ERRORS—*continued*

century; and the "Passionate Fisher" is illustrated by a woodcut borrowed from Emperor Maximilian's *Weiskunig* written before Bluff Harry was King! What dire confusion this inappropriate "explaining" must cause in the mind of the average reader it is unnecessary to dwell upon.

Even more open to criticism than are the two volumes on "Hunting" and "Poetry of Sport," so far as our theme is concerned, is a serles of nine articles entitled "Old Sporting Prints" written by the Editor of the latter work and published in a sporting magazine. These really baffle serious criticism by their extraordinary incorrectness. Were it not for the challenge which his co-editor incorporates in his preface where he declares that "*our work in its most trivial details was to be as accurate as care could make it, that if critics thought proper to differ from our conclusions, they were not to be allowed to disprove our asserted facts*," and the stress the writer of the articles lays upon the wide extent of his studies and the supreme importance of accuracy, one would feel more inclined to allow the veil of oblivion to settle down on his contributions to our knowledge of old sport.

The writer professes to give in these articles an account of ancient sport in England illustrating his text with specially selected prints and engravings. About these latter he remarks: "*One of the great difficulties to be found in a work of this kind arises from the fact that* 500 *years ago* (sic) *there was no copyright law and many so-called original etchings are but imperfect copies of pictures*" (p. 517). That he should believe that five hundred years ago the art of etching, or of engraving existed at all first arouses our suspicion concerning his knowledge of art. He lets the reader believe that he has delved into "*MSS. from the ninth, and books from the fifteenth century to the present time. Many of these are in old French, German, Spanish, Italian, not to mention Latin*," and selections from these "*I have before me whilst writing*." The amount of study he has devoted 'to "old MSS." is shown by his copying Strutt's ridiculous mistake already cited by declaring that a drawing made in the eleventh century and representing swine herders driving some domestic pigs to their pasturage, is a picture of boar-hunting in the ninth century. But even the ninth century is not quite old enough for the writer; he makes it (p. 258) a boar-hunting scene *twelve hundred years old!*

The series of nine articles contain something like 118 reproductions of old prints in illustration principally of English sport; and the writer says (p. 98) that "*a few are representations of foreign sport*." Going through them carefully one finds that only 12 of the 118 are by English artists and represent English sport, while 89 are unquestionably by foreign artists or represent foreign sport; about 17 one is doubtful, *i.e.*, whether they are by Englishmen or by foreigners who lived at one time in England, and whether they represent English sport. How extremely misleading his deductions from some of these foreign pictures are when attributed to English sport will be shown by the following. Considerable portions of several of these articles are taken up by quotations from the "Art of Hunting" (supposed to have been published by Turbervile in 1575 or 1576). It has long been known to be a pirated translation of Du Fouilloux's famous "Venerie" that had appeared some fourteen or fifteen years earlier, to the great joy of French veneurs. Nineteen-twentieths of Turbervile's work is simply cribbed from Du Fouilloux (without acknowledging the source), and not only the text but forty-eight of the fifty-three woodcuts illustrating his pages are *facsimiles* of the Frenchman's pictures, the same blocks being probably used. Of these not unimportant facts he appears to be ignorant, for he would otherwise not impress upon us that the great harts and fierce boar were killed by Turbervile in English forests and that the hunting described by the latter was that pursued in Elizabethan days by Englishmen, while in reality the stags and wild boar, the bear and "goats" were slain by Frenchmen in French forests. He quotes "examples from the personal experience" of Turbervile, narrating word for word pages of Du Fouilloux's translated experiences, Turbervile putting the latter's words into his own mouth; and to show to his readers the extent of his discrimination he condescendingly pats good Turbervile on the back and declares "as a rule this writer shows a marked leaning to the side of truth," quite oblivious all the time that he is really quoting and referring to a Frenchman writing about French sport, about which, with the exception of one interpolated sentence of less than two lines—and even this he fails to quote correctly—there is not a word that relates to England (pp. 325–330).

Some flights of this writer's imagination, while attempting to give local colour to ancient sporting scenes, are worthy of the pen that wrote the "Poetry of Sport," but why, in the name of fair Diana, select of all places the Crystal Palace on Easter Monday as the spot where a man is to "endeavour to forget his surroundings and step back into the past"? There "over what is now the new football field we might get glimpses of the Archbishop and his gorgeously arrayed followers with the hounds in full cry" after "a British boar as it dashes by, eager to hide in the thicket."

One would like to know what those Latin books were that this writer has studied; it is certain that one author, called Cæsar, was not among them, or poor old Turbervile would have escaped quite undeserved banter for the alleged confusion in the languages of Brittany and Britain.

In another place he shows a similar disregard of bygone reputations by ascribing to Turbervile the French poem "*Le Blazon du Veneur*." What an outcry he would raise were a French "authority" on the strength of a translation to claim Burns' "My heart's in the Highlands," or were a German "Gelehrte" to declare that "Sponge's Sporting Tour" was written by a countryman of his!

When it comes to dry hard and fast dates this

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writer is altogether unreliable. Passing over such minor inaccuracies as frequently spelling Turbervile's name incorrectly and giving three different dates as the year in which he published his book, or stating that the Book of St. Albans was published in 1468, he often makes mistakes of one or two centuries. On page 260 he reproduces a well-known miniature from Cardinal Grimani's Breviary which he declares was painted about 1350. To declare a picture by Memling's hand, painted in the last decades of the fifteenth century with all the rare finish and excellence of the Renaissance, to have been limned in the days of Giotto's primitive school does not show knowledge of art.

One would also like to know on what grounds he is so positive that two of the hounds tackling the wild boar in this miniature, which has nothing whatever to do with England, are "old English hounds"? If he knew more of ancient sport he would recognise that in laying this claim he was not paying a compliment to his country, for on account of the frequency of hounds being killed by boar, no valuable hounds were used for tackling boar, any large dog with courage and of sufficient strength was good enough to risk in this chase, and England, where wild boar had almost become extinct, was hardly the country where trained boar-hounds could be found in Henry VII.'s days.

At first one is rather surprised that this writer with such a quantity of material as he says is at his disposal, should turn to such an A B C as is Lacroix's *Le Moyen Age* for his information, particularly on English sport, but this surprise soon gives way to one of amusement when one discovers that he has not made use of the original French work, but of the English translation of it. But even with that at his elbow, he continues to make a number of grotesque blunders. Thus, where he speaks of the famous French sporting classic *Gaston Phœbus* and reproduces from Lacroix's English translation five of the famous illuminations which in every case are ascribed by Lacroix to the correct period—the fifteenth century—he puts underneath each of his reproductions: "from an illuminated MS. by Gaston Phœbus, 1359." On one occasion (p. 324) indeed, he speaks of it as an "*illustrated* manuscript 1359, by Gaston *de* Phœbus," "from which work," he proceeds to say, "I have already reproduced some interesting illustrations on stag-hunting"—which is true only in so far as reproductions from line reproductions in a modern work can claim to be taken from the ancient MS. itself. A comparison of our Plates XV., XXII., XXVI., XXXVI. and XXXVIII., which *are* reproductions from the MS. in question, with these Lacroix pictures will show what is meant.

Nobody possessing any antiquarian lore could possibly ascribe to miniatures replete with the typical qualities of French art of the middle of the fifteenth century, a date one hundred years earlier when very much cruder work was turned out. But we are to learn more wonderful things; on page 97 he states that the author of *Gaston Phœbus*, Count Gaston de Foix, lived from 1359 to 1394, so that he evidently desires us to believe that these beautiful illuminations, which rank among the choicest of old art, were painted by a baby of one year! Even if he had been accurate in his dates and ascribed to Count Gaston the correct span of life, *i.e.*, from 1331 to 1391, he would have been still at least half a century to the bad so far as these miniatures are concerned, for they were made at least fifty years after Gaston de Foix's death.

It is curious how frequently modern English writers on our theme make the mistake of believing that miniatures must be coeval with the origin of the MS. which they illustrate, which in fact they rarely are. The author of the recently published Book on the Cross-bow falls into this palpable error, ascribing illuminations from the very same Gaston Phœbus Codex to the fourteenth, instead of to the fifteenth century, evidently having the articles we are now criticising before him. These errors of just a hundred years invite very misleading conclusions to which we shall return presently in another place.

With the peculiarities of the beasts which he describes the writer shows no great familiarity; on page 264 he states that the wild boar sow "keeps the growing family with her until fresh ties compel her to drive her previous charges forth." It is a well-known peculiarity of the wild boar that the young keep with the mother until they are two years old. Again, on page 263 he reproduces a picture of what he calls a sow that sports big tusks, an anomaly he might have been aware of. Regarding weapons of the chase he airs some rather quaint opinions. When speaking of a French engraving he says that "at this date it was customary for both horseman and footman to carry the long pointed spear." Has he ever come across any other than pointed spears in ancient or modern hunting?

To what incorrect deductions inaccurate premises lead, the following will show. Speaking of Turbervile's account of the wild boar, he declares (page 511) that "April and May were the two months considered most suitable for hunting" them. Neither Turbervile or anybody else makes such a preposterous statement; what Turbervile (p. 151, ed. 1611) says is that they are hunted from the middle of September until the beginning of December, when they go to the rut. No author of any time or of any nationality that I know of gives April and May as the months for *hunting* wild boar. Again, on page 19 of his "Poetry of Sport," he says: "We have the authority of William Twici that the fox was classed with the buck, the doe and the roe in Edward II.'s time." Twici makes no such statement; on the contrary, he classes the roe quite separately, for he expressly says (MS. Phillipps 8336, line 185): "*Les chevereaus ne sunt mie enchacez ne aquyllees*" (Sir Henry Dryden's ed. Twici, line 185).

His explanations of the pictures he brings caused a good deal of amusement at the time they appeared. Thus (p. 97) there is a picture of a fox being chased by a couple of hounds and a cat or squirrel climbing a tree. This latter, for no reason that one can see, he