HART—*continued*

and was, according to the ancient French regulations, a beast of the sweet foot, although in the list of beasts of sweet and stinking foot given in the Boke of St. Albans the hart is included in neither category (*see* Appendix : Fewte).

One of the first essentials for a huntsman in the Middle Ages was to learn to know the different *signs* of a stag (according to German venery there were seventy-two signs), so as to be able to "judge well." These signs were those of the *slot, the gait*, the *fraying-post*, the *rack* or *entry*, *i.e.*, the place where the stag entered covert, and the *fumes*. By recognising differences in these signs made by a young stag, a hind, and a warrantable stag, he was enabled to find out where the latter was harbouring, and by the slot and gait he could recognise when the chased stag was approaching his end.

By a large deep and rounded mark left by the claws or toes of a deer he could recognise the old stag, and by the thinner pointed marks that of a hind ; he learnt to distinguish between the gait of the lean stag, who placed his hind-feet almost on the print of his fore-feet, from that of the heavy stag, whose hind-feet would be placed outside the fore-feet. Thus he could tell what deer were in his *quest* (the place in which he was searching for his stag), and be enabled to harbour the heavy warrantable stag of ten or more. During the chase he had to examine the slot to see if his hounds were still hunting the beast they started, and he watched to see if the slot showed that the claws were wider spread than at first and if there were marks of the dew-claws cutting deeply into the earth, for then he would know that the stag was done.

There were other things that the huntsman of old had to learn regarding the stag before he could be considered as more than an apprentice—for instance, how to speak of a hart in terms of venery (p. 78). The terms used were considered of the greatest importance, even to the manner in which the colour of the stag was spoken of, brown, yellow, or dun being the only permissible terms to distinguish the shade of colour. Special terms are given for every kind of head, or antlers, a stag might bear (*see* Appendix : Antlers).

Of the terms used in hunting the stag, we have spoken elsewhere (*see* Appendix : Venery). Many of them are now long obsolete terms. He spoke of the stag's *blenches* and *ruses* when alluding to the tricks of a deer when trying to rid himself of the hounds, of his *doubling* and *rusing to and fro upon himself*, when he retraced his steps, of his *beating up the river*, when he swam up-stream, and of *foiling down*, when he went down-stream, or of *going to soil*, when he stood in water. When the deer lay down he was *quat*, when he stood still in covert he was *stalling*. When he was tired he "*cast his chaule*," *i.e.*, drooped his head, a well-known sign when the deer is done, as was his closed mouth when dead beat.

The hart was *meved* or moved, when he was started from his resting-place ; he was *quested* or hunted for, and *sued* or chased, his resting-place was called his *ligging* or *lair*, his scent of line of flight, his *fues*. He was spoken of as *soule* or *soile* (F. *seule*) if unaccompanied by other deer, and in "*herd with rascal and folly*" if keeping company with lesser deer.

Besides many other quaint terms of venery the following were the designations given to the hart according to his age by :

	M. of G.	Twici, B. of St. Albans, Manwood, Turbervile.	Blome ; Cox's Gentleman's Recreations.
1st yr.	A calf.	A calf.	A hinde-calf or calf.
2nd ,,	A bullock.	A brocket.	A knobler or knobber.
3rd ,,	A brocket.	A spayer, spayard, or spayd.	A brocket or brocke.
4th ,,	A staggart.	A staggard or stag.	A staggard.
5th ,,	A hart of ten.	A hart.	A hart.

Until he was a hart of ten our text tells us he was not considered a chaseable or warrantable deer. By the above one will see that M. of G. is exceptional in calling a deer of the second year a bullock, brocket being the usual term.

In old French literature we occasionally find the word *broches* used for the tines of a deer's antlers, brochet would be the diminutive, *i.e.*, a small tine, and hence perhaps brocket, a young stag bearing small tines. Any stag of ten or over if hunted by the king became a Hart Royal, and if hunted and not taken, but driven out of the forest, a proclamation was made to warn every one that no person should chase or kill the said hart, and he was then a "Hart royal proclaimed" (Man. p. 180).

All stags not chaseable, such as young or lean stags and hinds, were classed as folly or rascal.

A young stag accompanying an old one was called his squire (F. *escuyer*).

Hinds also were called by different names from the first to the third year, but the M. of G. does not give these, nor do any of the earliest works. Manwood, Blome and Cox give the following terms : 1st year, a calf ; 2nd year, a Hearse or brocket's sister ; 3rd year and ever after, a hind. A somewhat similar term was employed in France to denote a young stag between six months and a year old. *Haire*, also spelt *her* (G. de Champgrand Baudrillard), and *Harpaille*, was the term for a herd of young stags and hinds.

Hart's Age.—The fable that a stag can live a hundred years which the M. of G. repeats (p. 20) after G. de F. was not of the latter's invention, but one that had been current for many centuries before their day.

Ancient classical authors ascribed a fabulous age to the stag and it was believed that it outlived thirty-six generations of men (Cheiron and Ausonius, quoted by Keller, p. 92). And although the stag was a "common beast enough" and its habits closely observed by the hunters of the Middle Ages, still the idea that it could live to a miraculous age was clung to. When the huntsman of King Charles v. of France (1364–1380) took in the forest of Senlis a large stag wearing a gilded metal collar on its neck bearing the famous inscription *Hoc me Cæsar donavit*, no one doubted

HART—*continued*

that Julius Cæsar himself had put this collar on some 1400 years previously, and it was quite forgotten that the German Emperors gave themselves the same title as the Cæsars of Rome, and one of the former might have placed this collar on the stag not many years previously (De Noir. ii. p. 152).

And even fourteen hundred years was short of the age attributed to stags by Oppian, who declared that they lived four times as long as a raven, and that that bird could live four hundred years !

Every year the stag was supposed to rejuvenate himself by finding and eating serpents, and then drinking water, and thus purging himself and "renewing his flesh"[1] (p. 10; Pliny, Nat. Hist. viii. ; Roy Modus, fol. lii. ; Keller, p. 88).

"The limit of a deer's life in the wild state is really about twenty to thirty years, though a park stag will not often live more than eighteen years and will begin to deteriorate at the age of thirteen and even twelve years" (Millais, p. 54).

Mr. Millais is quite right in saying that one cannot determine the age of red deer from the antlers, and that the study of the stag's dentition is a safer guide, but I cannot follow him in all he says concerning this detail. To those interested in this question the following table showing the red deer's dentition supplied to me by the well-known authority Professor H. Nitsche, of the Royal School of Forestry at Tharand, in Saxony, will be of use. For the purpose of this table it is assumed that the young deer is born on the first day of June. When born it has only eight incisors in the lower jaw. In the course of the first month four pairs are added, and in the next three months one pair of canines in the upper and three pairs of molars in both the upper and lower jaw. In further explanation of the table the figures given represent pairs, and those that are placed above the line indicate the upper jaw, those below the lower jaw. The Arabic numerals represent the deciduous or milk-teeth and the Roman figures show the permanent ones. The table extends only to the thirty-first month of the deer's age ; beyond that age, according to Prof. Nitsche, no change in the dentition has been definitely ascertained, and the only guide is the extent of wear shown by the teeth.

Medicinal virtues have been attributed to the various parts of the deer's body from very ancient days ; Pliny recommends the eating of venison as a preventive against fever, and Celsus recommends it as being especially nourishing. But it was particularly the antlers which were prized for their usefulness in the chemist's laboratory of classical times, as well as of the Middle Ages.

	Date.	Incisors.	Canines.	Molars.
First year.	June	1 2 3 4		
	July		1	1 2 3
	August	1 2 3 4		1 2 3
	September			
	October			
	November			
	December		1	1 2 3 IV.
	January	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 IV.
	February			
	March			
	April			
	May		1	1 2 3 IV. V.
Second year.	June	1 2 3 4		1 2 3 IV. V.
	July		I.	1 2 3 IV. V.
	August	I. 2 3 4		1 2 3 IV. V.
	September		I.	1 2 3 IV. V.
	October	I. II. 3 4		1 2 3 IV. V.
	November			
	December		I.	1 2 3 IV. V.
	January	I. II. III. 4		1 2 3 IV. V.
	February			
	March		I.	1 2 3 IV. V.
	April	I. II. III. IV.		1 2 3 IV. V.
	May			
Third year.	June		I.	1 2 3 IV. V. VI.
	July	I. II. III. IV.		1 2 3 IV. V. VI.
	August			
	September			
	October			
	November		I.	I. II. III. IV. V. VI.
	December	I. II. III. IV.	I.	I. II. III. IV. V. VI.

Powdered or charred, the antlers were used as tooth-powder, and prescribed by doctors as a cure for dysentery, colic, jaundice, and many other ills (Pliny, Nat. Hist. viii. 119 ; xxviii. 228 ; Celsus, ii. 18 ; Ovid, 59, 60 ; Cassius Felix, c. 32 and c. 72 ; Keller, pp. 88 and 355). The antlers were considered to possess, furthermore, a magic power, and pieces of them were worn as amulets and considered a sure preventive against witchcraft, the evil eye, and similar evils. Hung round the neck of a horse or of cattle, they insured these against illness. By burning hartshorn it was believed that snakes could be driven away. Even the fact of lying on a deer-skin or wearing the tusks of a stag was a protection against snake-bites. The powdered antler was thought to cure heart affections, and the piece of bone or gristle in the shape of a cross which is found in the deer's heart, and which was always carefully preserved by the huntsman when undoing the stag, was also considered good for heart disease and as lessening the pain of women at childbirth. That the Chinese to this day are firm believers in the efficacy of immature deers' antlers as a restorative of the strength of youth in aged persons is a well-known circumstance. A curious instance of this once came under my personal notice when I had a large number of Chinamen working for me in British Columbia. On two or three different occasions I had found in the bush near camp the bodies of Virginian stags from which nothing had been removed but their half-formed antlers. I presently discovered that

[1] Many accounts are given by ancient writers of the enmity that is supposed to exist between stags and snakes. Stags were said to seek out the holes of snakes and to be able with their breath to draw these out of their holes however much they might struggle, and then stamp them to death with their feet (Oppian, Cyn. ii. 252–290 ; Pliny, Nat. Hist. xxviii. 149). This legend undoubtedly originated in an exaggeration of a fact frequently reported to have been observed, namely, of stags having been seen to destroy snakes by stamping upon them, and Kaup (vol. i. p. 149) states that the Virginian stag of North America is a declared foe of the rattlesnake and kills it wherever he can by stamping on it.