford, where he became landlord of the Boothall Tavern.

Here, one fine day, came half a dozen hawkers of silk handkerchiefs, who, after partaking of the best which the house could afford, met the landlord's very civil requests for payment only with insolence and abuse. Not content with this, three of these pedlars,

feeling their valour wax warm, and forgetting the kind of person they had to deal with, rose to pay the champion off in a kind of coin which he had always been particularly handy in giving a satisfactory receipt for. Spring, however, declined the honour, and with equal temper and discretion retreated from his assailants, stopping their blows, and smiling at their vain attempts to touch him. He immediately sent for a constable, but the guardian of the law declined to attend. Finding that the law refused to protect him, and the fellows still insisting on covering him with violent abuse in reply to his repeated attempts to induce them to be quiet, he at last very properly, goaded by the most outrageous provocation, determined to adopt the shortest method of quieting such characters, and, requesting the persons present not to interfere, after every peaceable remonstrance had failed, he proceeded to expel the intruders. Three of them rushed on him at once, and he was soon surrounded by the six. Perhaps in his best days he never showed such science, coolness, and courage as he displayed on this occasion ; right and left, every blow told on their sconces, and on one occasion they were all down together. In less than twenty minutes they were completely brought to a standstill, and the champion, acknowledged victor, coolly observed that he would thrash twenty of their sort in an hour. They were all stout fellows, at least thirteen stone each.

Spring died on August 17th, 1851, aged 56. To the end of his life he was highly respected.

Another thoroughly honourable and straightforward pugilist was Edward Turner, who died in 1826.

As an apprentice of nineteen in a tanyard at Bermondsey, though never of a quarrelsome disposition, he gained a name for skill and bravery by his fistic prowess. His first battle was with the foreman of this yard, a Bristol man, who tried to lord it over all out of, as well as in, business, and he had stood forth as the champion of his fellows. After an hour's fighting his antagonist gave in, totally blind. On another occasion he defeated a big Irishman in Lock's Fields in twenty-five minutes. At this time he left London and went to Glasgow, where he was matched against a powerful Scotchman, named M'Niel; and though the latter was five feet eleven, and thirteen stone, Ned soon took the shine out of him, completely defeating him in half an hour. Blacket also, a taller and heavier man, was obliged to knock under to Ned on Newcastle race-course; and on his return to town he was still crowned with laurels by defeating a Jew of some notoriety in St. George's Fields, as well as by making a successful stand against five watermen, who set on him, and after a short struggle, obliging them to steer off amid the hootings of the assembled multitude, who, at Ned's request, permitted him to put their helm about. Nevertheless, Turner never sought to rank as a professional pugilist till he was challenged by John Curtis (brother to the Pet of the Fancy), who had distinguished himself on several occasions; and though Ned was

loath to enter the ring, he was egged on to the trial by hints which he considered might call his courage in question. They fought in October, 1816, at Moulsey; and after an hour and thirty-five minutes Ned was declared the victor. Curtis was carried out of the ring senseless, and died a few hours afterwards. Ned was tried at the Old Bailey, and found guilty of manslaughter; but his conduct during the battle was so humane towards his opponent—forbearing to take that advantage which his superiority gave him in many instances, and, when he could have ended the battle by a blow, lifting up his hands and walking away—that he was sentenced to only two months' imprisonment in Newgate.

After this a long series of triumphs ensued, till intemperance caused his decadence and death.

Probably the most successful prize-fighter who ever lived was John Gully, who, after attaining great celebrity in the ring, took to racing, and finally became a member of Parliament and a colliery proprietor. Gully fought but three fights in all—the first just before Trafalgar, the last seven years before Waterloo, after which he retired in a blaze of triumph. As an historical figure—and he merits that appellation owing to his remarkable career—he belongs to the long-bygone age of Corinthians and stage coaches, of the prize-ring, and the cock-pit, an age which it is difficult even to picture to oneself to-day. John Gully was the son of an innkeeper, near Bristol, who became a butcher. His business did not prosper, and his son found himself,

in 1805, an inmate of the King's Bench prison on account of a debt.

William Pearce—the "Game Chicken"—also a Bristol man, came one day to see Gully in the prison, and there being boxing gloves in the room, a sparring match was suggested. Gully, it should be added, had once thrashed a bully severely; he knew something of fighting, and gave a good account of himself with the Chicken, which came to the ears of Mr. Fletcher Read, a Maecenas of pugilism of the day.

The latter thought that a combat between the two would afford good sport, and Gully, being in no wise unwilling to fight his way out, was sent into training at Virginia Water, his debts being paid. The two met on Tuesday, 8th October, 1805, at Hailsham, in Sussex, before an enormous concourse of people. The Duke of Clarence, afterwards William IV, watched the fight from horseback, and many distinguished people were present.

Before proceeding to describe Gully's career some account of the famous Game Chicken will, perhaps, not be out of place.

William Pearce had first entered the lists with Bourke, whom Belcher had twice beaten, and they fought in a room in St. Martin's Lane by candle-light. The conflict was short and desperate, and in a quarter of an hour the Bristol hero was declared the victor. The bottom he evinced on this occasion procured him the name of the Game Chicken, upon which he crowed defiance to all the game cocks in the kingdom, Belcher excepted, as he was unwilling to fight any Bristol man.

His fight with Gully lasted sixty-four rounds—one hour and seventeen minutes. In one of the early rounds Gully put in a " most tremendous blow upon the Chicken's mouth."

Pearce's lip was split by this blow. " What do you think of it now, Pearce ? " said Gentleman Jackson to him. " The thing will never hurt nobody if he can't hit harder than that," replied the Chicken.

After the forty-fourth round the end seems never to have been in doubt, poor Gully being in a sad plight. Nevertheless, he struggled gamely on for another twenty rounds, until he at last resigned on the advice of his backer. The Chicken then came up to Gully, who was held up by his friends, and shook him by the hand, saying, " You're a damned good fellow. I am hard put to it to stand. You're the only man that ever stood up to me."

William Pearce had a heart animated by noble and elevated feelings, which even his dissipated habits of life could never deaden or suppress. As a fighter he was a most formidable opponent. He half killed an opponent on Wimbledon Common, and utterly vanquished Elias Spray, the hard-hitting coppersmith. Unlike many other boxers, he was a humane and chivalrous man, and his combat with Belcher, in 1805, was a credit both to British pugilism and the name of Pearce. In the twelfth round the Chicken went in and rallied furiously, and it was evident Belcher had fallen off in strength ; he had materially the worst of the rally. The Chicken closed and threw

Belcher on the rope, and had a fair opportunity of ending the fight; for Belcher lay balanced upon his back, and had the Chicken given him one of his death-like blows he must have been killed. Instead of which this chivalrous fighter—putting himself in an attitude for striking the blow, and looking round the ring with a countenance in which shone a mingled sense of justice and compassion—exclaimed, " Jem, I won't take advantage of thee."

Pearce signalised himself also, in the revival of the age of chivalry, as a champion for the fair sex. He delivered a forlorn damsel from ill-treatment at the hands of three gamekeepers, whom he discomfited and put to flight; and in 1807, at Bristol, he rescued another young woman from perishing in the flames, at the extreme peril of his own life.

When in the very height of his fame the Chicken fell into dissolute courses, and became too ill ever to fight again; he died in 1809 from an affection of the lungs, and left Gully undisputed master of the field.

In connection with the Game Chicken the following incident occurred:

Whilst Gully was on his way to Brighton he stopped for refreshment at an inn at Reigate, and during his sojourn there a stage coach, pretty well crowded with passengers inside and out, stopped at the door. A waiter, on the step of the entrance to the house, at this instant vociferated, " You are just in time, gentlemen; Gully has at this moment set-to with the chicken ! " and immediately disappeared, as if anxious to witness the diversion himself. The words of the

waiter appeared highly exciting to every one who heard them. In a few minutes the coach was left without a passenger, and the whole crowd thronged into the house, and, on learning where Gully was, eagerly made their way to his room, where, as the waiter had described, the good-natured pugilist was discovered on the point of commencing a set-to with a roast chicken, done to a turn!

Though Gully was never formally nominated as the Chicken's successor in the championship, no one appeared anxious to fight him for two years, during which he reposed upon his laurels.

At the end of that time, however, a famous fighting man from the north appeared. This was Bob Gregson, whom Gully encountered on 14th October, 1807, at Six-mile Bottom, near Newmarket, when a most obstinate battle ensued, lasting thirty-six rounds, the beginning of which was all in Gully's favour. At the twenty-fourth round, however, Gregson's strength—for he was a gigantic man—began to tell, and Gully's chances seemed to have disappeared. The men were now scarcely able to stand or hold up their hands, and in the last round "no drunken man staggered more or appeared incapable to stand steady than both the combatants did." Gully, however, pulled himself together for one supreme effort and knocked Gregson down. The Lancashire giant could not rise at the call of time, and Gully, like a tired horse with his nose turned towards home, as Pierce Egan said, "endeavoured to make a jump of it to show how much he valued the victory." Gregson's

friends, however, were not satisfied. They thought that if they could add to his great strength a knowledge of scientific boxing he must vanquish Gully, and after some negotiations a second fight was fixed for Thursday, 12th May, 1808. Some five days before this, a rumour having spread that the ring would be pitched on a certain common on the borders of Buckinghamshire and Bedfordshire, Lord Buckingham gave public notice in the London papers that he would prevent such a breach of the peace; but in spite of this, as early as the Saturday and Sunday, every bed and stable, every barn and outhouse, in every village between London and Woburn, was snapped up at famine prices. In one room at Woburn fifteen men lay on chairs or on the floor at two guineas a night. The villagers were amazed at the crowds, and some of the more credulous believed it was a French invasion. There appeared on the scene the Dunstable Volunteers, in full fighting array; and it was some time before it was realised that the cause of the turmoil was merely a projected fight on Ashley Common, which the authorities were determined to prevent. On the day of the fight crowds thronged the road at six o'clock in the morning. Bill Richmond, the black, acted as "finger-post," attired in blue coat, white waistcoat and pantaloons, and a white hat lined with green, and directed every one to Ashley Common. After a short time, however, up rode the redoubtable Mendoza in a green coat, and announced that there would be no fight at Ashley. The long string of carriages and horsemen then

set out for another place, a journey of seventeen miles, to where the ring was set up at Beechwood—Sir John Sebright's park, in Hertfordshire. It was then raining in torrents and the ground soaked and sodden, but the spectators lay down in the wet with perfect cheerfulness, and at last the two combatants appeared, clad in white breeches and silk stockings; owing to Gregson having a pair of spiked shoes, both parties fought in their stockinged feet.

The latter gave a poor account of himself, for he seemed to have lost his natural dash, and during the whole eighteen rounds there was but one in it, and that one Gully. After the fight was over the victor addressed the crowd, telling them that he would never fight again, and with this triumphant exit his career as a fighting man ended.

It should be added that the spot in the park, now in the possession of Sir Edgar Sebright, where the famous fight took place, has ever since been known as "Gully's Bottom." The grass in certain parts grows in a very patchy and irregular way, which local tradition asserts has been caused by the quantity of blood spilt there during the famous fight.

According to the custom of his day, Gully shortly afterwards bade farewell to his patrons at the Fives Court, and then became landlord of an inn, in his case "The Plough," in Carey Street.

He now began to frequent the turf a good deal, and in 1812, besides owning a racehorse, sometimes laid the odds, with the result that fifteen years later he was able to buy Mameluke of Lord Jersey for four

thousand guineas. He lost, it is said, some £40,000 when this horse was beaten by Matilda, but eventually got his losings back.

About 1846 was the zenith of Gully's turf career. In that year, in partnership with John Day, he won the Derby and the Oaks; however, his successes are too well known to need chronicling. He had now become a rich and well-respected country gentleman, and for some years sat as member for Pontefract. His money he shrewdly invested in collieries.

He alone of all the prize-fighters rose high in the social scale and achieved considerable renown.

His whole career was extraordinary. When he died, in 1863, aged eighty, he had won the Derby three times, and had had twenty-four children—the first achievement up till then unique, and the second rare.

Another remarkable man, whose name looms large in the annals of the old prize-ring, was Gentleman Jackson, the father of the modern school of boxing, who was born in 1769, and, like Gully, fought only three battles, two of which he won. In the first of these he proved the victor at Smitham Bottom, near Croydon, when nineteen years old. In a subsequent fight with a very powerful man of six feet—George Ingleston (George the Brewer)—at the Swan Inn, Ingatestone, Essex, he was less lucky, for when everything seemed going in his favour he slipped and severely injured his leg. With great courage Jackson offered to continue the fight strapped to a chair if his opponent would do likewise, but this not being

to the latter's taste, Jackson was decided to have lost the fight.

Gentleman Jackson's third, last, and most celebrated public appearance in the ring was at Hornchurch, in Essex, in April, 1795, when he vanquished the gallant Mendoza in nine rounds. This fight, which was for two hundred guineas a side, lasted little more than ten minutes. A number of spectators who belonged to the same race as the beaten hero were highly incensed at Jackson's behaviour during this contest, at one period of which, having with his right hand seized the long black hair of the Hebrew champion, he unmercifully hammered him with his disengaged hand. However, cries of "Foul!" were raised in vain, the referee deciding that no written rule of the ring had been broken.

After this Jackson retired from the ring and set up an establishment at 13 Bond Street, where fashionable Corinthians went to practise and learn the noble art of self-defence. Amongst his patrons here was Lord Byron, who alluded to him in *Don Juan*. All the great personages of the day went at some time to these rooms. Gentleman Jackson outlived all the rest of the old fighting men, and died, aged seventy-seven, in 1845. He was buried in Brompton cemetery, where a fine monument, surmounted by a magnificent lion, marks the spot where, "his last combat o'er," this old-style Englishman lies. Besides being endowed with great strength and courage, Gentleman Jackson was possessed of many social gifts which made him universally popular. He was, it should be added, of

far better birth than the vast majority of the prize-fighters of his day, having been the son of an eminent architect, and this no doubt accounted for the unobtrusive and tactful manners which gained him universal popularity.

George IV, who liked him, caused him to be asked to attend his coronation, on which occasion he is said to have accorded the tough old fighter a special nod of recognition.

Though the later days of the prize ring hardly come within the scope of this volume, some reference may be permitted to the gallant and unconquered champion—Tom Sayers—who at Farnborough, on Tuesday, April 17th, 1860, fought the historic battle with the American, Heenan* (known as "the Benicia Boy"). Sayers was but 5 ft. 8½ in. in height—Heenan 6 ft. 1½ in. The contest was a most determined one and should be remembered as a conspicuous instance of English pluck, for Sayers fought some rounds with a broken arm, had it not been for which he would almost certainly have won; as it was, the battle was declared a draw, each man being presented with a silver belt; oddly enough, the one given to Heenan hangs at White's Club, lent by Mr. Gilbert Elliot. Mr. Barclay Walker owns Sayers' belt, I believe.

This fight was practically the last real prize-fight fought in England, and in all probability scarcely any one who witnessed it is still alive. Mr. John

* Heenan married the handsome actress Ada Menken, who wrote *Infelicia* and other poems.

Gideon, who was one of Sayers' seconds, died in Paris a few years ago. The present writer well remembers how the old man's eye would sparkle when questioned about the great battle, and his enthusiastic references to Tom's courage. Sayers, who, it should be mentioned, was a Sussex man, lies buried in Highgate cemetery, beneath a monument very appropriately adorned with a medallion portrait and a recumbent mastiff.* The inscription, it would seem, has been almost effaced by time, but though the lettering may have faded from the stone the memory of gallant Tom Sayers—with whose name was associated all that was bold, generous, manly, and honest in pugilism—will ever be kept green by admirers of that striking old-fashioned English determination of which he was such a conspicuous and unwavering example.

The old school of prize-fighters is now, except for Jem Mace (the last surviving champion), extinct, the ring, once a recognised sporting institution amongst a people who worshipped personal hardihood and bravery, having—not unnaturally, perhaps—sunk into disrepute.

The battles of the future, it is said, will no longer be won by brute force, or the victors be inspired by the spirit which in former days animated soldier as well as pugilist; the primitive qualities of courage and physical endurance are, we are given to understand, not essential to the success of a modern nation.

In 1851 George Borrow, deploring the death of pugilism, wrote, " All I have to say is that the French

* A representation of his favourite dog Lion.

still live on the other side of the water and are still casting their eyes hitherward."

To-day, happily, it is but a friendly glance that reaches us from across the Channel, but should not only the eyes but the highly-trained legions of another great nation be cast hitherward, who can say that England may not have reason to regret that she ever resigned herself to the guidance of sentimentalists whose ideals—admirable though they may be—are scarcely likely to produce that unquenchable spirit of vigorous hardihood and endurance for which the British were once renowned?

VIII

SINCE its introduction into England battue shooting has been exposed to constant and severe criticism, accounts of the vast quantities of game slaughtered making much impression upon sensitive minds. It should, however, be remembered that in reality, owing to the perfection of modern arrangements, a very minute percentage of wounded birds escapes to suffer; indeed, the reproach of cruelty cannot with any justice be levelled against those participating in a big day.

Also it should not be forgotten that the people at large are by this system enabled to purchase game at a moderate price, whereas in the days before battues they could never get it at all; and lastly, the number of pheasants annually sent to hospitals is very large.

As a matter of fact, the abolition of the Game Laws would be anything but a benefit to the populace generally. In Norway such laws have recently been adopted, not for the pleasure of the rich, but in the interests of the people.

Whilst, as has been shown, a good deal of the abuse levelled against the modern system of shooting is unfair, there can nevertheless be no doubt but that the old school were more thoroughly devoted to

sport in the real sense of the word. To be patient and persevering under difficulties, however complicated; to feel interest without relaxation in what is going on; to entertain hope under all extremities; to succeed through such disheartening prospects as would have intimidated men of little experience, and to attain one's object or objects in spite of serious hardship and difficulty—this is what sport meant to them.

Our forefathers, after a hasty meal, taken commonly at daybreak, hurried to the field, where they explored wilds and wastes in the true spirit of adventure—their patience and perseverance betokening their ardour, and their efforts continuing often till the period of the setting sun; and though their subsequent conviviality was not infrequently carried to excess, recourse was not so often had to the physician as nowadays. Toil strung their nerves, and habitual exposure "steeled" their constitutions. What a contrast to the luxurious ease with which vast loads of game are slaughtered in modern times, when the wholesome pleasures of a year are sometimes crowded into one short day!

Man can have but enough. His enjoyments are limited with his powers to enjoy; and the greater and more rapid the consumption of pleasure, the earlier comes the distaste for it altogether.

Compare the joys of the modern crack shot, who vies with others merely as to who shall destroy most, to the modest rivalry of a couple of old sportsmen of the past with single barrels, a brace of dogs, and

one horse and a servant between them, taking the country steadily in the wind's eye; watching with attentive care the behaviour of the dogs; resting in the heat of the mid-hour under the cooling shade of a tenant's humble doorway, and finishing the day with a bag such as would be considered insignificant by sportsmen of the modern school!

How happy was the life of the old-fashioned sportsman possessed of a small sporting estate. In September there was partridge shooting, with its pleasing attributes, to be steadily pursued till came the pheasant shooting, from its shining beauty, on the first of October, to its happiest variety in November; woodcock, till frost had driven both the sportsman and the birds from the woods; snipe, while the bogs were wet, and when the rippling spring still ran through sparkling icicles; and then arousing the deepest interest, and asking for greater nicety of management, wild-fowl shooting, most exciting of sports, when the spirits were buoyant and the eye clear.

The pleasures of good English sporting used to consist in " the conscious pride of art "—in watching and training the fine instinct of the dog against the finer instinct of the bird—in the power of the man to pursue and in his skill to strike his wild and wary prey—to follow " over hill, over dale, through bush, through briar," with an activity that declared health and vigour, and a perseverance that indicated the keen sense of delight with which the sport was urged. The difficulty constituted all the glory of success.

Sport with a gun would seem to have been taken rather less seriously then than now; for the majority of shooters it was a pastime which, though it not infrequently involved strenuous effort, remained a pastime and nothing else. At the present time no inconsiderable section of expert shots, instead of indulging in sport as nature intended—that is, as a recreation from more important pursuits—behave as if the slaughter of game were the only serious business in life. There is often as much fuss and ceremony in preparing and in going out to kill partridges or pheasants, and such a gathering of people, as there was in olden time, in the north, when a whole clan was called out to go against the common enemy.

In these days a good bag is the chief thing demanded by those fond of shooting, and there must be some allurement of this sort, besides green fields and pretty prospects, to induce sportsmen to reside at their homes. To sixteen in twenty of these the preservation of game is the chief attraction.

When battues after the modern fashion first began to grow popular many voices were raised against them, and not a few sportsmen of the old-fashioned school joined in the outcry. They complained that this form of sport—if sport it could be called—merely gave to a select few an occasional day of merciless butchery against creatures reared as pets; that in reality it was nothing but an attempt to introduce into this country the feudal chase of the Continent for the amusement of certain un-English personages, who, too effeminate for the real sports

of the field, glutted their thirst for blood in the slaughter of the stupid pheasant. They also averred that the modern system of "preserving" had done away with all that was wild and really sporting in the pleasure of carrying a gun. It had entirely shut out the middle classes from the enjoyment of that pleasure, and, above all, that it had been of serious and material injury to fox-hunting, the noblest and most truly national of all sports.

Old-fashioned sportsmen manifested much dislike to the modern methods of shooting, which required people without number in attendance; ponies to ride after the birds; men, on their backs, to mark them down; other folks, with other spare guns, and spare hands to load them, that the shooter might not blacken his own, or fatigue himself too much. The modern shot, said they, must, above all, never be without a loaded gun in his hand—for, oh! it would be terrible if a bird were to get up while he was loading, and a chance of killing one more head be lost.

With reference to riding the birds down, it may be stated that Lord Anglesey, of Waterloo fame, who was very fond of shooting up to the end of his life, used to shoot grouse from a pony. He seems to have been a dangerous companion. On one occasion he shot through the crown of a tall hat on the head of a Welsh clergyman, who was naturally much frightened. "My good man," remarked Lord Anglesey, "don't be afraid; I'm a perfect master of the weapon."

It is not generally known that Lord Anglesey very

handsomely refused a pension of £1200 a year for the loss of his leg at Waterloo, and as he lived till 1854, he thus saved the nation nearly £47,000.

He could be very bluff on occasion. When, for instance, he was attacked by a hostile mob for being a partisan of King George IV against Queen Caroline, he put his head out of his coach window and shouted, "May all your wives be like her."

To return, however, to the subject of what old-fashioned shots thought of sporting innovations, their comments on the organisers of battues were severe in the extreme. The sole idea, said they, of a new-fashioned preserver of game was to slaughter a great heap of birds in a very small space of time. They denounced the wasteful extravagance of modern pheasant shooting, so tersely described by the huntsman who said: "Up goes a guinea, bang goes a penny, and down comes half a crown."

Others pointed out the absurdity of big shoots and of the growing practice of sacrificing everything to a gala day of slaughter. Gone were the good old times, said they, when sportsmen delighted in a little cheerful sport. On a fine November or December morning, with a rustling spaniel bolting a fine chuckling cock-pheasant from his run in a hedgerow, or mayhap a bouncing hare from her form, or little rabbit from his close hiding in the furzy bank.

One violent opponent of battue shooting denounced this form of sport as cruel, selfish, and unmanly. "Devoted as I am," said he, "to my pointers and my gun, I would consign them all to the Deuce, and

take to chasing rabbits with a lobster, and killing hares with Spanish snuff, sooner than have the fox disturbed, or this battue-ing tolerated."

The pheasant, a child of foreign birth, was declared to have brought in its train foreign customs and manners.

A sporting critic said, "Of all the un-Englishmanlike, unsportsmanlike practices which I have ever witnessed in the field, that called the Battue is the most offensive to a real sportsman ; and the most strenuous defender of it can only place it one degree beyond shooting rooks in a rookery. A dozen men—I cannot call them sportsmen—go out about three o'clock in the afternoon, and are placed at different parts of a covert. They seldom stir many yards from the spot at which they are posted, where their guns are put ready loaded into their hands by a slave in waiting, in order that no time may be wasted in shooting at everything that comes within their reach. Finally, when they return home, with about a thousand head of game killed (and half as many more wounded), an account is sent of their 'grand day's sport' to the London newspapers. Dogs, and the excellence of their respective qualities and breeds, form no part of the day's sport, whereas, before the country was so overrun with game, the merits of these animals constituted, with sportsmen at least, one half of the pleasure."

Old-fashioned sportsmen took the keenest interest in their setters and pointers. Sir Robert Dudley, son to the famous Earl of Leicester by his second

wife, Dowager Baroness of Sheffield, and whom, for some sinister purpose, his father bastardised, is said to have been the first man who ever taught dogs to set partridges.

The origin of the setter has been derived from the pointer, which is absolutely impossible, as the pointer was not known until after the introduction of shooting flying, somewhere about the beginning of the eighteenth century.

Good setters were difficult to train, and required great care and attention, especially with regard to chasing hares, which is, of course, the greatest of temptations to young dogs.

Setters, it was said, never did well except in a country where there was plenty of water.

They were less easily broken in than pointers, which, however, were considered better for partridge shooting across an open country. The setter was better for moor game, and could endure more fatigue, besides being more active and stronger.

Where woodcocks were to be found in abundance setters were highly useful. Some sportsmen employed them in company with spaniels, which sounds rather strange.

It should be added that by some the setter was considered superior to the pointer, in spite of the extra trouble in training. In September they declared setters had all the dash of the spaniel, and would follow birds when they got into cover, which the pointer would rarely do.

The old English setters were brown and white,

commonly called liver and white, red and white, and red—all others were new varieties. The brown, and liver and white, were said to proceed from the spaniel; the red and white, and red, from the hound.

The only idea which can now be formed of the old English setter is from pictures, to judge from which he was a large, strong, and rather heavy dog; indeed, had he not been so, there would have been no necessity to alter the genus, when the more active pursuit of the fowling-piece superseded the sport of the net. It is obvious that a strong weighty dog, who would knock up in a day's modern shooting, would answer perfectly well, if not better, for the tardy process of the net; because two or three successive draws were enough, and the long rests the dog got would enable a heavy one to blow, and regain his maximum of performance as to speed. Two or three draws with the net were enough, because few manors could bear more reducing at a season's continuance of such wholesale work.

Some of the old pointers were undoubtedly remarkable dogs, though not a few of the stories told of them seem hard to believe, resembling the famous tale of Munchausen's dog.

One Christmas Day, for instance, it was said a certain clergyman was riding his nag from his parish church, which was at a considerable distance from his dwelling-house, and his way lay over the most private spot of a secluded and neglected heath. In the deepest recess of this wild he espied a pointer by himself, standing at a covey of birds. He looked,

admired, pondered on the wonderful and inscrutable instincts of the brute creation, blessed himself, and passed on. The cares and studies necessarily attendant upon his calling, however, soon expelled every vestige of this occurrence from his mind, until he was awakened to fresh admiration and benediction by a renewed and stupendous view of the same objects. Exactly on the above day twelvemonth, passing the same way, his second astonishment was far greater than the first, for he saw upon the self-same spot the dog pointing at the birds, in precisely the same attitude he had left both parties twelve months before — with this difference, however, that they were then living and breathing, one party stealthily circumventing, the other apprehending; whereas now they were in a skeleton state, fit for a lecture in anatomy.

Strange peculiarities have been recorded of many pointers. One, a gormandiser, for instance, had to be lowered by two or three days' fasting before work; and it was no easy task to do this, as he would eat trash of any sort or kind, from shoe-leather to the horny part of a horse's hoof. It was indeed difficult to reduce him so as to reap the advantages of his singularly good qualities in the field. Some had wonderful sagacity in so managing matters, and particularly in hedgework, as to get round the game and to turn it out on the gun side. One would point the game through the loose stone walls on the wolds in Gloucestershire. The most extraordinary pointer of all, however, was one which stood a covey of birds whilst topping a gate, having so instantane-

ously checked himself in his career as to maintain his point, a circumstance almost unrivalled in singularity by his master's bringing down six of the covey the moment they rose, at a single shot.

"I have a fine pointer," said a gentleman to his friend, "staunch as can be at birds, but I cannot break him from sheep." The reply was that the best means were to couple him to the horn of an old ram, and leave them in a stable all night, and the discipline he would receive would prevent his loving field mutton again. The same person, meeting the owner of the dog some time afterwards, accosted him thus: "Well, sir, your pointer now is the best in England, no doubt, from my prescription." "Much the same, sir, for he killed my ram and ate a shoulder!"

A sporting parson in Wiltshire possessed a pointer that was the admiration of the whole county. A nobleman, very fond of sport, admired the dog much, and wished to have him. The clergyman observed this, and hearing that his lordship had some church preferments in his gift was not backward in displaying his dog. "He certainly points well," said his lordship. "Yes," replied the parson, "he does, but I'll tell your lordship how it is; he is a hungry dog, and points for a living." His lordship took the hint, and made the dog his own.

Colonel Thornton's pointers, Pluto and Juno, were, it was declared, sketched by Gilpin the artist, on account of having kept their point upwards of one hour and a quarter. This story excited much amusement amongst sportsmen.

About 1805 the first bob-tailed pointer was bred by Mr. Tayleure, of Meeson Hall, Salop, who gave Mr. Picken, of Sidney, two whelps by his own dog, Carlow, who was not of the bob-tail breed. Both whelps turned out well, but Patch, a bitch, was an extraordinary animal. She was trained by, and was the property of, Mr. Duncalfe, who then had the management of the Duke of Sutherland's game on his Shropshire estates, and no man better understood the business he had undertaken than he. He was an excellent shot, and often went out with John Crutchley, the head keeper, a man of great vigilance, courage, and activity, and a good marksman. There is an anecdote told of him; it was in the days of flint and steel, when hanging fire and flash-in-the-pan were more frequent than desirable. One drizzling day, when powder would be moist, John made a decided poke at a snipe that was wheeling round him; the trigger obeyed the finger, but ignition was slow—'twas a "spluttering hang." "I shall have thee presently," he quietly muttered, still dangling the gun and keeping his aim, until "Bang!"—the bird fell.

Patch was the admiration of all sportsmen that saw her either in field or covert. The Duc d'Angoulême, when exiled in England, frequently visited the Duke's woods; and so pleased was he with her performances that, on seeing Mr. Duncalfe, who always attended him, Patch not being out, his Royal Highness would anxiously exclaim, "Where is de Patch, de delightful Patch?"

Owing to various causes, perhaps chiefly owing to the perfection of modern guns, more men shoot well now than was formerly the case, and some of the long shots which certain experts make with ease make one feel inclined to sympathise with that Irish servant who, after his master had brought down a very high pheasant, shouted out, "Arrah, your honour, need not have shot; the fall would have killed him."

Most of the old-fashioned sportsmen did not care to attempt long shots at all; their object was to risk missing as little as possible, for loading was not then the easy task which it has long since become.

The old guns sometimes did great execution. In September, 1823, for instance, a gentleman who was shooting near Allonby, Cumberland, raised a covey of twelve partridges. The wind literally blew a gale, and just as he fired a gust wheeled the covey suddenly round, concentrating it very considerably, and ten birds fell to the ground. The sportsman immediately fired his other barrel and brought down the remaining brace.

As a rule the bags made by sportsmen of other days were moderate, according to a modern estimate, but, all things considered, some very creditable records were made.

At Holkham, in 1811, when several first-class shots were staying with Mr. Coke, the party killed:

Pheasants	264
Partridges	314

Woodcocks	29
Snipes	46
Hares	283
Rabbits	371
Total killed	1307

A royal duke, who was one of the guests on this occasion, does not seem to have done much execution as regards game.

As a military man he appears to have considered pheasants and partridges unworthy of his aim, and the return made for him was of a different kind, being as follows :

Killed of game—none.
Wounded in the legs—one foot marker, slightly.
Wounded in the face—one groom, severely.
Wounded slightly—one horse.
Wounded on the head of a friend—one hat.

In the eighteenth century many landowners made little attempt to preserve game at all, and allowed their neighbours to sport over their estates at will. On one property, belonging to a certain nobleman, the officers from a neighbouring garrison town had for long years past been permitted to shoot over the land of a noble lord who seldom visited that portion of his property. The privilege of shooting had indeed come to be regarded as a military right, and so when the peer in question died a certain captain, very fond of sport, did not trouble to ask permission of his

successor, but with dogs and gun set out as usual one fine September morning. The new owner, however, was a man of irascible character, and resented what he deemed to be an intrusion when he caught sight of the uninvited sportsman. Flying into a passion, he sent for his gamekeeper, and directed him to go instantly and shoot the stranger's two dogs. The man knew the character of his master, and from his tone and manner saw that he must be obeyed. He rode off to the spot, addressed the sportsman, apologised, but said he dared not go back to his lordship till the order be carried out. The captain expostulated; and at length, pointing to one of his dogs, requested as a favour that the gamekeeper would kill that one first. The shot was fired, and the poor dog fell. The captain, who carried a double-barrelled gun, instantly advanced, and coolly discharged his piece through the gamekeeper's horse. "Now," said he, addressing the fellow, who was all astonishment and terror, "this is horse for dog; fire again, and it shall be man for dog." The invitation was, of course, declined. "And now," he continued, "go back to your rascally master, describe what you have seen, give him this card, and tell him that wherever I find him in country or in town, I will horsewhip him from that spot to the threshold of his own door." The noble lord was early the next morning on his way to London, and did not return to his country residence until the captain's regiment had been ordered to a distant part of the country.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century par-

tridges were looked upon as an inferior sort of game in Scotland, the grouse being the all-engrossing pursuit with the resident gentry, who had not generally by any means got into the habit of letting their hills; so that, comparatively speaking, they escaped with impunity. In those times there was not a pheasant in the country—Lord Willoughby D'Eresby, then Mr. Drummond Burrell, when he married the heiress of the House of Perth, and came to reside at Drummond Castle, being the first who introduced them. No country was better adapted, as, although skirted by the Grampian, Orchill, and Stormont Mountains, it was entirely a corn one, interspersed with numerous natural coppices and almost endless plantations. In such a fine situation, and under the best care, they soon prospered; and the other great proprietors for the most part taking the hint, more or less, they spread all over the district, and became as fairly naturalised as in any part of the Island.

One of the first great game preservers in England was Lord Pembroke, who, about 1804, at Wilton, reared a great many pheasants for that day, and used to take great care in breeding them. When a hen-pheasant laid eggs away he would give a shilling for every one of her eggs brought to Wilton House. His cocks, of course, used to stray, and very often appeared in farmyards, where they would attack the chanticleer of the yard.

One farmer who bred chickens for the Bath and Salisbury markets, in order to keep the raiders in check, put steel spurs on certain cocks he could depend

upon, with the result that he sometimes got a plump pheasant for dinner.

"On the whole," as he said, Lord Pembroke's love of breeding pheasants did him more good than harm, for, owing to the intercourse between his lordship's wild birds and his own birds, he obtained a continual succession of the finest game chickens in the whole country.

At that time there hung at the "Pembroke Arms" a small picture called "Morland's Pheasant," painted by the artist from life when he had been at Wilton, in 1794, at which time Morland had stayed at the inn for many weeks in order to recover his health. This little jewel of painting was inscribed "G. Morland, 1794." It would be curious to know in whose hands it is now.

In the western part of Suffolk, in 1811, a number of sporting landowners formed an association, the object of which was ironically described as being the prevention of every one but themselves from having any kind of game at their tables. Those ladies and gentlemen who were not so fortunate as to rent or be in possession of manors or estates were therefore advised to introduce poached eggs as a substitute for pheasants and partridges.

The increase of game which occurred at the beginning of the nineteenth century led to a certain reaction against preserving. In 1812, for instance, many noblemen, gentlemen, and other landowners, in Staffordshire, held a meeting, and resolved to destroy all the game and rabbits on their estates, on

account of the large quantity of corn which they consumed.

The Kentish Gazette, of 4th September of that year, contained a remarkable advertisement to much the same effect:

"GAME AND RABBITS.—*A general invitation to qualified gentlemen.*—Manor of Dennie, *alias* Dane, in the parishes of Chilham and Molash. The interest of agriculture on this manor, and the surrounding country, being much injured by the great number of hares, pheasants, and rabbits, the proprietor feels the necessity of giving this general invitation to *qualified gentlemen* to sport at their pleasure. The manor-house is in the parish of Chilham, very near to a place called Shottenton Thorn, and John Packman, a servant, who resides there, has orders to accommodate gentlemen as well as he can with stabling for their horses, and with any refreshment for themselves, that his homely mode of living can offer. The house is large, and a limited number of gentlemen, by sending their own bedding, may be accommodated with house-room in this or future shooting seasons."

In the early days of game preserving there was much rivalry between the keepers on different estates. An annual meeting of Suffolk gamekeepers used to be held at Bury in December, for the purpose of awarding a large silver powder flask to the keeper who should produce the certificates for the greatest numbers of hares, pheasants, and partridges shot at, as

well as killed, during any six days, from 8th October to 8th December. In 1811 Richard Sharnton delivered vouchers for the following list, and obtained the prize. The prize was given upon a comparison of the sport, estimating the number of guns, and the extent of land in strict preserve. Sharnton's list averaged three guns, and his extent of preserve four thousand acres.

	Killed.	Missed.
Cock-Pheasants	378	199
Hen-Pheasants	51	33
Partridges..	506	301
Hares	177	94

Total shots 1739, nearly 300 a day!

Sharnton afterwards produced the account of the vermin and birds of prey that he had destroyed in the last twelve months. Sharnton had but two under-keepers.

Foxes	22
Martens	3
Polecats	31
Stoats	446
Crows and Magpies	120
Hawks of all kinds	167
Field Rats	310
Brown Owls	13
Wild Cats	7

In the days when keepers not infrequently had to risk their lives there were many families in which they

occupied the position of old and trusted servants, who were generally prominent figures in the elaborate funerals of great landowners of other days.

At the funeral of the last Lord Egremont twelve gamekeepers flanked the head of the procession, which was ended by four hundred Sussex labourers in the beautiful old smock-frocks which the modern rustic is foolish enough to disdain.

Lord Egremont's funeral was worthy of an old English nobleman, who had lived and died respected by the countryside about his hospitable mansion. Entirely pedestrian, it first of all proceeded round Petworth House, the coffin being drawn by sixteen men.

Many gamekeepers were privileged individuals. Such a one was Hawkesworth, who was in the service of Mr. Coke at Holkham—a most eccentric man. He never associated with or spoke to any person, unless he was first addressed. He was very penurious, had accumulated a considerable fortune, which he had hid from the fear of invasion; and his death, at the age of seventy, was supposed to be occasioned by depriving himself of sufficient nourishment. Mr. Coke always furnished him with proper liveries; but his dress was of the most miserable kind, and he always wore an old painted hat, patched over with pieces of cloth. The liveries he had by him at the time of his death, and which had never been worn, are supposed to have been worth £100. He was known by the title of the "Walking Obelisk."

Another keeper at Holkham was old Joe Hibbert,

who had been a prize-fighter in his youth. On one occasion Sir John Shelley, who was celebrated for his neat sparring, challenged Hibbert to a set-to with the gloves, and some young men mischievously promised Joe a good tip if he would administer a little punishment to Sir John. Joe put on the gloves, but soon drew them off again, and turning round upon his backers, exclaimed, "Not for twice the money would I strike a gentleman."

A great character amongst gamekeepers was Mr. Flower Archer, one of the King's Keepers of the New Forest, who died, aged eighty-six, in 1813. He had expressed a great wish that he might be buried with all his clothes on; to be conveyed to the grave in his own cart; and that half a hogshead of strong beer, and cakes for every one present, should follow the procession, and that his body should remain one hour on the church hill, in order that the cakes and beer might be distributed. Singular and eccentric as was his desire, it was rigidly adhered to, and strictly observed.

Here and there, scattered through village churchyards, are monuments and inscriptions testifying to the esteem in which gamekeepers were held in the past by their masters.

Against the north wall of Harefield Church, Middlesex, on the outside, was, and perhaps still is, a monument, with a representation in bas-relief of a gamekeeper and his dog, put up by Mr. Ashby, in memory of his faithful servant Robert Mossendew, who died in 1744. Underneath are the following lines :

In frost and snow, thro' hail and rain,
He scour'd the woods, and trudg'd the plain;
The steady pointer leads the way,
Stands at the scent, then springs his prey;
The tim'rous birds from stubble rise,
With pinions stretch'd divide the skies—
The scatter'd lead pursues the sight,
And death, in thunder, stops their flight;
His spaniel, of true English kind,
With gratitude inflames his mind:
This servant in an honest way,
In all his actions copied Tray.

Another epitaph on a dog ran thus:

To one, through all a chequered life, alone,
That, of the many, I have faithful known,
Whose joy alike, should good or ill betide,
Was still to linger fondly at my side;
While the fix'd eye, with look of rapture fraught,
Proclaim'd a love beyond all common thought:—
Whom no caprice could weary, slight estrange,
And, more than all, whom years could never change:
The blithe companion, and the friend sincere—
A grateful tribute I would offer here! . . .
Are there who pause, as doubting such might be
In woman's love, or man's fidelity,
And seek to learn in whom such virtues were? . . .
Turn, and behold the answer graven there!

It was by no means unusual to commemorate the memory of some favourite dog by a picture or tablet.

At Blo' Norton Hall, Norfolk, a perfect specimen of the smaller kind of manor-house, now happily occupied by a great authority on local archæology, and also a first-rate shot, Prince Frederick Dhuleep Singh, hangs

a quaint oil painting of a sporting dog, on which are inscribed the words, "Oh Rare Blackwinder."

Formerly the following epitaphs on dogs were to be seen under Euston Park wall, not far from the house. I am unaware whether they still exist to-day :

TROUNCER,
1788,
Foxes rejoice !
Here, buried, lies your foe.

1799,
GARLAND,
The spotless rival of her
Grandsire's
Fame.

A faithful and singularly intelligent spaniel (DUCHESS) lies buried beneath this wall ; she was killed by an accidental shot while performing her duty in the Decoy Carr in the month of January, 1813.

Surely the faithful dog is as deserving of some memorial as many men.

The companion of man, since the days when our feeble ancestors of remote antiquity lived in caves, he certainly ranks second amongst God's creatures.

The prominent features of his character are fondness and fidelity. There is no humbug about him : he never takes offence. and bears no malice, but accommo-

dates himself to all one's tastes and humours. If you are disposed to be serious, or there is business to be done, tell him to " lie down " and, throwing himself at your feet, he waits for hours in a state of the most perfect quiescence. If you are in gayer mood, give but the joyous signal, and he executes gambol after gambol, indicative of such strength and activity that you wonder how such a thing of life could lie still so long.

In courtesy and gentleness of heart he yields neither to the most accomplished courtier nor to the mistress of your heart.

An extraordinary instance of canine fidelity occurred about a hundred years ago in London. A poor tailor, who lived in the parish of St. Olave, Tooley Street, Borough, died and left a small cur dog inconsolable for his loss. The little animal would not leave his dead master, not even for food; and whatever he ate was forced to be placed in the same room with the corpse. When the body was removed for burial, this faithful attendant followed the coffin. After the funeral, he was hunted out of the churchyard by the sexton, who, the next day, again found the animal, who had made his way by some unaccountable means into the enclosure, and had dug himself a bed on the grave of his master. Once more he was hunted out, and again he was found in the same situation on the following day. The clergyman of the parish, hearing of the circumstance, had him caught, taken home, and fed, and endeavoured by every means to win the animal's affections: but they were wedded to his

late master; and, in consequence, he took the first opportunity to escape and regain his lonely situation. With true benevolence the worthy clergyman permitted him to follow the bent of his inclinations; but, to soften the rigour of his fate, he built him upon the grave a small kennel, which was replenished once a day with food and water. Two years did this example of fidelity pass in this manner, when death put an end to his grief. The enlightened philanthropy of the good clergyman allowed his remains an asylum with his beloved master.

Probably the greatest lover of dogs who ever lived was a gentleman who died, aged seventy-two, in 1805, in his house at Knightsbridge, where he had resided for twenty years. A very singular character, he literally worshipped the canine race, which he certainly had good reason to do, his life, when travelling on the Continent, having been saved by a dog preventing his assassination. Up to almost the very end of his life this gentleman never was without four or five very large ones of the setter kind, lineally descended from the very dog that saved his life. At last, the old stock was reduced to one, and the others were in some degree supplied by a small terrier and an enormous dog of the Albany breed. They were fed and lodged in sumptuous style; beefsteaks, buttered rolls, gingerbread, and pastry were no uncommon diet for them; and, as to lodging, one or two slept in the room with himself; the others were provided with mattresses in other apartments of his house. He kept two lads to wait on them; and, at stated hours, however bad

the weather, and in spite of every other consideration, he himself took them out for air and exercise; the last of those hours was between one and two in the morning, which necessarily kept him up almost all night. In addition to the dogs he kept, he had, as he termed them, a great many pensioners, that regularly came, some from a great distance, to be fed daily at his door; and frequently, when he met a half-starved dog in his walks, he would take him to a confectioner's, and treat him with a shilling's-worth of tarts; or, if a hawker of dogs' meat chanced to be near, to a more substantial meal of horseflesh. When any one of his dogs died, it was placed in a kind of coffin—laid in state for a day or two, with wax candles burning around, whilst this dog lover sat in a disconsolate mood beside it—after which it was interred with great solemnity. On such occasions the chief mourner generally wrote an elegy, descriptive of the beauty and qualities of his departed friend, the dog. By his last will he bequeathed £25 a year to each of the dogs that were living at the time of his decease. His whole family consisted of his canine friends, the two boys already mentioned, and an old woman. He had an utter aversion to physic, and allowed no one to approach him in his last moments. Notwithstanding his whole affection seemed to be settled on his dogs, yet he was not devoid of feeling for the human race, and many an indigent and unfortunate object had good reason to lament his death.

IX

IN the eighteenth century people were not very particular as to whose land they shot over.

In 1798 the neighbourhood of Newmarket was considerably perturbed at the doings of a sportsman who had already attracted some attention at the previous October meeting. The gentleman in question, who was accompanied by a lady of dashing appearance, travelled about in a gig with a couple of pointers and two guns. With this equipage he had made the journey from London to Newmarket, shooting on every manor he came to; but as he was warned off the grounds of the various landowners in his way, that he might enjoy the same pleasure on his return, he chose to proceed a different road for that purpose.

His fair companion appeared to be very fond of the pointers, and was a good markswoman, as was observed by a keeper, who had seen her make a remarkably good cross shot in his master's park.

At one time the Eton boys used to enliven the round of scholastic toil by occasional poaching. Of course, this was strictly prohibited, and many a boy was severely punished for his love of the gun. Young Lord Baltimore and a friend were once caught on a poaching expedition by one of the masters, who came up quickly enough to one of them to discover

who he was; the other, perhaps having quicker heels, got off unknown. The detected culprit was flogged pretty severely, and threatened with repetitions of the same discipline if he did not discover his companion; this, however, he persisted in refusing in spite of repeated punishment. His companion, who was confined to his room at his boarding-house by a sore throat, which he had got by leaping into a ditch to escape the detection of the master, on hearing with what severity his friend of the trigger was treated on his account, went into school with his throat wrapped up, and very straightforwardly told the master that he was out shooting with the young man who with such magnanimous perseverance had refused to give his name.

The pursuit of game was once the subject of considerable solicitude to the legislature, and immense pains were taken to frame enactments and regulations to safeguard everything relating to Royal sport.

Some of the old sporting laws were highly curious, as were also the tenures of land.

At Seaton, in Kent, for instance, Bertram de Criol held the manor of the King by serjeantry, viz. to provide one man called Veltrarius, a vaulter to lead three greyhounds when the King should go into Gascony, so long as a pair of shoes of fourteen pence price should last.

At Mansfield, in Nottinghamshire, Sir Robert Plumpton held an estate called Wolfhunt, by the service of winding a horn, and frighting away the wolves in the forest of Sherwood.

At Silbertost, in Northamptonshire, Nicholas de Archer, in the time of Edward I, held by the service of carrying the King's bow through all the forests in England.

At Luton, in Devonshire, William de Albemarle held the manor of Loston, by serjeantry of finding for "our lord the King" two arrows and one loaf of oat bread, when he should hunt in the forest of Dartmoor.

In connection with the subject of ancient sporting usages, the following terms, now more or less obsolete, once used in connection with the carving of game, may be of interest:

Unlace a hare or rabbit; wing a partridge or quail; allay a pheasant or teal; dismember a hern; thigh a woodcock; display a crane; lift a swan.

Next to war the chase was in feudal days considered to be the most fitting occupation for a great noble, and considerable glamour hung about everything connected with it. This idea spreading to the people no doubt augmented the number of those who, braving severe penalty, surreptitiously captured game.

Amongst the country folk of old England the village poacher was often regarded as half a hero, the existence of regular gangs being almost openly recognised. Sometimes these men were dangerous smugglers as well. A particular band, known as the Johnnies, once quite devastated a west country estate of game. The heir to this estate, when he came into possession, did everything in his power to develop the great sporting capabilities of the place, but for a long time all

was in vain, till one day a friend discovered the cause.

Out partridge shooting one day on a heath bounded by the seashore, this gentleman observed one of his pointers behaving in a very curious way, coming to heel in a cowed manner. As this heath was infested with vipers, he thought the animal had shied at one of these reptiles, and, turning to another quarter, was encouraging him to resume his work, when the other ran towards him also, with his tail between his legs, and every now and then looking behind him as in a state of terror. On returning to the spot containing the cause of this alarm, a gruff, black-looking fellow rose up from the heather, approached him without uttering a word, and would have interrupted his progress. In face of a gun, however, the fellow made off, and soon after the gentleman perceived what explained the enigma—numbers of small casks, and other articles, indicating it to be a temporary depot of smugglers. On the farther side of this store the gruff fellow now bawled with all his might to a companion of his, who had drunk so freely that he had fallen asleep on his watch. The prostrate contrabander at length rose up, exhibiting a loose, lank figure, with a thin, meagre countenance, nearly covered with yellow hair. "Johnny," said he, wiping his eyes and viewing the gentleman from head to foot, "Johnny, I say you be wrong. This gentleman is a friend, and therefore we must not 'quesson' him, nor touch a hair of his head. All as call themselves 'Johnny,'" added

he, addressing himself to the sportsman, " do know your honour, except this poor fellow, who has lately joined us, after escaping from a coop in Warwickshire. You are almost the only gentleman that frequents this heath, except at cattle driving. Often as you have been seen to hunt the very spot where we had placed our smaller ventures, we never missed anything but once, and we attributed the loss to your having given information. Our people met on the occasion, and a reward was offered for the first who should lay hold of you. One of our own folks, however, was afterwards found to be the thief ; and it was then resolved for your past forbearance you should have a present from the first who should fall in with your honour. Here is a cargo we landed last night, and if you will fix on any one article it shall be conveyed this evening to your lodgings, cost free." After refusing this offer the gentleman returned home, pleased to a degree that he had not given cause of offence to the Johnnies, many of them hardened desperadoes, who at times assembled to the number of eighty or more, and whose connections extended from Dover to the Land's End. One only of the " clan " did he afterwards meet in his sporting rambles, and this man told him that in an engagement on the Hampshire coast with the King's officers several of their party had been taken, others, from their having flown to foreign countries, outlawed — so the Company of the Johnnies had been some time broken up, and become too dispersed ever to band together again.

In its palmy days this clan had particular signals

of their own when they expected vessels containing contraband goods, and were perpetually scouring the country on prowling expeditions. Some of them were so expert at the twitch or switch, as they called poaching, it was wonderful that any game ever escaped them, for keepers, on account of their desperate character, stood in great awe of the gang.

After the dispersal of this band of poachers the game increased in the district they had haunted as if by the operation of magic. In covers where before a hare was scarcely heard of, and the pheasant was the rarest of visitors, both in a few seasons were multiplied to an amazing degree. As a result of the disappearance of the Johnnies, the owner of the property, chiefly on account of the abundance of game on his manors, was in a few years offered nearly as much again for his estates as they were valued at when he took possession of them.

It was said at the time that the speedy increase of game after the disappearance of this band was largely owing to the proximity of the sea, it being an old theory that game increased most rapidly in such districts because salt caused an increase in the number of eggs. Pigeons are certainly particularly fond of salt; and it was formerly thought to be so enticing to them that it (and also a looking-glass) was debarred by an Act of Parliament, under a certain penalty, from being placed in a dovecot.

The old poachers were very expert at netting game, and nets were also used more or less legitimately in the old English rural sport, now probably ex-

tinct, known as "bat-fowling." This was capturing by night all kinds of birds which roost in bushes, shrubs, in hayricks, or under the barn or stable thatch. The best season for bat-fowling was before the grain was cleared from the harvest fields, when sparrows forsook the barns and outhouses about the farms for the wheat-fields, where they congregated in great abundance, and while the season continued fed voraciously on the new grain, until they became plump and fat, and of a most delicious flavour. The time for the exercise of the net and the bat was about an hour after nightfall, when the over-fed and weary birds were fast asleep on the roost, in thick trees, hawthorn bushes, or old ruin of any description, covered with ivy, a kind of shelter the flocks mostly delight to resort to.

The netman, carrying a net secured to two pliant rods with a rod for closing it upon the birds, played the most important part in this sport, assisted by an individual with a lantern on a pole to hold behind the net, and a batman to thrash the ivy or bushes.

The greatest number of birds secured by "bat-fowling" generally belonged to the sparrow tribe, and a favourite dish in consequence was what was called "the autumnal sparrow pudding." The recipe for this was as follows:

Let the birds be well picked, and a parsley-leaf put into each of them; then take a thin rump-steak or veal cutlet, on which place your birds. Having applied the proper seasoning, lay thereon a slice of fresh butter, then let your steak be the envelope, and a good

crust cover all. When the pudding is sufficiently boiled, place it on the table and open a round hole at the top.

The autumn, of course, was the best season for catching the birds, for at the conclusion of the harvest sparrows are in their primest condition.

Roading was another old sport which entailed the use of a net. It was a good deal practised at the period when few people were sufficiently skilful shots to shoot flying, and many a woodcock was caught in what were called *roads.*

A road was a net fixed between two trees in some glade frequented by woodcocks flying from their resting-place during the day to their feeding-place at night. Woodcocks prefer to fly through some avenue, natural or artificial, at twilight, and a particular ten minutes just before dusk used to be called *roading time.*

Women poached as well as men. At the beginning of the last century Margaret Taylor, a damsel just sweet seventeen, who might have sat for a study to Gainsborough or Barker, was fined at Perth one pound and expenses for illegally destroying salmon. Her plan was certainly a novel one: she set two dogs (trained, it would appear, for the purpose) into a fishing dam a little below the spawning bed, while she sat several yards above, in the neck of the little stream which formed the dam, up to her hips, while her apron was stretched out under the water. At a signal the dogs rushed forward into the dam, and drove the fish up the neck of the bourn (the Shilligan),

which had no other alternative than to rush into the extended receptacle of this Highland water-nymph.

Another instance of a young and handsome female, whose name was also Margaret, being seized with a similar propensity, though in another line, occurred a few years later in the same county, at the residence of a nobleman who preserved extensively. One of the fronts of the mansion looked into a very beautiful retired lawn and pleasure-ground garnished with some splendid trees ; and there the lady of the place was particularly fond of seeing the pheasants in numbers, consequently great care was taken to disturb them as little as possible. One winter, when the family was absent, the head keeper, in his rounds, became aware that some of the old tame stagers were missing, and he resolved to say nothing, but watch himself. The following night he ensconced himself in a large spruce tree, where he was perfectly hidden, but whence he commanded most of the lawn, particularly a small cottage *ornée* which was tenanted only by an old gardener and his daughter. At daylight the window of this opened, and Miss Margaret jumped out with her lap full of something which turned out to be corn, and three or four rat-traps. These she put down and baited in two or three places close to where the guardian lay hid. She then sat herself down behind a large tree ; and presently a slight click and a few struggles called her forth to secure the prey. The keeper instantly descended, and, coming softly behind, took her in the act of loosing

a fine cock-pheasant from the trap. Her confusion was unbounded; and, being severely threatened, she admitted that her sweetheart, a suspected poacher, who made himself scarce in consequence, had put her up to it. As her father was an old workman of years' standing, nothing was done to her except being sent out to service.

On the other hand there were women who did good service in assisting to preserve game.

A curious character at Holkham at one time was Polly Fishbourne, keeper of the church lodge. She had large black eyes, red cheeks, and white teeth, her hair was cropped like a man's, and she wore a man's hat. The rest of her attire was feminine. She was irreproachable in character, and, indeed, somewhat of a prude. Polly was the terror of poachers, with whom she had frequent encounters, and would give and take hard knocks, but generally succeeded in capturing her opponents and making them answer for their misdeeds at petty sessions.

A Norfolk game preserver once offered Polly a shilling apiece for a hundred pheasants' eggs. She nodded her head. Soon after she brought Mr. Coke a five-pound note. "There, squire," said she, "is the price of one hundred of your guinea-fowls' eggs." Of course, the squire made Polly keep the five-pound note.

Polly was the daughter of a gamekeeper. She had commenced her career by being kitchen-maid at Holkham, and as such did her duty very well till she heard a shot fired, when down would go the saucepans,

and Polly, jumping over the kitchen table, would be off.

All sorts of warnings against trespass and poaching were to be seen about the countryside—most of them threatening, but a few whimsical. About the quaintest of the latter was the poetical effusion which Richard Wheeler, gamekeeper to a landowner near Faringdon, placed on a board at the entrance to one of his master's preserves :

The game on this estate's preserved,
Take notice all encroachers,
And be it also well observed
Death's poaching here for poachers.

In 1823 some desperate encounters took place in Norfolk between poachers and gamekeepers. Two of the latter, in the service of Lord Bayning, at Honingham, were terribly beaten by a certain gang, all of whom escaped. In the morning were found some pea-makes, which the poachers had used as weapons. They were left on the spot with defiant verses attached. Some of the lines ran as follows :

Come, hear, all ye jovial poachers,
What I am going to write,
'Tis of a small engagement
Happened the other night.
There was twelve then of the poachers
So quickly you shall hear ;
Lord Bayning's watch daren't not come nigh,
But hid themselves for fear.

At the end of a long effusion in the same strain was :

"I hope you will get your forks made stronger; we shall thank you for them again in a week or two."

In this district poachers assembled in such numbers as to defy opposition.

In Norfolk at one time poaching was looked upon by a large section of the people as being quite legitimate.

A gentleman walked into the shop of a large dealer in game in a market town in that county, and having known the man for some time, there was not that reserve on his part that a stranger might have met with. In the course of conversation, it being early in September, and the moon just past "the full," he enquired how the supply of game and the demand for it tallied. "Why, sir," said the man, "at present it comes to hand rather slowly; the gentlemen have not quite done away with the old custom of giving it away, and at present I have received very little through any other channel . . . *there has been so much moonlight lately;* but next week I expect plenty." Keeping this in mind, about ten days afterwards another visit was made, and to the enquiry of how his prophecy had been fulfilled, he replied, "No trouble to serve my customers now, sir; I have more than a hundred birds now in my cellar that came in yesterday, and not a shot in one of them!"

The East Country poachers were very clever. As a matter of fact, for ingenuity in catching the wildest bird or beast, the North American Indian of old days would have had a poor chance with a Norfolk or Suffolk man.

A party of these men would enter a covert with dozens of "ingles," that is, small snares formed of a single fine wire, and stick dozens of them in the tracks where they knew the pheasants would run. Then, facing to the rightabout, the whole band, each armed with a small stick, would retrace their steps gently beating and kicking the underwood, and making a sort of hissing, as if in the act of driving geese. In the month of October, with the breezes that generally prevail, they were in no danger of being overheard at their pastime. The pheasants ran before them, and a large proportion of them were certain to be taken. This plan was also adopted towards the end of the season in taking partridges just before the birds began to pair; but in this instance the ingles were placed in thorn fences and the ground baited with a little barley.

There were in reality two kinds of poachers, the amateur who poached partly for sport and the professional who poached wholly for money. One or two of the latter sort were to be found in every large town or village in the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, and most likely in every other county in England; the appearance of this hero generally vouched for his calling. He was generally a man, as the poet wrote,

> Who in his time had made heroic bustle.
> Who in a row like Tom could lead the van,
> Booze in the ken, or at the spelkin hustle?

He was in the confidence of the head waiters at the large inns, coachmen and guards, and now and then

did a little doubtful business with queer characters. If young, at the beginning of each season he would occasionally go out in person with the party ; if in the sear and yellow leaf of life, he was the receiver and distributor of the labours of his brethren : but in whatever capacity he acted, this professional poacher always had an eye to his pocket.

Many poachers of this sort were not particular as to appropriating other spoils than game if the occasion arose.

A carrier on one of the roads out of Norwich, though a very respectable man, was exceedingly convivial in his habits, and one night, anxious for a lark, bribed some poachers to let him join them on their next partridge-netting expedition ; he stipulated, however, that the party should only visit fields where there would be little likelihood of meeting any keepers, for, as he said, his business might be ruined if there was any trouble.

Accordingly, on a certain night the carrier, according to the instructions he received, put on a dark smock-frock, met the party at an appointed spot, and in a cart proceeded to the hunting-ground of the gang. Unfortunately, the weather was very unpropitious and the birds would not lie, with the result that a good wetting was all the expedition obtained, in consequence of which they eventually determined to abandon their efforts and turned the horse's head towards home. The carrier, who was now thoroughly disillusioned with poaching as a sport, began to rejoice that he had got out of the affair safely, for to

add to his discomfort he had been in a great fright when he had started. He inwardly vowed that his first appearance in the new character of a poacher should also be his last.

When, however, the cart had proceeded a mile or so on its homeward way it suddenly stopped and two of the gang jumped out and ran up a dark lane, the rest silencing the mystified carrier's enquiries by telling him to hold his tongue and not even to whisper.

In about ten minutes the couple returned, bearing something heavy in a sack; the cart then went on at a furious pace, no one speaking a word till they dropped the carrier where they had picked him up early in the evening.

For a long time afterwards the carrier trembled at the recollection of this expedition, for from what he had felt by placing his foot against the sack and from what he learnt from handbills posted in his village and on his own gate-posts, he had no difficulty in divining that the sack had contained nothing else than a particularly fat pig, the property of a neighbouring farmer.

For years the carrier stood in fear of being taken up for felony and transported for life.

Whilst the professional poacher, as has been said, was actuated entirely by greed, the amateur poacher, on the other hand, was a living demonstration that sport is one of the strongest and most natural propensities with which Providence has endued man for the purpose of affording him health and sustenance. To those who study human life only through the

medium of a London atmosphere, it will appear almost impossible that such characters could exist—that poor men could be found, who for the love of sport only, and after a hard day's work, with the gaol and the treadmill staring them in the face, in cold, dark winter's nights would eschew their beds and go on foot miles to assist in taking game, for which they received no further remuneration than the sport, and perhaps half a gallon of ale; nevertheless, such was undoubtedly the case.

Of this type it was truly written that poaching

> Was his delight
> On a shiny night
> In the season of the year.

The old amateur poacher never troubled or enquired to what mart the game he had procured went, nor did he eat it himself. "If I wanted a hare or a pheasant to make a present of," said an old poacher, "I always had it; but as to eating it, I don't think I ever tasted any kind five times in my life": he never looked for any further remuneration for his share of the peril than the "value of a drop o' drink and the fun," and, if the season turned out lucky, "a crown or so" at Christmas.

This type of man never complained of being punished when caught; the risk of the penalty was the price of the article, and this, when called upon for, he cheerfully paid. He was wise enough to see that if all laws respecting the preservation of game were done away with, his trade or amusement would be done away with also.

The timid and discreet are prevented from poaching from a fear of fine or imprisonment, not from want of skill or the dislike of the pursuit of game; and therefore men of the real old poaching spirit rather gloried in the game laws.

The old poachers were generally rough and sturdy men who thought little of physical exertion or even pain. One of this sort, a noted poacher on the manors of Worthen and Brockton, was shooting at a covey of partridges; the gun burst and took off two of the fingers of his left hand. On his return home he was met by a neighbour, who observed his hand bleeding pretty freely, and enquired what was the matter. The other replied, "The gun has burst and blown off two of my fingers; but never mind that, mun, I ha' got the birds."

Though poaching brought many a young man to a bad end, like most other venial crimes that lead step by step to the worst, it had its redeeming qualities. During the Napoleonic wars it sent forth bands of men careless of danger, and from practice (for we all know that courage is partly mechanical) possessed of presence of mind in imminent peril.

In districts where there was much game nearly every village had its poacher, not unusually quite a character, who eked out a living by doing odd jobs.

A man of this sort, who sometimes did carpentering, having secured a job at the house of a rich bishop, well known for his love of good things, told a friend that he was in luck's way, for he felt sure that he would participate in the good cheer which was such

a feature of his Grace's household. His spirits, however, were entirely damped by his colleague, who at once offered to bet that he would neither taste the bishop's beer nor even his bread. "I'll make him find me a dinner for a week," was the carpenter's retort. The next day he went to work, determined to taste some of the good things of the episcopal kitchen.

The part of the edifice he was employed upon was near a low fence, which enclosed a lawn at the back of the bishop's house, and in this lawn he presently saw the owner walking. No time was now to be lost; so gently loosening a pale he slyly drove one of the prelate's pigs, which happened to be feeding near him, into the lawn, and then jumping over the enclosure with his knife open in his hand pursued the animal as fast as he could, hallooing and swearing as loud as his lungs would permit. "Stop! stop!" exclaimed the bishop. "What is the matter? What are you going to do with the pig?" "Oh! curse the pig; I'll kill the pig; he has ruined me and I shall be starved to death; he has ate all my week's meat which I had brought in my bag." Then, pretending to relapse into his former passion, he was again setting off after the pig, exclaiming as before, "Curse the pig; I'll kill the pig." "Don't swear, don't be in a passion," cried his Reverence. "Are you sure the pig has eaten all your meat?" "Oh, yes, indeed he has; I put my jacket and my bag down under the tree, and I turned round and saw the pig, just as he had finished the meat. He has ate it all, and I'll kill the pig," again endeavouring to pass in pursuit of his victim.

"Well, well," cried the prelate, evidently alarmed for his pig, "if you are sure he has eaten all your victuals, I will order my cook to give you your dinner for the week; but don't lay your bag on the ground again, or you must abide by the consequence."

Another poacher, being caught shooting partridges, excused himself to the squire, a violent church and king man, by saying he was learning to shoot at the French should they attempt to land.

"But why," said the squire, "do you shoot at my game? Why do you not stick a mark on a tree and shoot at that?" "That would not answer the purpose," replied the countryman; "you always told me the French will run away, and therefore I must learn to shoot them flying."

An extraordinary instance of the effrontery of poachers was afforded at Wakefield Sessions in 1793, in the autumn of which year nine men were tried. Having been encountered by a gamekeeper on the Duke of Leeds' moor and asked their names the first said, "I am Master of Manchester Workhouse"; the second, "I am Tom Paine"; and so forth till the last, who described himself as "Knock thee Down," and instantly acted up to the name, pressing on the gamekeeper's stomach with his knees, whilst he was punched and ill-treated by the others. Not one of their names could be discovered till "Knock thee Down" was accidentally recognised at Halifax, he being in actual custody on suspicion of seditious practices. Having no defence to make upon his trial, he was found guilty, to the satisfaction of all present, and

adjudged to be imprisoned in the castle of York for one year.

Poachers were occasionally sheep-stealers as well, and the death penalty which followed detection did not prevent a good deal of this from going on.

A curious instance is recorded of a man who perished owing to sheep-stealing, though he was never tried or caught.

In the year 1801, when the quartern loaf was at one shilling and ten-pence halfpenny, and a pound of good flesh could not be bought under eighteen pence, a poor day-labouring man, named William Hathaway, had so great a desire for a bit of good mutton that he determined to take a sheep from a nobleman's park. Having climbed the wall and got hold of a sheep, he bound the animal's legs together and put them over his forehead, as a porter used to put his knot. When, however, he came to the five-bar gate that separated the park from the high road, he attempted to cover it with his fleecy burden. But, alas ! his foot slipping in the descent, poor Hathaway fell, and the feet of the sheep shifting to his throat, he became instantly suspended, the sheep on one side and William on the other, where, no one coming to his relief, together with the struggles of the animal, he was found stone dead in the morning ; and in that state was suffered to remain by the parish till the coroner had held an inquest, when a jury of villagers brought in the following verdict :

" Executed for sheep-stealing by Providence, without the interference of the law."

As a proof of the prevalence of poaching in country districts it may be added that in 1822 there were no less than sixty persons lying in Bury gaol and fifty-four in that at Lewes who had been apprehended for that offence. The lack of employment which prevailed at that time no doubt contributed to produce such a large number.

Many of the old poachers were great characters. Such a one was a Dorsetshire man—Daniel Jenkins, known as Gentleman Jenkins, who as a youth carried all before him at cudgelling, boxing, and wrestling, and became the hero of all the fairs and country wakes which he attended.

Of a highly sporting disposition, Jenkins gratified his love of shooting with profit to himself. He poached quite systematically, selling what he shot, and always going out alone for safety. Cautious to a degree, he carefully concealed what fell to his gun, having it secretly conveyed away and sold to a Bath dealer with whom he had an arrangement. During his eventful career he had only three dogs, the favourite of which was out of a setter bitch by a sheep-dog, gaunt and thin in appearance, the exact resemblance of its father. This animal was very clever, with much point, however, and capable, according to its master's account, of doing everything but speak.

When twenty-six years old Jenkins determined to make a great expedition to some well-stocked covers in the western part of Dorset, famed for an abundance of game, which were preserved with most particular care; and for the execution of his plan, attended by

his faithful follower, and with his gun on his shoulder, he crossed the country, arriving on the scene of action as the day began to dawn. He had just turned into the first cover and commenced a twilight sort of reconnoitring, when two men sprang up, one on either side, and had nearly overpowered him when, recovering his legs, he dealt the stouter of the two such a blow under the ear as felled him to the ground, and made him, to use his own words, " kick and sprawl, as in the last agonies." The other Jenkins instantly seized, and with a thong which he had in his pocket he bound him neck and heels, in spite of his cries for mercy, in order, as he said, that he should witness the effect of the punishment inflicted on his presumptuous companion. After some shaking the natural colour returned to the cheeks of the prostrate keeper, whose eyes had some moments been half closed and fixed as in death. In the intervals of his recovery, and when nature, as it were, seemed to ebb and flow, Jenkins conceived a scheme which in the way of impudent audacity has never been equalled by any poacher. Both these keepers, the one recovered from a temporary trance, yet for some time labouring under considerable weakness, and the other freed conditionally from bondage, did he compel to follow him several hours through their master's covers, pointing out the most special places for game, and carrying for him such quantities as marked the day beyond any precedent in his sporting career. On parting he eased them respectively of their load, advising them to return contented to their master's service and say

nothing of the matter. For some days shame and mutual agreement alike conduced to seal the mouths of the keepers, till meeting at a booth in a country fair, and drinking to excess, certain hints escaped one of them as to some deficiency in the other's courage. Words created words—the whole story, with all its circumstances, and, indeed, with much addition, soon reached the ears of their astonished master.

Before long Jenkins had good reason to know that his poaching exploit had become the talk of the countryside, for, passing through a turnpike gate, he saw on one of the posts, in large capitals, the whole circumstance of the late transaction, which he did not wait to read through. On the top of the paper, however, he noticed a reward of "Fifty Guineas," which the turnpike woman said would be doubled on conviction of the offender. Proceeding somewhat farther, and the day drawing to a close, another of these conspicuous handbills met his eyes, fixed to the trunk of an aged elm by the roadside; and this he proceeded to read at his leisure, when the very landowner on whose property the raid had been committed happened to pass by and enter into conversation with the astonished poacher, telling him he would give five hundred pounds to catch the culprit. With characteristic effrontery Jenkins offered to assist in the search, and received a guinea as preliminary payment for his services. When, however, the gentleman had gone he thought it prudent to leave the district, and going to Dartmouth went away to Newfoundland for two years.

In Newfoundland he worked on a fishery, at times indulging his sporting propensities, which an abundance of game was at hand to gratify. On his return to England, arriving at Teignmouth, he found that the enemy he dreaded had died in a fit, owing to some further poaching, which had thrown him into such a rage as to have induced apoplexy. His heir, a young man of effeminate habits, passed the whole of his time in London, leaving his estates to be poached by any one who liked, a piece of news which filled Jenkins' heart with joy. The latter, after enquiries, also found that he was quite safe from arrest, and so, returning to his native village, he began to renew his sporting excursions with increased ardour; and, probably because his past deeds and tried prowess had intimidated the keepers of the various properties, he poached with more boldness than ever, and though committing havoc and destruction, never after experienced the least interruption. Woodcock shooting was his favourite amusement, from the twofold consideration of the value of the birds and the pleasure they afforded in the pursuit of them; and in truth, never in the annals of sporting did they ever meet with a more formidable enemy. It was a rare thing for him to miss a tolerable shot. Whenever a snowstorm proceeded from the north, or north-west, the south of Dorset and Devon, and particularly the coast part, found him full employment in pursuit of woodcocks; and should the sleety tempest come from any eastern point, instantly he set off to the house of a relation on the north coast of

Devon, whence he seldom returned without ample remuneration for his trouble. Strict economy being a prominent feature in the character of Jenkins, he purchased, chiefly by gains as a shot, a small estate of twenty-five pounds per annum in the neighbourhood of Sidmouth.

After a few years he fell in love with a farmer's daughter, whom he married, but the death of the poor girl within the same year entirely altered the poacher's character. He could not bear to remain on the spot of his lost happiness; he set sail again for Newfoundland.

There, in the deepest solitude, and remote from all society except that of one merchant, at whose store he exchanged his gettings and procured supplies, he resided many years alone, in a cottage covered with inverted squares of turf, so much the humorist, and so original in character, as to render him an interesting object to the sporting part of the community.

A regular Robinson Crusoe in his retreat, the old poacher employed his time in various ingenious contrivances, mostly connected with sport.

One of these, of which he was inordinately proud, was a contrivance for killing the foxes which strayed into his garden.

From an upper window of his cottage a line was stretched to the ground, whilst an enormous duck gun pointed in a similar direction. The line was fastened to a peg stuck in the earth, to which some dead birds were fixed as a bait, so arranged that bells at the top of the peg would jingle when any foxes were attracted to devour the birds. Every night,

when Jenkins went to bed, he cocked the duck gun, immovably fixed pointing at the birds. A string connected the trigger with his bed, which he pulled whenever he was aroused by the jingling of the bells, and then at one shot he often killed two or three black, white, or silver foxes.

His abode was a cottage in a part of the country then known as the "Hunting Ground." Shooting and fishing occupied his time, and he was his own caterer and cook, carpenter, builder, shoemaker, and tobacconist, dependent only on the factory for such articles as it was impossible for him to provide. The "factory," it should be added, was the local name of the depot or store. When strangers came to see him he never failed to point to an old fowling-piece, telling them that a small estate he possessed in England had been gained by it. From this he drew a modest income, which was increased by the furs and skins he sold to the "factory."

Jenkins, it should be added, lived to a very great age in his Newfoundland retreat.

A curious sporting character, whose fate it was to pass most of his life in a town, was John Underwood, who died in 1825. For forty years he was doorkeeper and bill-sticker to the Theatre Royal, Bristol. His qualifications, indeed, entitle him to a niche amongst the departed worthies of his day in the sporting world. He commenced his career as gamekeeper to Mr. Wyndham, of Dunraven Castle; he thence passed into the service of General Rooke, who wanted him to accompany him to Goree, on the

coast of Africa. John, however, understanding from a friend that there were very few trout streams in that neighbourhood, and very little shooting, except now and then with a musket at "black game," excused himself. His master had given him a most handsome letter of credentials, and so he determined to lay by the shot-belt and see the world. With this intent he offered himself to the celebrated Collins, the actor. John had so excellent a memory that he was soon master of every word, and acted as prompter to his master, giving him his cue whenever he made a halt, or bolted out of the course. John could also, when needful, play the fiddle and sing a good song—both valuable acquisitions in the Bohemian life he chose. Later on he again became keeper in the Forest of Dean; and there 125 couple of cocks fell before his single barrel in the course of the season, besides other game—a fine record for the days of muzzle-loaders. After this he came to Bristol; but Bristol is a bad sporting country, and our hero longed to have his finger upon the trigger, and so, for lack of other sport, he used to bring down the swifts upon Brandon Hill, or, when these birds were lacking, would practise upon a flung-up ha'penny, which he seldom failed to mark with the lead. Now and then he won a bag of shot by a bet that he hit a dozen times following. His great secret was to let drive at the standstill moment, when the piece of money, like the cannon-ball of Hudibras and the coffin of Mahomet, was in doubt whether to mount or to descend. But he might have shot swifts and have defaced the King's

coin to eternity, without having any serious claim to sporting immortality, if he had not been a "brother of the angle," and the Izaak Walton of his day. The Bath River, Blagdon, Redhill, and Congresbury all exercised his skill, both with the fly and the ground bait; and many a young fisherman went home with a full bag by attending to his instructions. In fact, he was altogether a clever sportsman; and had not a somewhat "truant disposition" coupled him to a paste-kettle, his name would have long ago figured in the annals of sports, by the side of the first anglers and the first shots in England.

X

SLAUGHTER of game on a large scale is, after all, no new thing, for surprising quantities were killed before the French Revolution in one day, on the domains of some of the French nobility.

Prince Radzivil once showed Augustus Poniatowski a plain perfectly open, and without a covert for a sparrow, and asked him if he wished to have a day's sport hunting there. The King replied that, as he could not see a bit of brushwood, if he hunted, it must be the birds of the air, not the beasts of the field. "As for the want of a forest," rejoined the Prince, "that is my affair, not your Majesty's; only say the word, and here you shall to-morrow have a glorious day's sport." The King, determined to humour the Prince, accepted the invitation. On the following day, as if by enchantment, was seen a forest as fresh as if it had come from the hands of Nature, and stocked with deer, wild boars, and various other game.

To account for this sudden transformation of an open plain into a wood, the reader should know that the whole plan had been previously arranged, with the view of giving the King a high idea of the power of the Prince. Accordingly, for some days previous to the invitation being given, thousands of

the peasantry had been employed in uprooting trees and placing them upon timber wagons; holes had been dug in the plain, and in one night a forest was planted, and the animals carried or driven thither. This extravagant whim cost, of course, a pretty considerable sum of money, but the whole of the expense was probably more than repaid in the estimation of the Prince by the éclat of the freak; and the memory of the Radzivil Hunt has been preserved like that of Chevy Chase in England.

The battle of Wagram, it may not be generally known, so celebrated for the slaughter of men, was also the occasion of an extraordinary slaughter of game. It was, indeed, one of the largest battues ever known. The beaters were four hundred thousand French and Austrian troops who fought on a plain covered with hares. At every ten paces numbers jumped up—the rattle of musketry and the cannonading rendered them wild with terror. Maddened with fear, the poor animals rushed from before the moving wall of Frenchmen, only to find themselves hemmed in by an equally impenetrable barrier of Austrians; then they rushed back to the French. They ran in squadrons between the two armies. At one moment a charge of cavalry, which certainly was no affair of theirs, put them to the rout; they pierced the ranks, passed between the legs of the soldiers, and were either sabred, bayoneted, or taken alive. The day resolved itself into a regular butchery of men and hares! The humorous note was not absent, for one puss killed made men forget a comrade slain!

It was like the pantomime after the tragedy! If every bullet has its billet, how many bullets destined by one army for the other were billeted by an averting Power in the bodies of those poor animals! Never were there so many seen—never were there so many killed! That evening, after the battle, conquerors and conquered alike, all supped off "jugged hare."

The hare is not usually considered a very sagacious animal, but there are exceptions to every rule.

A Mr. Dunning, of Winchley, in Devonshire, who had a pack of harriers, kept a pet hare in his large walled garden for several years, which before capture had given him and his hounds twenty-three runs.

Puss was the admiration of the neighbourhood, owing to her extraordinary history.

When out hunting, Mr. Dunning had frequently found a hare near a deserted cottage, in the herb garden, which always gave the sportsmen a most excellent run, and was lost in a very extraordinary manner in one particular spot. The master, astonished at this, sent a man to watch near the place where the hare always ended her runs; the latter saw her come leisurely up to the spot, where there was a double bank, called in Devonshire a hedge, from whence grew a pollard ash, in which time had made a large hole; the hare looked around, and then leaped from the bank into the hole. The hounds with one follower alone came up, the rest of the sportsmen being thrown out, as this witch of a hare, as they called her, had given them a chase of two hours and a half. The hounds hunted the hare to the

top of the hedge, and then gave up the thing as usual, after which the man captured puss. Added to this extraordinary fact, the hare had but three feet, one of her fore ones having been cut off by some trap.

A Scotch farmer, known for his good breed of greyhounds, had often coursed a hare unsuccessfully. At last her appearance and habits became so well known to him that he was able to distinguish her from others, and knew where to find her when wanted. On a bank sloping gently to the water of Leith, the background rising more precipitously to the Pentland Hills, puss was always to be found at home at certain hours; and whenever the farmer wished to gratify any of his friends by witnessing the speed of his dogs, he had only to proceed to her haunt. She became so accustomed to the sport that it did not seem to annoy her, and she would trot at leisure before the dogs, until hard pressed, when, turning her head to the hill, and putting out her speed, in a short time they were "at fault." This lasted for some time, until the farmer, irritated by the repeated defeat of his best dogs, somewhat cruelly ended the poor hare's career by shooting it, which caused a good deal of regret to many who had come to look upon poor puss as a friend. In all probability the man was actuated in some degree by superstition. The hare has always been supposed to be a witch's favourite metamorphosis; indeed, she was seldom alleged to assume any other shape, and when the chase led past a lone moorland hut, occupied by an old woman, and the dogs lost sight thereabouts, as it was likely

they would, the evidence was generally considered conclusive.

A crooked sixpence was generally put in the charge when any one wished to destroy one of these uncanny hares.

At one time hawking was a favourite sport in England, which sent experts to various parts of Europe, including Holland.

Louis Bonaparte, when King of that country, detained some English falconers about to leave for England, and employed their talents for some time in his own service; he then transferred them to his brother, Napoleon, who used to make them exercise their art for his entertainment at Versailles. On his commencing his ill-fated Russian campaign, having expressed a wish for their company to those inhospitable regions, they obtained leave to depart by representing that theirs was the profession of wings, and not of arms.

A notable supporter of this old-world sport was Lord Berners, who for a time was a worthy representative of that falconry which was once the delight of our princes, and the diversion peculiar to all of gentle blood, some of whom bore the "tercel gentle" for device. Up to comparatively recent years the Hereditary Grand Falconer had to capture a pigeon (latterly a tame one) by means of a hawk, in order to hold his post.

Soon after Lord Berners had become a convert, the style of his hawking establishment achieved a high standard of perfection. His own estate afforded

great facility for this. It contained a noble heronry, and the wild heaths of the neighbourhood seemed spread purposely for those "who lance their falcons in the air." Certain parts of Suffolk were exactly suited to the cry of "*Heron à la vole,*" which in feudal days often rang o'er its fern-bearing wilds. Upon one of these, sheltered by a solitary clump of firs and mountain ash to hide their presence and purpose from the home-wending fisher-bird, might the old lord be discerned seated in a rude one-horse chariot of primeval simplicity, with a small but select band of the lovers of the "flight" around him. Russet-clad men of foreign aspect bore stately birds plumed and hooded upon their fist, the music of whose silver bells was the sole sound breaking the silence of the world of waste. The whole scene resembled one by Snyders.

Lord Berners was also a great supporter of the turf, and few men who have made racing a pursuit ever supported it so long as he. His house at Newmarket was characteristic of him and a most unpretending box, containing much that was useful, but nothing by any means superfluous or ornamental. All that related to the stable, however, was amply provided for in both the last-named respects, though latterly they were maintained in a less careful way. The ground behind it, with its thickset hedgerows offering complete shelter for walking exercise, and the quiet access afforded by its situation to the heath at either side of the town, made this place the ideal of a racing establishment.

Lord Berners did not become more liberal as he grew older, and in 1834 his stud, though in the hands of Doe, a man who thoroughly understood his profession, exhibited a good deal of seediness due to economy. In that year he would have won the Oaks but for a fall, by which his mare lost her life. After this Doe left his master's service for that of Lord Lichfield, and the racehorses were entrusted to the direction of a person who was really little but an ordinary stable-boy. With these odds against them they went to Epsom in 1837, where Phosphorus, with forty to one against him and a queer leg, won the Derby, which was more than the stable had been able to do in the palmy days of the Didlington stud.

Lord Berners was exceedingly eccentric about money matters. On one occasion, being in a county town on one of his racing expeditions, and wanting cash for some immediate purpose, he entered a banking-house and requested money for his cheque upon his London banker, stating who he was. "My lord," answered the official, "there is no need for you to draw upon London; we shall be happy to pay your draft upon ourselves, as we are in account with you for a considerable sum which your lordship lodged with us several years ago to your own credit." This anecdote is by no means out of keeping with the character of a man of close habits.

In his general appearance no man of his class ever exhibited a more supreme contempt of outward show, or was more eminently independent of his tailor. A portrait of the sporting old peer, "in his habit as he

lived," would be as original a sketch as can well be imagined. An ample and venerable white hat was matched by a marvellously capacious frock-coat composed of grass-green baize lined with a substance resembling buff kerseymere; his waistcoat was of the same material as the lining of his coat, and his trousers were of brown stuff. Thus arrayed, it was his habit to stand at the gate of his lodge at the foot of the windmill hill in Newmarket, his customary cigar alight, in attitude and bearing the very picture of one whom the cares and anxieties of this world had touched but lightly. Lord Berners died, when seventy-six, having left no species of sylvan craft untried, and a name honourably connected with all of them. He was in many ways the type of the old-fashioned sportsman with original ideas.

Another, though of a different kind, was Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh, of Up Park, in Sussex, who flourished in the days of the Regency. One of his eccentricities was to cause his hunters to stand for a given time with their forelegs in stable buckets full of cold water. This plan was once adopted at the hunting stables at Goodwood, with extremely unfortunate results.

Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh (whose widow the present writer perfectly remembers, having been taken to see her as a child), though a sorry veterinarian, was a fine horseman. As a result of the adoption of his cold-water system at Goodwood, all the horses subjected to it became unfit to follow hounds. One of the old grooms, speaking of the disastrous ex-

periment to an enquirer, said: "It was all a frolic, sir, of that Sir Harry Featherstonhaugh's; but, Lord love ye, it was something else besides cold water and horses' legs that was running in their heads, in those days at Up Park."

Sir Harry was for some time on intimate terms with the beautiful creature who became Lady Hamilton, and he it was who taught her to ride.

A fox-hunter of eccentric ways was that Duke of Somerset (a Seymour) who was commonly called "the proud Duke." He employed Seymour, the artist, to paint the portraits of his horses, and asked him to stay. One day, at dinner, the Duke filled his glass, and saying with a sneer, "Cousin Seymour, your health," drank it off.

"My lord," said the artist, "I believe I have the honour of being related to your Grace."

The proud peer rose from the table, and ordered his steward to dismiss the presumptuous painter, and send for a humbler brother of the brush.

This was accordingly done; but when the new painter saw the spirited works of his predecessor, he shook his head and retired, saying:

"No man in the world can compete with James Seymour."

The Duke now condescended to recall his discarded cousin.

"My lord," was the answer of Seymour, "I will now prove to the world that I am of your blood—I won't come!"

Upon receiving this laconic reply, the Duke sent his

steward to demand a former loan of one hundred pounds sterling.

Seymour briefly replied that he would write to his Grace; he did so, but directed his letter, "Opposite the trunk-maker's, Charing Cross."

Enraged at this additional insult, the Duke threw the letter into the fire without opening it, and immediately ordered his steward to have him arrested.

But Seymour, struck with an opportunity of evasion, carelessly observed that "it was hasty in his Grace to burn his letter, because it contained a bank-note of one hundred pounds, and therefore they were now quits."

Many sporting artists, like Seymour, were wits in their way. One of them, for instance, drew an excellent likeness of a well-known dashing young man of rank and fortune, driving his *chère amie* in a chaise. The landscape was St. George's Fields, with a distant view of the King's Bench Prison. Under this he wrote, "This is allowed to be a very good portrait, but a shocking bad prospect!"

The aristocracy of the past, though patrons of art, do not appear to have treated even great painters with any particular respect.

Sir Walter Blacket paid Sir Joshua Reynolds two hundred guineas to paint his portrait, which, when finished, was placed amidst the baronet's ancestors in the family mansion at Newcastle. Before, however, it had been there very long the ladies of the house were terrified with a sudden alteration in the visage, and even in the dress of this admired picture. The

tints which gave animation to the countenance, and the colouring of the drapery, disappeared, and left on the canvas only a natural but elegant outline, when nothing less than death was foreboded from this extraordinary phenomenon. Sir Walter being in London, an express was immediately despatched, with whom the baronet returned in perfect health, to the great joy of his friends and his family; he laughed heartily at the incident, but, to revenge himself upon the painter, wrote the following epigram, and in letters of gold inscribed it beneath the picture:

> The art of painting clearly was designed,
> To bring the features of the dead to mind,
> But this damn'd painter has revers'd the plan,
> And made the picture die before the man.

Sport rather than art monopolised the attention of the majority of the upper class.

The existence of many country gentlemen was entirely concentrated upon it, and young squires who were obliged to spend any length of time in London used sometimes to behave in a very queer way. One of these young gentlemen, having been obliged to proceed to town on account of being subpœnaed as a witness in a trial for an assault committed upon one of his gamekeepers, set out for the metropolis in great ill-humour. Thinking, however, that some sport might be attainable near London, he did not fail to take a couple of dogs and his gun. Putting up at an old-fashioned hotel, he spent the most part of the day occupied at the courts, and

became very bored. The law business, his dinner, and his loungings at the theatre being over, he used to come home at about twelve, and, bent upon gratifying his sporting propensities, never failed to blow a coach horn, animate his dogs, fire two or three times out of the window, and halloo in the loudest tones for about two hours before he retired to bed. To his satisfaction, his room was hung with old arras, which, though in tatters, still exhibited the faded remains of a stag-hunt. Before this venerable tapestry he made his dogs bark, encouraging them with hunting cries, which highly delighted the ears of the young Nimrod. This noise, however, for several nights annoyed the inmates of the house, but especially a country attorney, whose bad luck and unlucky star would have it that he should sleep immediately above the turbulent votary of Diana. Vainly he tried by all possible means to restore the welcome silence of the night — he remonstrated with the timid landlord, knocked repeatedly upon the floor with a stick, a chair, anything he had at hand, but to no purpose. The squire could not or would not hear. Deprived of his rest, the lawyer at last determined to put an end, if he could, to the disturbing commotion, and, mustering a bold countenance, went to meet the hunter in full chase. At one o'clock he came down, opened the door, and having, with great difficulty, obtained what could hardly be called silence, gently and politely represented his sad case to the squire, who, without turning from the forest-wrought arras, answered, with a sneer, " I

am fond of hunting, sir, and will not give up my diversion for your sake." Ill-pleased with this short and peremptory decree, the attorney returned to his apartment in dudgeon, and as he could not get a wink of sleep, framed at last an ingenious and effective plan of revenge.

The next day, having done his business earlier than usual, the attorney came to his lodgings, and sending for a bricklayer, expounded his scheme. "My man," said he, "build me directly before this door a wall about a foot and a half broad, and a foot high."

The fellow stared, wondered at the scheme, but soon obeyed, and in a little time the task was performed. Then a water-carrier was sent for. "My lad," said the attorney, "fill me up this room with twenty pails of water, and that within two hours." The water-carrier smiled, nodded, and at about half-past eleven the job was done.

Soon after the hunter came home, roused his dogs, sounded his horn, fired his piece as usual; but "Zounds!" exclaimed he, "am I caught in a shower? What the devil is this?" Indeed, a deluge of water was pouring unmercifully at all points, on himself, on his dogs, on his bed, and on his very light, which was soon put out. Finding himself in the dark, wet to the skin, and enraged at his disappointment, he flew up the stairs, opened the door of the lawyer, and, with the accompaniment of the most horrid imprecations, thundered out, "By all the devils in hell, sirrah, what are you about?" The attorney was in bed, a book in one hand and a fishing-rod in

the other; he turned deliberately to the squire, and said with great composure, "You are fond of hunting, sir, I am fond of fishing." The squire bit his lips in attempting to smile, went back to his room, and hunted no more.

The great popularity of fox-hunting, without doubt, largely contributed to the efficiency of English cavalry leaders, and it was said of two celebrated generals, that they never could have taken the long rides they did, or been the active commanders they were, had they not been natural-bred fox-hunters. This was the case with Lord Lake in India, and with the Duke of Wellington in Spain. With the latter, whenever the army moved its quarters, the hounds were always on the right of the line.

A great fox-hunter was Sir John Hill, of Hawkestone, a veteran of the chase, aptly described as the "Father of Heroes" and the king of sportsmen, who for long years after his death lived in the memory and affections of many.

On the whole, the annals of fox-hunting present much of which Englishmen can be proud, but one unpleasant trait afflicted only too many of its devotees. Unfortunately, fox-hunters were only too often intemperate, and the copious libations in which they indulged shortened the lives of many. Somerville, for instance, the sportsman's own poet, whose *Chase* is full of pure nature and vivid description, died broken in constitution owing to his indulgence in toddy—a mixture of rum and black currant jelly, with a very sparing dash of water—an excellent and healing

beverage after a hard day's exercise when taken moderately, but in Somerville's case an insinuating poison.

The convivial habits so prevalent amongst English sportsmen of a past age, though they promoted jollity and good-fellowship, without doubt often brought a good deal of sorrow in their train. Pleasure of every kind is generally purchased pretty dear, for the gods "give us nothing, but sell us all things," and they put a high price on some of their commodities. The source of pleasure is not infrequently also the source of pain. Nevertheless, it will always find a market. The wisest course is to treat it as a connoisseur does strong wine of rare vintage, and indulge with moderation at congenial intervals, taking care, however, to avoid deferring tasting it till too late, when the progress of years will have impaired its taste.

Old newspapers and letters abound in records of Bacchanalian excess, for which reason it is difficult for the conscientious chronicler to avoid some mention of the drinking habits prevalent in the past, however unpalatable this may be to the present more moderate generation.

When, in a former volume,* the present writer gave some account of the unconventional habits which formerly prevailed amongst English sportsmen, he was in consequence roundly abused for dwelling upon vulgar and unpleasant subjects, and even accused

* *The Merry Past.*

of sanctioning drinking and debauchery. As a matter of fact, no one loathes intemperance more than he, but in order to give an accurate picture of the life of the past, it was absolutely necessary to touch upon the excesses which brought so many fine fellows to ruin and death.

Somerville was a sadly conspicuous instance of this, for as a result of continued intemperance his bright imagination and cheerful mind were obscured and overcome by the indulgence in what became a disastrous vice.

Though Beckford apprehended that "our friend Somerville," as he called him, was no great fox-hunter, there is good reason for thinking that this estimate was wrong, for Warwickshire, in the sporting poet's day, was one of the finest arenas for field sports in the country. Contemporary evidence, whilst unanimous as to Somerville having injured his health and fortune by his attachment to conviviality and sport, testifies that he was thoroughly conversant with all phases of hunting.

Somerville's old huntsman, John Hoitt by name, long survived his master, and having, at the age of seventy-seven, in 1804, expressed a fervent wish once more, for the last time, to hunt a pack of hounds and revive the glories of departed days, received permission from Sir Edward Smith to hunt as near as possible to the ancient house of Edstone, Somerville's old home. The muster was most brilliant, two hundred horse-men and as many foot having assembled. The bells from every neighbouring steeple rang joyfully, whilst

the sun shone forth as if in honour of the weather-beaten huntsman. Everything being ready, Hoitt, dressed in his old green plush coat (rather the worse for wear), black cap, couples suspended to his belt, and Somerville's old whip in his hand, mounted on a rough, but well-made pony, somewhere about fourteen and a half hands high, sounded his horn, and thus addressed the company:

"Gentlemen, I thank you all for thus gratifying my last wish in allowing me once more, before I die, to conduct the hounds myself. I am glad to see so many fine horses out. Gentlemen, look well to your nags, and I doubt not you'll ride them well; but don't ride too near, and pray don't hurry the dogs past the scent. Let them alone to do their work themselves. My little nag is rather rough, to be sure, but his wind is good, and he must not be despised. I'll take care to save the hare, and pick her up in the bargain."

Away now went the cavalcade, commanded by the veteran, with the spirit and judgment of his best day; and in the course of an hour, on a dry bank in a meadow facing the south, where the hounds had been for some time trailing, a hare was found, which, after one view-halloo, was followed by horse and foot the distance of a mile, when a little check took place. At this, Hoitt was regularly up in his stirrups, his hounds had been too much pressed upon. He begged them all to stand still and be as silent "as the grave itself"; and, casting back, he hit the scent to a lane, leaping the hedge to find where she had

left the road. The hounds now went off, and after running two excellent and extensive rings, ran into her in an hour and nine minutes. The old sportsman redeemed his pledge by picking up the hare before any other horseman was up; and on delivering it to Sir Edward Smith, exclaimed, whilst his furrowed countenance beamed with the mingled feelings of gratitude and triumph, " Sir Edward, I thank God I have lived to see this day. Gentlemen, I thank you all for your attention and kindness to me. I shall never hunt again, but I shall now die happy. I never saw a better pack of dogs in my life."

At a dinner, given after the day's hunting, Hoitt was called upon for a toast, and gave, " To the memory of my old master, Somerville; and may you all, gentlemen, enjoy hunting as much as he did, and live to enjoy it as long as I have. Good health to you all, and God bless you for ever!"

Hoitt lived about six years after this, but activity of mind and body had left him, and he sank into a helpless state and died. A simple epitaph was written by the vicar of his parish, the commencement of which was as follows:

> Here Hoitt, all his sport and labour past,
> Joins his loved master, Somervile, at last!
> Together wont the echoing fields to try,
> Together now in silent dust they lie:
> Tenant and Lord, when once we yield our breath,
> Huntsman and Poet, are alike in death.

Whilst public opinion was not hostile to the chase, even in those sporting days, there were certain counties

where fox-hunting was unpopular. A great supporter of the chase, chancing to meet the bailiff of a certain peer owning much land in such a county, asked him how the foxhounds were doing in his part of the world. "Why, sir," replied he, "they han't been down wi' us for this two year, and we hope they 'on't come no more, for they aren't of no use, that cry of dogs, to kill foxes with." "Very extraordinary," said the bailiff; "and pray, why not?" "Why, sir," rejoined this individual, "they found three foxes that day all laid up together, but they could not kill only one on 'em!"

In 1811, at the Rutland Assizes, Sir William Manners had thirty-five actions for trespass against his noble relative, the Duke of Rutland, and the gentlemen of his hunt. Sir William seemed determined to overcome the Fox-hunting Club in his neighbourhood, and, though no sportsman himself, showed great determination in sticking close to their brush!

In the end an arrangement was made, by which the Duke of Rutland compromised the actions for trespass by letting Sir William Manners return his own member for Grantham. This was said to have been the first instance of a sporting member introduced into the house—by hunting.

In a part of Scotland where a pack of foxhounds had just been established, the peasantry, contrary to anticipation, took the keenest interest in the sport—sometimes they were almost too keen. On one occasion, just as the fox came out of cover near a

cottage, the owner was seen standing in the doorway, gun in hand, his wife by his side. Directly she caught sight of Reynard, she sang out, " Shoot, mon, shoot! Gude save us, for why dinna ye ca' him o'er ? What the deel's in the man ?—he's surely dement!" Seizing a broomstick, off she dashed across the plough, but soon had to slacken her pace, and, coming back in a furious mood, she added, " The plague take ye for a firerdless loon, ye wi' a gun in your han', and the lourie just aneath your feet; gin ye war na de'd it yeersel', cad ye na think on the laird, puir gude mon, just wearin' himsel' out, an' keeping all they rampaging hoonds an' men and horses, and braking neck day after day, and a' the gentlemen, an' ye stood like a gowk as ye are—I had a let the tod kent ither, an' I'd had haud a gun."

About this time an extraordinary individual was well known to Scotch sportsmen. This was a man called M'Gilvray, who, though blind—having lost his sight through small-pox at two years of age—was a good rider and a well-known judge of horses. He knew the good properties or defects of a horse by feeling all over his frame, and gave a remarkable proof of acuteness in discovering a fine horse was blind of one eye, a failing never suspected by his purchaser. The gentleman had bought the horse at Edinburgh, and on his way home put up at the inn kept by William M'Gilvray's father. He desired the sightless jockey to go out and examine his recent bargain, extolling the handsome figure, the mettle, and docility of the animal. M'Gilvray returned in

half an hour, saying, "the horse was all that could be wished if he could see with both eyes." "How do you know he does not see?" said the gentleman. "I have passed my hand over and over that side of his head," says he, "and his eyelids never flinch, but on the other side they close instantly." The horse was found to be really blind of one eye, and a blind man was the first to ascertain the imperfection.

A very celebrated Irish sporting character was Owen Carrol, a huntsman who died about a century ago, aged ninety-six, at Duffry Hall, Wexford, the seat of Cæsar Colclough, Esq., in whose family he had been in service for nearly sixty years. Originally a farmer, he was so fond of hunting that he always kept a horse of his own, and hunted with the hounds of Colonel Colclough for many years; but when Mr. Adam Colclough set up a pack of his own, he came and hunted his hounds at first for his amusement; but as he lived at too great a distance to be always regular, Mr. Colclough gave him a farm near him, and he acted in the triple capacity of huntsman, steward, and master of the family. During the rebellion, in 1798, he and his family acted with uncommon fidelity to their employers; as one of his sons, when the owner of Duffry Hall was obliged to fly, came down and remained to protect the house and property; and he never quitted his post. Another of his sons brought off horses and clothes to his master at the risk of his life, when he was informed where to find him; and during that period the old man buried a large quantity of the family plate,

which he afterwards conveyed to a place of safety. Until the last year of his life he regularly went out with the hounds, and his voice retained its clearness and sweetness; he was well known to all sportsmen in that part of Ireland. Mr. Kelly, the judge, about his own age, towards the end of Carrol's life, spent a day at Duffry Hall, to see and hunt with him. At one period the old huntsman's age, with that of his horse, amounted to 106 years, and yet neither could be beaten.

At that time it was a favourite custom in Ireland to attend as many funerals as possible, and old Carrol used to boast that for seventy years he had never missed one within many miles of where he lived.

In connection with the Colclough family, whom Owen Carrol so faithfully served, it may be added that Duffry Hall is now entirely demolished, and the last of that branch of the family which owned it died a railway porter at Liverpool.

An extraordinary instance of the downfall of a county family in one generation was Hurshaw Grevis, who, in 1786, was summoned before a court for a debt of seventeen shillings—security furnished by him for a misdemeanour of his son.

This gentleman's family had produced distinguished men, and some of them had been commanders under Charles I. The Grevises, indeed, had lived at Moseley Hall nearly from the Conquest, and he himself thirty years before had cut a dashing figure in green velvet at the head of his own pack of hounds, which, perhaps, like those of Actæon, devoured him, or rather his fortune.

On his appearance in court his whole apparel could not have been worth more than eighteen pence, and for years past the gun with which he loved to roam over his preserves had been exchanged for a spade, the careless bucks with whom he had caroused for common labourers, and his ancestral halls for a gravel pit, where he was glad to obtain work.

The parish of King's Norton, in which Grevis's property had been, was fatal to the prosperity of county families. Five rich squires had once resided there, but at the end of the eighteenth century it was described as a parish of paupers.

The fields over which the unfortunate Hurshaw Grevis galloped so merrily in the days of his prosperity, and where he was afterwards forced to toil, now form part of a flourishing suburb of Birmingham.

Moseley Hall—burnt down by rioters in 1791, and rebuilt—has become a children's convalescent home, the cost of its conversion into this beneficent institution having been borne by the late Mr. George Cadbury, who also provided an endowment.

Who knows but that some of Hurshaw Grevis's descendants have been restored to health on the very site where their Cavalier ancestors revelled ?

The name of Grevis seems to have disappeared from the district, the only remaining memory of the family being a fine old monumental tomb in King's Norton Church, embellished with many heraldic bearings, including a golden sun of prosperity which appears to have for ever set.

Time, far more effectually than any socialistic nostrums, seems to bring all things to a level. The average duration of a county family is, I believe, not more than, if as much as, three generations.

Families rise, flourish, and then fall. A careful investigation as to the descendants of quite a number of dashing sportsmen who owned a broad expanse of acres and caroused in their own stately halls, even a hundred years ago, would reveal the penalty paid by a later generation for the excessive devotion of its ancestors to the pleasures of those "sporting days and sporting ways," some of which the author has attempted to describe.

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