LA CHACE DOU SERF—*continued*

Comparing them with those obtaining still in France, we are struck by the similarity, for as the Duke D'Aumale has said when writing of another old French hunting book (*Gace de la Buigne's*): "Everything has changed in France since then, only the language and rules of venery remain immutable."

The unknown master in this treatise tells his pupil that he will instruct him in a pleasure that surpasses all others, and that he who learns diligently does not easily tire: "Qui bien apprent petit se lasse." I will tell thee, continues he, "how to quest and to find, and to run a hart well without change, how thou shouldst have thy horses led to the place where thou thinkest the stag has harboured, and then how to draw with thy limer and to make thine hounds hunt, and to have a care, if thou canst, that all the hounds shall be in at the take."

The hunter is told to hunt wild boar and hare in Lent and in the early spring with the hounds that are to be used for stag-hunting in summer, so that they may be in good condition. "And if thou wilt know the signs of a stag, I will have thee know that by the slot thou canst well know the stag that thou shouldst chase; a large heel and a broad edge to the cleeves or toes should be refused by no one." ("Grosse esponde[1] et large talon; Ce ne doit refuser n'uns hom.") "If the bones (or dew claws) are also broad and large thou wouldst be a fool to leave him." "I pray you what shall I do with the fewmets if I find them? Thou shalt put them within thy horn and stuff grass over them, then go to the covert, and when thou hast found the wood that the stag has broken and turned aside as he walked, then look at the fraying posts so that thou canst inform thyself by these, for from the fraying post shalt thou know a big stag, the largest fraying post and the highest is the right one. ("Car au plus grois froir a froie, et avient plus haut, c'est la vraie.")

After full instructions for the making of his report to the Seigneur on the signs he has found, the master continues: "Then take thy limer and go back to thy blemishes and to the marks thou hast made, and when thou art come near the place where the hart is ambushed, hold your limer, and when he follows the scent soon and well, and your masters will go with you to rouse the stag, give thyself pains that they may also see what thou hast seen. Thus will the sport please them better, and do thou not be miserly of showing them what thou seest, but look well on the ground there where thou seest the stag has been, and discover to them as well as thou canst the slot:

"Et li esponde et li talons; Et li os, pour ce le jugons."

Then holloa and blow a long note on thy horn, so that all and even the hounds will rejoice when they hear it, and the varlets may bring them nearer:

"Et puis Juppe ou corne i lonc mot:
Chacuns en a joie qui l'ot.
Nès li chiens joie en auront.
Et li vallet les amenront
Plus près, pour ce qu'aurras juppé."

Then the stag is unharboured and the *Apelle* for the hounds is sounded:

"Et puis si corneras apel
iij lons mots pour tes chiens avoir;
Et lors vendront à lor pooir
Puis met la main au descoupler
Et lesse les millors aler."

When the hounds pass, says the master, show them thy hunting crop (*estortoire*), slap thy boot with it, and they will hunt the stag the better:

"A l'estortoire[2] dois monstrer
As chiens que ven à passer
Le cerf; plus joli en ceront
Et fiert ta huese, et bat et ront."

Further on the pupil is told to encourage his hounds with a *Ra, Ra, Ra, Ra, Taho, Taho!* And follow the stag "till thou canst no longer follow." Then when he stands at bay "thou shouldst sound four long notes on your horn to call thy hounds and varlets to thee. Then cut the hamstrings of the stag, unless the stag has already frayed and burnished his head, then tell thy varlets to bring bows and arrows and shoot him from afar," for to kill him then with a sword was too dangerous. Then follows a minute description of how to break up the deer, and to give the hounds their *curée;* and then to tie the whole of the severed parts of the deer together and load it on to a horse to have it conveyed home. The Master ends his instructions by saying that if his pupil really wishes for knowledge, he must remember what the Master has said, as to the best of his power he has told him all that is most valuable for his sport:

[1] *Esponde*, the edge of the deer's foot round the hollow sole; this edge is sharpest in the toes or cleeves of young deer. An old stag having worn down his edges, they would be broader than those of a young stag. The word *Esponde* was derived from the Provinicial *Esponda*, border, edge, extremity. Spanish *Sponda* and Latin *Sponda*. It became afterwards to be pronounced *éponge*, and to denote the ends of a horse's shoe or the heels, and later still to denote the substance of which the horse's hoof itself was composed. (Lav. *Chasse à Courre*, p. 238, and Littré.)

[2] *Estortoire*, also called *destortoire*, corresponds with our hunting crop. It was a switch of hazel or other pliable wood about two and a half feet long carried by those who were hunting on horseback to hold in front of their faces when riding in thick wood to turn aside the branches and thus protect the face. It is from this it derived its name, F. *detordre*, to turn aside, to twist. These switches were cut by the hunt servants and presented to the Master and his friends when they arrived at the covert side or at the meet. If they were hunting a stag whose antlers were still in velvet, the bark was left on the *estortoire;* if the stag had frayed and burnished his head, then the bark was peeled off before being presented by the hunt servants. G. de F., in speaking of the outfit of a veneur, says he must have gloves and "l'estortouere" in his hand, and that it is not only useful for the object above mentioned, but also when one is hunting to slap it on one's boot to excite and encourage the hounds; also for one's horse when it shies or stumbles, one can give it to him over his head, likewise to one's varlet or to a hound when necessity arises (G. de F. p. 175).

LA CHACE DOU SERF—*continued*

"Se te veul acointier,
Or retien bien ce que dit t'ai,
Et saches bien que eslit ai
Les paroles à mon pooir
Qui au déduit doivent valoir."

But that nevertheless he is not to omit to make the acquaintance and ask for information of any man he may meet who is able to teach him anything:

"Mès jà pour ce non laisseras
A demander quand tu verras
Home qui te puist ensaignier
De li te lo a acointier."

The poem ends with "Explicit la Chace dou Ser." In the whole of it there is no mention of relays of hounds; whether it is merely an omission, or whether the system of having relays of hounds uncoupled during the run of the stag did not obtain till later, cannot be determined. There are given so many minute details of how to hunt the stag, that one can scarcely doubt that had relays been customary some mention would have been made of them. In all the subsequent works on French hunting from Modus on, we find relays alluded to.

Although the *Chace dou Serf* is little more than a simple primer of venery, as far as stag-hunting is concerned, it compares favourably with our English book, the *Art de Venerie*, by Twici, written half a century or so later. *La Chace* is more explicit, has more details, and gives one altogether a clearer idea of the methods pursued.

The whole of *La Chace* is to be found embodied, with many amplifications it is true, in a work written at the end of the fourteenth century by Hardouin de Fontaines Guerin, *Le Tresor de Venerie* (see p. 232).

TWICI (Twety, Twiti, Twyt, Twich) LE ART DE VENERIE. Written in Norman French by King Edward II.'s huntsman in or before 1328. It is the oldest treatise on hunting in England of which we know.

I. Phillipps MS. 8336 now in Cheltenham in the lib. of the late Sir Thomas Phillipps. Latter half of 14th century, vellum. The third of eighteen treatises, fol. 15 v.–19. French.

This MS. is first mentioned in vol. ii. *Catalogi lib. Manuscript. Angliae et Hiber., E. Bernard, Oxoniae* 1697, when it belonged to the Farmer or Farmor family of Tusmore, Oxfordshire. From the latter's library it passed into the more famous one of R. Heber and at the sale of the latter it bore the number 1470, Sir Thomas Phillipps, of Middle Hill, purchasing it together with a large number of the best MSS. of the Heber collection. By the latter's hand it received the number 8336, by which it is known to-day in the goodly company of the Phillipps MSS. in Cheltenham where I saw it.

Warton in his History of English Poetry, 4th ed. vol. ii. p. 221, mentions this MS. as belonging to a Mr. *Turner* of Tusmore in Oxfordshire (evidently a misprint), and he spells the name of the author Twici, making him the *Grand* Huntsman of Edward II.

II. Cambridge, Caius Coll. Nr. 424, late 14th century, vellum, 8°, Art. 4, fol. 91–95. See S. Smith's Catalogue of Gonville and Caius Coll. Lib. Cambridge, 1849. French. We give a reprint of it further on.

III. British Museum MS. Vesp. B. XII., a "translation" into English of above treatise ascribed in colophon to Twety and Johan Giffarde, these names being spelt in the "Incipit Twety" at the beginning of the text "Maystere Johan Gyfford and William Twety." As Gyfford or Giffarde is not mentioned in the original MS. I. and II., we shall refer to this "translation" by giving it the joint names, and to the original MS. I. and II. as Twici under which name I refer also to the following modern reprints of MS. I. made by the well-known archeologist the late Sir Henry Dryden, Bart., of Canons Ashby.

It has been printed:

1. *Le Art de Venerie, par Guyllame Twici;* printed at Middle Hill Press, January 1840. Sumptibus D. Henrici Dryden, Bart. Four small quarto leaves, containing the text of MS. I. without any notes. Only very few copies of this reprint were made (Sir Henry Dryden telling me only 25 as well as he remembered) and it has become exceedingly scarce. Souhart, p. 474, mentions that in 1883 a dealer had one for sale at 450 frcs.

2. *The Art of Hunting*, by William Twici, with Preface, Translation, Notes, and Illustrations by H. Dryden. Daventry, 1843. Small quarto, fol., the text occupying 80 pages with an Introduction covering nine pages. In the British Museum Catalogue (Twici) it is stated that 75 copies of it were printed, but this is not correct, as I have it from the author himself that only *forty* copies were printed, and he allowed me to copy the list of the subscribers, and what was done with every one of the forty copies. Another mistake respecting this treatise occurs in the B. M. catalogue where it is entered under Dryden, the year 1834 being given as the date of its publication.

Sir Henry Dryden's notes are really the first sound and scholarly remarks on old English hunting we have, his predecessor Strutt's attempt being, as I show in another place, very faulty and totally inadequate. Sir