OTTER—continued

plenty of sport, for it was by no means every stroke that killed, and they are told if the hunters "misse then shall they runne up or down the streame as they see the Otter bend, until they may at last give him a blow; for if the hounds be good otter hounds and perfectly entred, they will come chaunting and trayling alongst by the rivers side and will beat every tree roote, every Helme, every Osier bedde, and tuft of bulrushes: yea sometimes also they will take the river and beat it like a water spaniell" (Turb. chap. 76; G. de F. p. 235). The end of the chapter states that if the rivers are large a net should be placed at one end held by two men on either bank and leaded at the bottom so as to catch the otter as the hounds drive him up or down stream. This also originated in Roy Modus and has been recopied down to Turbervile. G. de F. ends his chapter with the statement that a good otter-hound will make a good hound for the stag if not entered when too old, especially when the stag takes to water (p. 236).

That the fur of the otter is good and that his grease will make a medicine that will "make fish turn up on their bellies as if they were dead" are the only additions that Turbervile has made besides the mention of a water spaniell quoted above.

We have not been able to ascertain the price otter skins fetched in the early 15th century; that they were much sought after there is no doubt. We find them mentioned among the imports from the Continent in 1401 (Wylie, vol. iv. p. 266, quoting Rogers, i. 415) which would show that there was more demand for them than our streams could supply. In the Pipe Rolls of 10 Henry IV., we find rents being paid in Ireland in Otterskins. At a much later date, i.e., end of 17th century, a full-grown otter was worth "twelve to fifteen shillings, and sometimes more if it be shining black, and of these skins are made excellent muffs" (Blome, p. 100). In the next century the worth seems to have decreased, for Isaak Walton says that the skin was worth ten shillings to make gloves of, and that "the gloves of an otter are the best fortification for your hands that can be thought against wet weather" (Compleat Angler, ed. 1815, p. 130).

There is no mention of what hounds were used for hunting the otter in either Roy Modus, G. de F. or M. of G., or Turbervile, the only hound spoken of being the lime hound which the hunters were to take to find the otter's holt according to Gaston's directions.

In a miniature in one of the MSS. of Roy Modus, attributed to the 14th century, a small nondescript smooth coated dog is on the far side of the stream and a curly coated dog with rounded flap ears on the near side; this latter may be meant as a primitive picture of a water spaniel or basset. The picture reproduced in our Plate XIII. from G. de F. seems to show the ordinary running hound being used by the otter hunters. Gace de la Buigne says that one should not use valuable

dogs, for the water hunting spoils them, but spaniels and dogs of the mastiff or house dog type: Espaignolz pour rogne tondus, Et si y a de mastineaulx. Greyhounds seem to have been kept ready to kill the otter if he ventured on land: Mais le lévrier vint, qui la mort, Luy donna et l'a estranglée.

Lavallée in his "Chasse à courre" tells us that Barbets, bassets and griffons were the dogs chiefly used in this chase in France, the barbet was a poodle-like dog used in the chase of water fowl, bassets were a low standing, rough coated terrier, and griffons were somewhat larger than the other two with rough straight coats, that were used as pointers; they were excellent scenting dogs hunting with the nose low. This combined with their being good water-dogs will have been the reason why they were used for otter. Buffon thinks these dogs to have originated from a cross breed between a water spaniel and a barbet (De Noirmont, vol. ii. p. 386; L. de la Conterie, p. 399; Lavallée, pp. 31 and 172). The same dogs that were used in hunting the fox can be used in this chase, says Leverier de la Conterie (p. 399). Foxhounds as well as Otterhounds and Terriers are employed in England. The beginnings of the ancient race of Otterhounds is lost in the dark ages of history, and we shall never be able to establish if their ancestors were the southern hound, and the rough terrier, or the rough deerhound, or whether the French griffon was at any time related to them, for all old documents merely allude to them as otter dogs or hounds and fail to say what "manner of dog" they were.

In consequence of the M. of G. having nothing on the chase of the otter, we have few terms of venery to record.

Whelps, we find was the term for the young of the otter.

Marches or Marks, for her footprints called now

Marches or Marks, for her footprints called now the Seal.

Spraintes or tredeles for the excrements; modern, spraints or wedging.

According to Turbervile the above terms were the same in his time and we find him speaking of the *Vent* for the spot where the otter comes to the

Couch, Hough, or lodging, is the name for the dwelling of the otter in the 17th cent., modern, holt, couch, kennel, or hover, the latter probably a corruption of hough;

Grease, fat of the Otter;

surface for air;

The otter is cased, viz., the skin is drawn off him;
The otter lodges, goes to his lair (Dryden, p. 21

The season for Otter-hunting was Shrove Tide (about Feb. 22) to midsummer.

PARFET, the perfect. Twici says: Une autre chasce il y ad qe homme appele le parfet. Dunkes covient il qe vous corneez en autre maneree. . . . E isse chescun homme qest en tour vous, que siet de venerie puet conustre en quel point vous estes en vostre dedut par vostre corneer. (Line III.)

From comparing the various places where the

PARFET—continued

word parfait is employed in connection with hunting, it may be concluded that to hunt the "Parfet" was when the hounds were on the line of the right stag, to sound the "Parfet" was to blow the notes that indicated the hounds were hunting the right line. Dryden in his notes to Twici suggests that the chase of the parfet was "in opposition to the chase of the Forloyng," that is, when the pack run well together "jostling in close array." (Twici, p. 43.) But Perfect in the O. F. works seems to us to invariably be used as already said to indicate that the hounds have not taken the change, but are staunch to the right scent. Jacques de Brézé says the stag he is hunting, joins two great stags, but although some of the hounds ran silent for awhile, they still continued staunch to their line, and here he uses the word "parfait":

"Le cerf qui devant nous fuyoit
A ses futaies de hault boys,
Deux grans cerfs sur piedz apperçoit:
Si se mectoient ensemble eulx troys;
Aucuns chiens se taisoient parfois,
Mais tousjours chassoient le parfaict."

Sen. de Nor. p. 13.

Modus also uses it in this sense: Les chiens qui viennent chaçant après le parfait (fol. xix. v.) And what is most conclusive is the sense given to it in our text: "Should blow to him again the parfyt so that he were in his rightes and ellys nought," i.e., the parfyt should only be blown if the hound was on the right line (p. 98).

PARFYTIERES the name given in M. of G. to the last relay of hounds uncoupled during the chase of the stag. First came the "vaunt chase," and then the "midel," and then the "parfytieres." They may have been so called from being the last hounds to be uncoupled, being those that completed or perfected the pack—i.e., perfecters, or this relay may have derived its name from being composed of some of the staunchest hounds from the kennel, those not likely to follow any but the right line or the parfyt. It was customary in the old days to keep some of the slower and staunchest hounds in the last relay, and to cast them only when a stag nearing its end rused and foiled, and sought by every means to shake off his persecutors (see Appendix: Relays). G. de F. gives the names of the three relays simply as La premiere bataille, la seconde and la tierce (p. 175).

POMELED; spotted, from O. F. pomelé, spotted like an apple. The young of the roedeer are born with a reddish brown coat with white spots, which M. of G. calls pomeled. This term was also frequently used in Ang. N., O. F., and

in the dog latin of our ancient records to describe a fleabitten or dappled horse. "His hakenei that was all pomeli gris" (Strat.). "Pommeli liardus, gris pommele, Uno equo liardo pomele" (Obs. Ward. Acc. 28. Ed. 1.). G. de F. does not use this word in describing the young of the roedeer, but says they are born "eschaquettes" (p. 40).

PRISE; a signal on a hunting-horn, blown at the death of a stag, sometimes called the *mort* or death. It was also blown after the quarry according to M. of G. by the chief personage present. It was only blown when the deer had been slain by strength, or hunted, and not when shot or coursed (see Appendix: Hunting Music). According to G. de F. it was also to be blown at the death of a wild boar (p. 220).

RACHES; ratches or racches, a dog that hunts by scent. A. S. raecc, a hound, and O. F. and Ang. N. brache, brachet, bracon, braquet; Ger. bracken. Ang. Lat., brachetus, bracketus.

Raches were scenting hounds hunting in a pack, later called "running hounds," and then simply hounds. Although raches or brachets are frequently mentioned in the O. F. and Ang. N. metrical romances, and in various early documents we have never found any description of them, but can only gather what they were from the uses they were put to. Mr. Arkwright in his book on the pointer, says that he has come to the same conclusion as Buffon who declared that 'braques,' pointing dogs, and 'chiens courants' or hounds have descended from one and the same stock, and that the title braque (spelt in a dozen different ways in French, bracco in Italian, braco in Spanish, and brach in Eng.) is a word of high antiquity used in olden times for hounds, then for hounds and pointing dogs, and finally in those countries, where it has survived, for pointing dogs alone (pp. 12, 13). De Noirmont considers that the word bracon is of German origin (vol. ii. p. 353), breac signifying in Gallic spotted or fleabitten. Braccos are mentioned in the Lex Frisiorum which belong to the period of Charlemagne, they are written in Latin with only a few Frisian terms of which Braco is thought to be one. We find that the bracco was used by these early German tribes to track criminals, therefore they were scenting hounds. There is plenty of evidence that they were used for stag, wild boar and buck hunting during the Middle Ages. They were coupled together and led by a berner or bracennier or braconnier. Fais encoblar los veltres els bracos (Daurel, p. 337, Bangert, p. 173); "Ses braches et ses loimiers, acouplait pour aler chacier" (Dol. 9188).

We gather that these brachets of the early

¹ Braconnier now means poacher, but this is only the later meaning; originally braconnier was the leader of the bracos or huntsman, and is still used in this sense by Hardouin de F. G. in his Tresor de Venerie:

"Mais là le sage braconnier Doit savoir, com bon costumier, S'il a chien qui se pregne garde Du change et celuy ayme et garde."