ERRORS—*continued*

declares is "doubtless intended for a *cub*"! Again, in the reproduction (p. 96) of *Gaston Phœbus's* picture of the curée in Lacroix where it is quite correctly described, we see a dead stag lying on his back being "undone" (our Pl. XXXVI.). This he calls "Death of the Hart," just as if the stag were offering himself up to be sacrificed, and laying himself down on his back quite tidily, is meekly awaiting the end by the knife of the youth who has already skinned his front leg! In another instance he reproduces (p. 554) an early woodcut of an elk that has been struck by a harpoon set in a snare, the dart having penetrated the beast's neck. He had evidently never seen a picture of such a trap before, for he explains that the unhappy beast is "tied to a tree"! Of the ancient Northern myths he appears to have never heard, for a picture of one of the well-known old fables of the pigmies fighting the cranes he takes quite seriously, and describes as "dwarfs hunting storks"!

When declaring (p. 226) that Turbervile's cribbed account of stag-hunting is "the most minute and accurate in our own or any language," which it is not by any means, he proceeds to say that during the 14th, 15th, and 16th centuries, hunting *first* began to mean the chasing and killing of an animal chosen from a number of the same kind, and not as heretofore either an enormous butchery, or an attack on the first beast that was found." The contrary was the case. Norman hunting, like the French language, became, as every schoolboy knows, established with us in the eleventh century, and the former never consisted of anything else than this singling out of one animal, which was the chief end of "grand venery" as Frenchmen understood it. General slaughter was at no time a feature of it, as a very slight acquaintance with the earlier literature demonstrates. The "enormous butcheries" occurred *after*, not before, the period he specifies, *i.e.*, they were the result of improved weapons and of the rise of the nobility's power in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, but they never occurred in England, for the simple reason that game was at no time within the given limits sufficiently plentiful (outside of parks) in this country for slaughter on the scale we read of as occurring in Germany. In Scotland occasional Tainchels returned immense bags, but they were infrequent, and that for the same good reason which prevented them occurring south of the borders.

Of the main facts relating to English mediæval hunting his writings betray nescience. Of the fact that Norman hunting and the French language became unfashionable in England at the dawn of the modern age not a word is said; nay, by representing Turbervile's account of French hunting to be that of English sport in Elizabethan days, when the two had already drifted far apart, he conveys a radically wrong impression. Were he acquainted with any of the text-books of old Venery, he would have known that already by the middle of the sixteenth century (1547) we did not *hunt* the stag in the open with hounds, but *coursed deer*, and mostly in parks. In 1603 James I., as one of his first royal acts, begs Henry IV. of France to send him huntsmen to teach the English *par force* (*i.e.*, Norman) hunting[1] which had long gone out of fashion with Englishmen.

In the first of his articles (p. 99) this writer declares that "we find that the huntsmen killed their prey in whatever manner they could." How entirely incorrect this assertion is a perusal of the "Master of Game" will show the reader. This will also demonstrate how unjustified is the doubt he expresses as to whether old sportsmen ever troubled their minds about hounds frequently changing scent when hunting. If there was one thing about which sportsmen in the Middle Ages were particular, it was the staunchness of their hounds. All old writers, English, French, and German, dwell on this at great length, and to deny it shows that one knows nothing of the subject.

If we have shown in the foregoing that this writer's knowledge of old English hunting is hardly of the sort that deserves to be paraded in any standard work, his acquaintance with foreign sport is yet more nebulous, much that he says indeed being the very opposite to facts. Let us go into some of the details. He devotes a long article to the subject of "*Battue hunting*" abroad. On the face of it, such a thing as battue hunting never existed in any country at any time, for there never was any *hunting* in the ordinary sense of the word in connection with battues. Of the fourteen pictures with which he illustrates this nightmare of impossible combinations of various kinds of hunting, only one relates in the remotest degree to battues; six describe stag-hunting *par force*, where of course only one stag was hunted at a time; then there is one each of the *Stöber Jagd*, showing a hare being potted by two concealed sportsmen, of the *Netz Jagd*, for stag and roe deer, of the *Lappen Jagd*, and of the *Brakier Jagd*. The picture (on p. 307) of a stand from which deer are being shot is the only one descriptive of battues proper, as they were conducted on the Continent. His text is yet more vague and inappropriate; he descants upon football, cricket, and racing, makes conjectures about the surprise a modern conservative magistrate would experience, and the feelings of an anti-sport editor, when learning about the severe manner with which estates were preserved in olden days; he tells us of "harbourers" who, as a matter of fact, were never employed at battues; he draws parallels between the pomp displayed by the Lord Mayor of London, and the scene he describes, with long lines of gilded coaches, gold and silver trappings of the horses, the ladies of quality with their "dusky favourites," under which category the nigger boys probably came; we hear about modern bull-fights, and a lot of other equally pertinent matters, and lastly, but not least, we get some poetry which, while it deals with hunting, has no bearing whatever on battues.

It is true that he warns us that this fine bit

[1] Maréchal de Vieilleville, Memoires, ii. chap. 4; Julien, "La Chasse," p. 199; de Noirmont, i. 191; Salnove, p. 29.

ERRORS—*continued*

of word-painting is quite and entirely his own, for at the end he says: "In no work with which I am acquainted, British or foreign, has a full description of this method of so-called hunting been given," and this is about the only passage in his long article against the accuracy of which one has no reason to raise any protest.

If we have to complain of a general and often convenient vagueness in most of this writer's statements, his attempts to be precise, to give definite dates, are disastrous. Thus (p. 298) where he describes the origin and progress through Europe of what he calls the "reaction" in sport which by a love of ease and luxury "degraded the pastime," he states that "so far as it is possible to discover" this reaction set out on its European jaunt in the year 1668, and "it first sprang up in Swabia and Bavaria. It then filtered through France . . . and finally reached the court of Charles II. of England." This is about as incorrect a description of any movement as could be given. It began nearly a century earlier, as a result of the improvement in firearms and the rise in the power of the ruling classes. It took its origin in France and reached its zenith there during the reign of the Grand Monarch, and from France it invaded Germany, where all the countless small potentates tried to ape the splendour of French venery, with its prodigal display and luxury, generally with very disastrous results for the finances of their downtrodden people. It never reached England, for the very good reason that wild game had long ceased to be sufficiently plentiful, and also because Englishmen fortunately ever dissociated outward luxury and display from their field sports.

One more little bone we have to pick with this writer; it is concerning his ideas as to what constitutes "sport." All his writings impress one with the conviction that he does not realise the fundamental principle of it, *i.e.*, that it is a test of courage and skill. What does he, for instance, mean by the following remark (p. 22): "What we should term in the present day most unsportsmanlike methods of limiting the victim's chance were employed . . . spears" (let us hope they were of the pointed kind!) "as well as the more deadly cross-bow being freely used"? To be told by this exponent of modern sport, with all its vastly perfected arms, that to tackle a charging bear or boar of the enormous size to which we know they attained in those days, armed only with a spear, or a sword, or a cumbersome cross-bow, was a most unsportsmanlike proceeding really taxes one's patience, and makes one indignantly resent the cheap sneers at the sportsmanlike qualities of our forefathers in which he and others constantly indulge.

If one has to blame this writer for copying blindly from Strutt's pages, the same reproach has to be addressed to what is usually considered the Englishman's standard authority, viz., the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. There (vol. 12, p. 394, published in 1881) we find Strutt's gross blunder concerning the picture of boar-hunting in the ninth century perpetuated. Likewise the several errors about Twici's MS., and, what is more surprising, such absurd mistakes as *chasse au courre* and *chasse au tir* indicate that the writer of the article "Hunting" knew not even modern French. In other respects, too, one has found this publication by no means free of misleading errors. Thus, when dealing with the house of York (vol. 24, p. 753), the later Kings of that line are represented as descendants from our Edward, second Duke of York, instead of from his brother Richard. Surely such an important mistake, affecting the lineage of the reigning house, might have been discovered in the course of years, and corrected in the new edition.

Turning to other writers, the following are some other instances.

Some years ago an anonymous writer contributed to *Macmillan's Magazine* several delightful articles on the three famous old sporting books with which we have dealt at length in these pages. One of them is Twici's "Art of Hunting." Exceedingly spirited as is his account of the events connected with the sport itself, his historical studies are not quite on a par with his practical experience in the hunting field. He declares: "By a curious caprice of fortune the French work of Twici seems to have perished, and thus England holds, so far as we know, precedence in the foundation of a literature of sport." This is rather an unfortunate sentence, for, as we have heard, the existence of a French MS. of Twici has been known for a long time, and several reprints of it have been published in England and France. From what he says it would appear that he knew only the British Museum translation, and was unaware that Thomas Wright had published it more than half a century ago. He also seems unacquainted with several important dates in the literature of old sport, for he suggests the possibility of Twici having borrowed from "Gaston Phœbus," the latter being a work *commenced* some fifty or sixty years after Twici composed his treatise. He likewise is led astray by some rhymes which precede, in the British Museum MS. translation, Twici's treatise, and mistakingly considers them the prologue of the latter; while as a matter of fact they are of a much later date. He also accuses the author of "Gaston Phœbus" of having been an "incurable rhymester," which is not correct, for of course the verses printed by Verard at the end of "Gaston Phœbus" were written by Gace de la Buigne, and not by Gaston (*see* Bibliography). He also seems to be unfamiliar with the ruling position of the French language and French venery at the courts of our Norman and Plantagenet kings up to the fifteenth century. Though not falling into the same error as others have done concerning Turbervile's cribbed Art of Venerie, he is in error when he says that of Du Fouilloux "we know little beyond what he has vouchsafed to tell us in a short poem." Several Frenchmen have written about the great veneur's life, the notes by M. Le Bosse and M. Pressac being the best. The latter's biography of Du Fouilloux, covering some 35,000 or 40,000 words, is full of details of his career and adventure, and should have at least been scanned by a writer undertaking such a task.