

impulse of upward motion, the hunter came back to life. Terife snatched the loose handkerchief from his neck, and cast it full in the tiger's face. In an ecstasy of surprise the beast threw up his head and shoulders, and pawed insanely at the cloth. In the catching of a breath Terife aimed the upraised spear at the rounded yellow throat, and drove it home.

Tiger and spear rolled in the dust together, the blood spurting over the spear-shaft and

staining the narrow trail. The king of the Cordilleras was conquered. He died as he had lived, fierce, cruel, savage, with no abatement of his splendid courage.

Going forth in the first flush of the new day, I found Terife there, beside the vanquished jaguar; and as the shadows lifted slowly from the slopes of the ravines he told me the story with graphic detail and circumstance. When he had finished I leaned across the stiffening body of the tiger, and grasped his hand.

William Willard Howard.

SPORTS IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

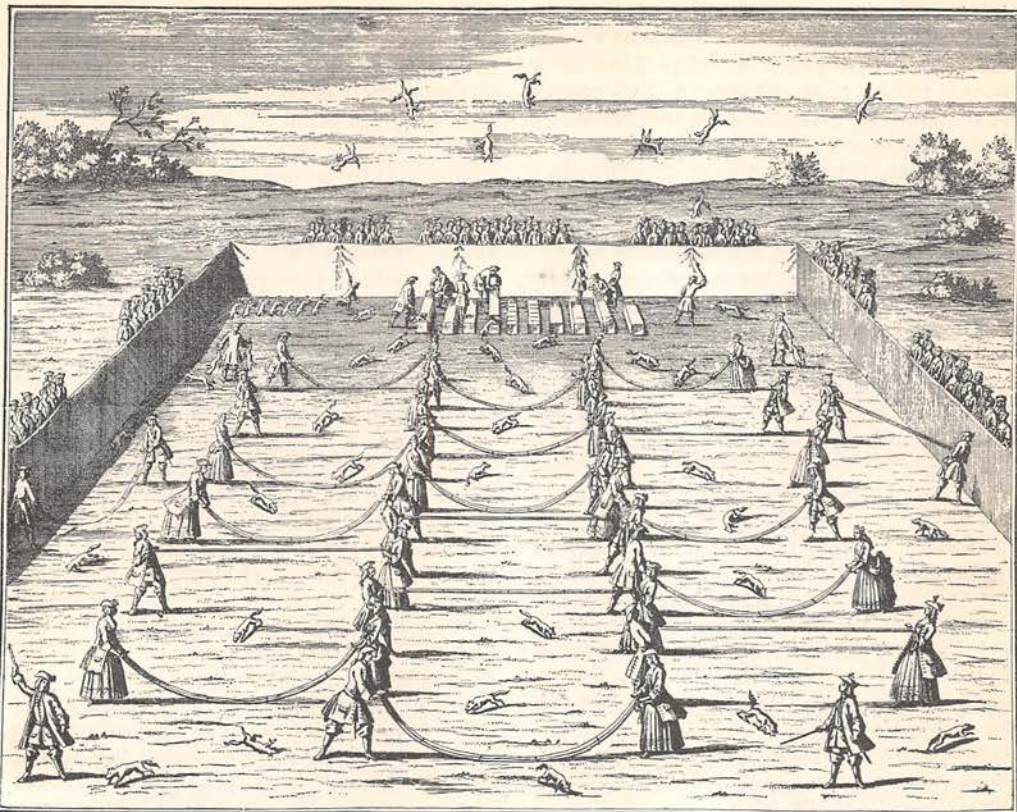


HE belief of the middle ages that none but those devoted to the chase could become great, or reach a green old age, was the verdict of an age in which throughout Europe warfare was the only occupation, and the chase the only pastime, of the ruling classes. Frederick the Great, that iconoclast among royalty of the last century, was the first who dared to raise his voice against this doctrine, by showing in his «Anti-Machiavel» that such famous warriors as Turenne, Marlborough, Prince Eugene, and Gustavus Adolphus not having been Nimrods, the old belief was one unworthy of the enlightened eighteenth century. That century showed in other ways that the noble art of venery had seen its best days, and that the well-being of downtrodden subjects rather than that of the antlered denizens of the forest was becoming the question of the hour.

Those wishing to gain an insight into matters appertaining to the chase at the height of its vogue must, therefore, turn to the preceding century. In England the kings and nobles were far less ardent worshipers of Diana than those of the two other countries of which we propose chiefly to speak—namely, France and Germany. The art of capturing wild animals by means of dogs, without employing arms or other devices to arrest their flight, which was the original meaning of «venery,» was of French parentage, and was unknown to the ancient races, with the exception of the Gauls. Already in the days of the Merovingian kings the stag, the boar, and the buffalo were hunted *à trait de limier* (with hounds in leash), and the sport was introduced into Britain with William the Conqueror. The French terms of the chase were

used in that country for the next two centuries, as we know from William de Twici's «The Art of Venery,» which work he wrote when master of the hunt under Edward II. It was not, however, kept up with the same vigor as it was in the country of its birth; for among the numerous foreigners of distinction who visited England in the following two or three centuries a consensus of opinion appears to have prevailed that stag-hunting was a much-neglected art in Britain, and that the English chiefly excelled in hunting the hare, in falconry, and in the breeding of dogs. When De Vieilleville, the French ambassador at the court of Edward VI, returned to France, he told Henry II that the English knew more about navigating vessels than about hunting the stag. «They took me,» he reported, «to a great park full of fallow-deer and roe-deer, where I mounted a Sardinian horse, richly caparisoned; and in company of forty or fifty lords and gentlemen we hunted and killed fifteen or twenty beasts. It amused me to see the English ride at full tilt in this hunt, the hanger in their hand; and they could not have shouted louder had they been following an enemy after a hard-won victory.» This was altogether different from the French *chasse à courre*, a sport in which the French nobles had attained a mastership no other nationality could rival. It meant hunting the fleet red deer, not the lazy fallow-deer, in its wild state, following it often for two or three days consecutively before the quarry was at last brought to bay.

English hunting literature of the late middle ages is very scanty—much more so than that of France and Germany. The few works that did appear in England were not always



PRINT.
THE SPORT OF «FOX-TOSSING,» A FAVORITE AMUSEMENT AT THE GERMAN COURT 200 YEARS AGO,
PRINCESSES AND THEIR LADIES PARTICIPATING IN IT.

original: thus «The Maystre of Game,» attributed to the Duke of York, is only a reprint of the famous French work on sport by Gaston Phœbus; and «The Noble Art of Venery,» by George Turberville (London, 1575), is a translation of Jacques du Fouilloux's «La Venerie,» even the woodcuts illustrating the original work being used in the English adaptation, whether or not they suited the English *mise en scène*.

With the beginning of the seventeenth century stag-hunting in the French fashion suddenly became popular at the court of James I. Physically unfit as that monarch was for feats of endurance or for hard riding, this sport appealed to the love of pomp and to the vanity of a sovereign who was fully persuaded of a king's divine rights, among which was not least the royal prerogative of hunting where he listeth in the forests of his subjects. James constituted himself a patron of venery, and one of his first acts after his accession to the throne was to beg his ally, Henry IV of France, to send him the most skilful of his huntsmen,

in order that «he might henceforth hunt in the forests of his realm rather than in inclosures and parks, such as was hitherto the fashion, where one hunted the stag only as long as he was in sight.» The Marquis de Vitry, one of the French king's most renowned *veneurs*, was immediately despatched to England; and soon afterward De Beaumont and De Moustier, two of Henry's officers of the hunt, with several *valets de chiens*, or kennel-men, and presently, also, the Sieur de Saint-Ravy, followed the marquis across the Channel. Saint-Ravy became permanently attached to the English court in the character of grand veneur, or master of the hunt, to James's Danish queen. Other sportsmen of renown followed suit: thus Ligniville, the author of a well-known work on venery, was sent from Lorraine to the English court to cooperate with the others in the introduction of the French *chasse à courre* on English soil. And there is no doubt that in consequence of the pronounced favor shown by James for French hunting institutions, a considerable number of French nobles came

over to England to sun themselves in the favor of the vain monarch. To such extremes did James drive his predilection that he imported red deer from France; and we are told that Saint-Ravy annually visited France for this purpose, collecting on a single occasion as many as forty and fifty in the forests of Fontainebleau. These stags, according to Maricourt, only the king hunted.

The sport does not seem to have long retained its French features in their entirety, for Ligniville already complains that the English were introducing the custom of killing the stag with a harquebus when the hounds had at last succeeded in bringing him to bay, while the French continued much longer to consider it a point of honor to despatch the stag with the hanger, a proceeding to which, of course, considerable danger to the unskilful or careless was attached.

Neither Cromwell's wars nor the rapid deforestation of England, which we know began about the middle of the seventeenth century, assisted in the development of English hunting institutions, which throughout that century retained a much more modest, and also less typical, aspect than those of the two other countries.

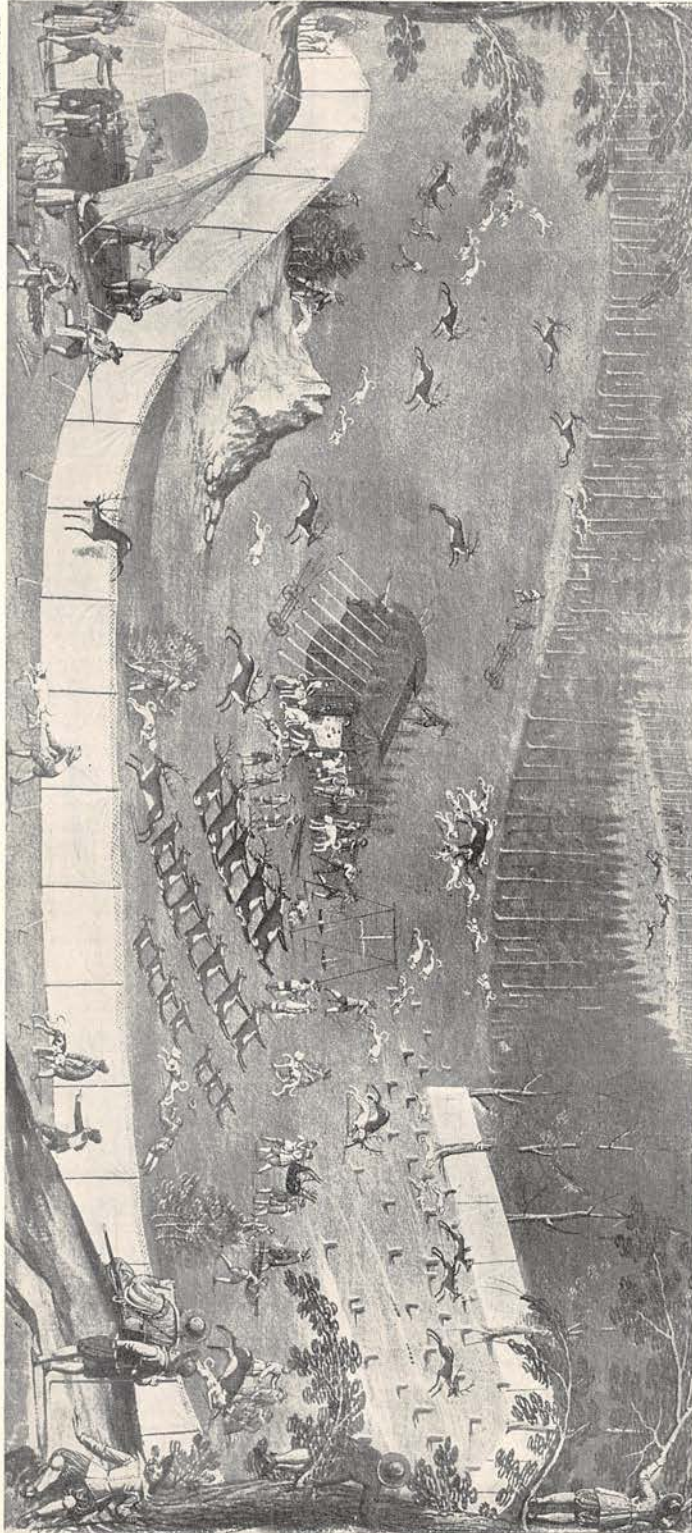
In France, on the other hand, under luxurious Louis XIV stag-hunting was carried on with an unparalleled extravagance and pomp, the chase of the wild boar and of the wolf being next in the king's estimation. Each species of quarry necessitated a separate pack of hounds, and as relays of the latter were used, as well as relays of horses, they were both counted by the hundred. An immense staff of retainers clad in gorgeous uniforms, and hundreds of officials of the chase strutting about in fantastic hunting-dress, made the *chasse royale* the most brilliant pageantry of the kind ever seen. Many of the great court ladies followed the example set in the previous century by Catharine de' Medici, and joined the hunt, riding on men's saddles, the field often consisting of five hundred cavaliers and courtiers.

Wonderfully elaborate open-air fêtes, often the scene of some mummery or *coup de théâtre* celebrating scenes in connection with venery, were frequent occurrences. Thus Louis XIV more than once held stag-hunts at night; and for that purpose the great forest of Chantilly was illuminated with torches, and the hunted stag was forced to pass through avenues lined by several thousand men holding brightly flaring flambeaux in their hands. Several of the princesses of his court were daring riders, and from the letters of one of these royal

ladies, a duchess of Orléans, we learn that in four years she was present at the death of over a thousand stags. Her descriptions of the sport are most enthusiastic. «I have had twenty-six falls, but have hurt myself only once,» she says in one of her letters.

If we turn to Germany, a very different picture offers itself to our gaze. Stag-hunting in the French fashion was quite unknown there until the last decades of the seventeenth century, though game was not the less keenly pursued. Indeed, in the quantity killed the German magnates and potentates of that period were quite without rivals. The game was shot either by stalking it or by «driving,» on which latter occasions thousands of peasants had to turn out to act as beaters, and the most elaborate arrangements were made in the shape of temporary inclosures consisting of stout canvas stretched ten or twelve feet high, by which great tracts of forest were surrounded. A study of the records of the chase in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, which have accumulated in the principal archives and libraries of the Continent, brings to light a mass of interesting material illustrating not only the sport of those days, but, alas! also the decline wrought during the last hundred years in the quantity and size of the big game of Europe.

One of the most interesting records of this kind is a manuscript folio volume of 370 pages, gorgeously bound in green velvet, with solid gold clasps, which is the list of game hunted and shot by John George I, Elector of Saxony, the foremost sportsman of his century. It is supposed to be mostly in his own handwriting, and forms one of the treasures of the royal library at Dresden. From this punctiliously kept shooting-diary we learn that between July 11, 1611, and the day of his death, January 12, 1656, this Nimrod and his suite bagged 110,960 head of game, made up of the unprecedented total of 47,239 red deer, 31,745 wild boars, 102 bears, 818 wolves, etc., the 29 beaver enumerated among the smaller animals making up the balance being, perhaps, the most interesting, as showing the prevalence of an animal at present almost extinct in Europe. The great weight of some of the stags, boars, and bears brought to book by the elector is as surprising as the enormous totals we have given. To-day red-deer stags of 300 pounds avoirdupois are, with the exception, perhaps, of Hungarian red deer, considered unusually fine animals; indeed, Scotch deer of that weight (clean) are to-day next to unknown. How much, therefore, must the race have



FROM AN ANCIENT ILLUMINATION.

A «DEER DRIVE» OF THE DUKE OF COBURG.

degenerated when we read of stags killed by the above sportsman scaling over 850 pounds avoirdupois, and hear that he shot 4139 stags which weighed over 450 pounds! The antlers of these animals were in proportion to their bulk. Every sportsman knows that to-day red-deer antlers bearing more than fourteen tines are exceedingly rare. How one wishes one's self back in the elector's days, when one hears of great heads with thirty tines, and peruses his summary, according to which he bagged 39 stags of twenty points and upward, and 1735 deer of fourteen and upward!

The wild boars were also gigantic animals compared with their descendants of to-day, when a tusker weighing 250 pounds is considered a very big fellow. Of the 31,745 head bagged by the elector, 1583 scaled over 300 pounds, and the heaviest of all weighed close upon 650 pounds. The bears were also, for the European species, enormous, reminding one of the grizzly. The largest was «baited,» with two other bears, on the great square at Dresden in 1630, on the occasion of a royal marriage. He weighed 850 pounds. Of the 818 wolves, 41 must have been tremendous beasts, for they scaled over 120 pounds.

What these «baitings» were like is shown by the finely illuminated frontispiece of the volume of which we are speaking. It describes a very celebrated occasion of this kind, namely, the *Jagen* held on August 7, 1617, on the Dresden square, in honor of the Emperor Matthias's visit to that town. On that occasion—one of the great days of Dresden, a town which was then a little Paris as regards pleasure and art—there were baited and hunted, within the high palisades erected in the largest square, fifteen deer, ten wild boars, eight bears, and numerous smaller animals, like badgers, foxes, etc. Twenty-two years before, a similar «baiting» was held in the same town, and on that occasion two lions, two tigers, one panther, four bears, two wolves, four stags, and six wild boars tore one another to pieces, or were similarly served by packs of fierce hounds, amid the fanfares of three separate choruses of hunting-bugles and horns, and the cries of a vast multitude.

As an instance of the quantity of game killed in the «drives,» may be mentioned one held in the year 1613, where alone 672 stags were shot. At this drive over three thousand peasants were employed for three weeks, and they had to furnish four hundred vehicles—all, of course, without receiving any recompense, and to the serious injury of their farms, particularly then, when they had to

render this most detested «service of the chase» during harvest-time. The lot of the peasantry must have been a very hard one in those feudal hunting-days. Their crops were entirely at the mercy of the deer and boar, and they were not allowed to fence their fields or to employ other means of keeping the game away. During the rutting-time of the deer, when stags will often attack persons, they did not even dare to defend themselves, lest the animal might receive injury. A burgomaster of a Hessian town was once attacked by a vicious stag in the outskirts of the town. The infuriated animal had already knocked down the worthy mayor, and would have promptly gored him to death had not an onlooker with a stout cudgel come to his assistance. The stag, however, was not to be intimidated, and with one thrust of his great antlers killed the man. At this juncture a town councilor took courage, and seeing the impending fate of the mayor, approached the stag, and killed him with a firelock. Unfortunately for him, the animal carried a fine head; so when the landgrave heard of it, the councilor was cast into prison and was, besides, sentenced to a heavy fine. Poaching in those days was a capital offense, and often the most cruel punishments were inflicted even for a first offense, such as branding on the cheek, loss of one eye, or of the right hand. Not all the temporal lords were, however, as cruel as certain ecclesiasts of high degree. Thus it is known that one archbishop of Salzburg caused a peasant who had killed a stag that was in the habit of visiting his corn-field to be sewn up in the skin of the hart, and torn to pieces by the pack rendered savage by being left foodless for twenty-four hours. There is also reason to fear that more than one wretched poacher shared Mazeppa's fate by being chained to a live stag which was then hunted by the hounds.

The stag was altogether the most highly prized animal of the chase; and his antlers, if they were of great size or showed any abnormality in their growth, were the most treasured trophies of the hunt. When potentates made one another presents, these usually consisted of some famous deer-head; for these Nimrods not only vied with one another in the quantity of game they laid low, but also regarding their collections of antlers, upon which enormous sums were spent. For the famous sixty-six-tined head killed in 1696 by the Elector of Brandenburg, and which is still preserved at the castle of Moritzburg, near Dresden, it is said that the Elector of Saxony gave a company of the tallest grena-

diers in his army. For an abnormal thirty-six-point head one of the dukes of Würtemberg gave a whole village, with its inhabitants, land, houses, and church, including even the parson's prebend, as the chronicler does not forget to mention. A duke of Pomerania offered for a celebrated thirty-two-tined head which he was anxious to have for his collection a sum which would correspond to \$25,000 of our present money, and, what is more, his bid was refused. Upon the spots

The great banqueting-hall of the castle of Moritzburg is one of the sights with which no doubt many a traveled reader has been charmed. It is a chamber of noble proportions—sixty-six feet long by thirty-four feet wide and thirty-eight feet high. On its otherwise unadorned white walls hang seventy-one pairs of magnificent antlers, which one may describe as the most famous of their kind in the world. Not a single one carries less than twenty-four tines, or is less than two hundred



PRINT.

BANQUETING-HALL IN CASTLE MORITZBURG, CONTAINING THE FINEST COLLECTION OF STAG ANTLERS EXTANT.

where great stags were killed monuments were erected; and in more than one instance monasteries and cloisters were founded in such localities, as well as in those where some great Nimrod had escaped mortal danger.

Of the famous collections of antlers formed in the seventeenth century only two or three have escaped the general fate of conflagrations, sieges, and pillage. One of them is in Moritzburg, the King of Saxony's historical hunting-castle, near Dresden; while in the celebrated gun-gallery in Dresden itself are to be seen, in an unrivaled show, the wonderfully inlaid arms used by the elector of whose doings the interesting shooting-list from which we have largely quoted gives such accurate account.

years old, while some are probably double that age.

Like the ladies of the French court, many of the German ladies of high degree were passionately addicted to sport, the only difference being that instead of following the deer on horseback, they used the firelock, a cumbersome, unwieldy weapon. Several of the great heads looking down from the lofty walls of Moritzburg were brought down by fair hands. Thus one magnificent head is of a stag shot by Duchess Magdalen of Saxony in 1656, during the rutting-time. The animal weighed close upon six hundredweight; while a yet larger stag of twenty-six points, scaling 850 pounds, was killed by Princess Frederika of Saxe-Eisenach in 1693. This was, so far

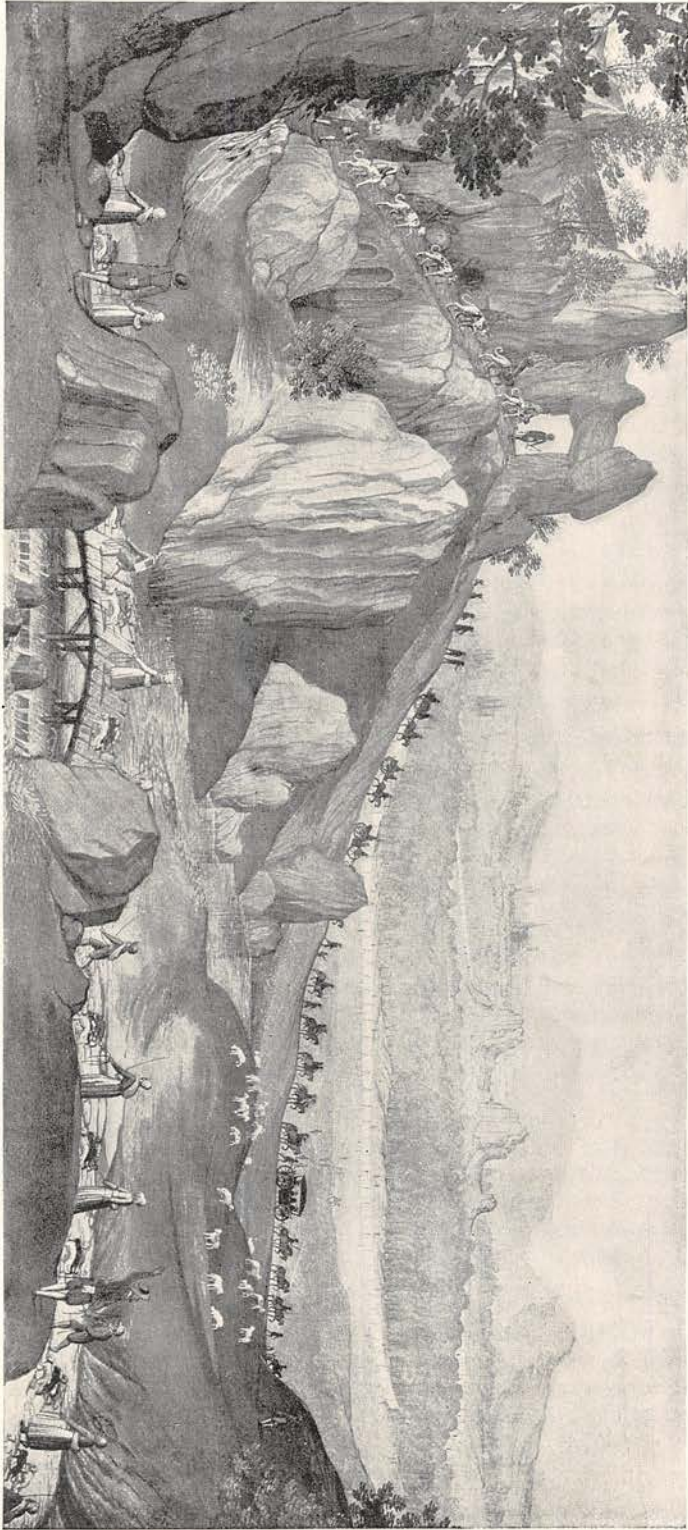
as the writer's researches show, by far the heaviest stag ever brought to grass by lady's hand.

Maria of the Netherlands was a royal lady who not only could track her stag and follow him with the hound in leash in the most scientific manner, but, after shooting him, could gralloch her victim, a somewhat unusual performance for a lady's hand. After cutting open the deer and removing the intestines and stomach, the carcass had to be prepared for the ceremony of the *curée*. This was an ancient custom by which the assembled sportsmen, officials, keepers, and underlings of all degree, standing in a great circle about the slain one, paid homage to the dead monarch of the forest. Amid loud fanfares of the hunting-horns, and the ancient hunting-cries, some of which date back to heathen times, the master of the hunt approached his royal master or mistress, as the case might be, and bending on one knee, presented the right fore leg of the stag, cut off at the knee-joint. This ceremony was usually performed only over the body of the largest deer shot that day, or over the quarry bagged by an important guest. A custom which was invariably observed, and is still followed on all formal occasions at the courts of German princes, is the *Strecke*, or the parading of the game, as it might be translated. In this display of the day's bag the various animals were laid in a long line, strictly according to the rank of the sportsmen who killed them, those obtained by the highest in rank of course coming first. After the hunt was over, the assembled company, headed by the host, passed along the line, inspecting it, some minor ceremonies, to which we have no space to refer, being observed.

Wild boars, it may be mentioned, were still generally killed with the spear, a proceeding which was full of danger, and required great presence of mind and great physical strength. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this was a favorite sport, and strong and burly must have been the race that indulged in it. Of the «last knight,» as Emperor Maximilian I is often called, it is told that in the days of his lusty youth, armed only with his hanger, he used to creep on his hands and knees into the lair of the fiercest boar, and slay the animal. Of Duke Ulrich of Würtemberg it is told that once, single-handed, he killed a monster wild boar which measured seven feet three inches in length, and was five feet two inches high at the shoulder!

The hounds employed to track and bay

wild boar were of the largest size; they were called English *dogges*, and had presumably a good deal of the mastiff about them, and high prices were paid for them. These hounds were furnished with regular armor made of the stoutest leather, thickly wadded, and underlaid with whalebone; but not even this always afforded protection against the formidable tusks of a great boar. Armored hounds were still used in the beginning of this century: thus at a court chase in Würtemberg in 1812, out of a pack numbering 250 hounds, twenty, which were used only when large boars had to be bayed, were furnished with the old-fashioned armor. At the period when «closed hunts»—that is, when great masses of game were collected in inclosures—were all the fashion, it became necessary to catch these beasts in the forest, and then to transport them in covered cars to the inclosure. This often occupied hundreds of men for weeks, and the catching was accomplished by driving the boars into pits filled with water, and catching them about the neck with long tongs-shaped instruments as they tried to land. To drive the animals on such occasions only ordinary hounds were used. The quantity of game collected for a great court chase was often enormous. At one held by Duke Charles of Würtemberg, in the last century, there were collected 6000 head of red and roe deer and 2600 wild boars. The damage done by wild boars to crops was exceedingly great, and the complaints of the peasantry of the last-mentioned country, and of the duchy of Hesse, where this species of game stood for centuries in the special regard of the rulers, betray a hardly credible condition of things. When Duke Charles Alexander, of the former duchy, died, in the first decade of the last century, the outcry about these damages was so serious, and open rebellion so imminent, that the new duke ordered that the game should be reduced. The reduction consisted in shooting 19,567 head of red deer and wild boars; but the complaints were not stopped by it, as there is ample proof in contemporary documents, where indignant surprise is expressed at the audacity of «those wretched knaves of peasants» for daring to interfere with the «good pleasure of our august sovereign»! Another hardship which pressed cruelly on the peasantry of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was the «service of the chase,» to which brief reference has already been made. It is easy to fancy to one's self with what intense hatred all the lower classes looked upon game and upon the degenerated



FROM AN ANCIENT ILLUMINATION.

RETURNING FROM THE CHASE.

aspect of what these splendor-loving potentates chose to call « noble sport.»

The dusty shelves of musty old archives, where the writer, after doing battle with the accumulated cobwebs of several generations, has spent many a busy day, have revealed dozens of quaint instances of devotion to the chase shown by grizzly Nimrods of olden days—instances which might be termed a regular worship of the cult of which Diana was the prescribed goddess. Thus of one hard-drinking landgrave, of whom it was said that the Evil One had stood godfather to him, and who would never let a « black coat, » or priest, approach him, we read that whenever he passed certain great heads killed by himself and hung in the corridors of his castle, he would doff his hat, and insist that all the gentlemen of his suite should pay similar homage to « God's noblest creation. » Another, Duke William the Red of Würtemberg, would order great triumphal arches, which were adorned with figures representing Diana and her attendant nymphs, to be erected in his forest, and by means of his extraordinarily efficient *équipage de chasse* the deer would be forced to run under these arches, where rosaries made of large wooden beads, and of the orthodox number, were thrown over their antlers. « Thus prepared for death, » as the account from which this is quoted says, « the stags would rush to meet it at the hand of the royal hunter. »

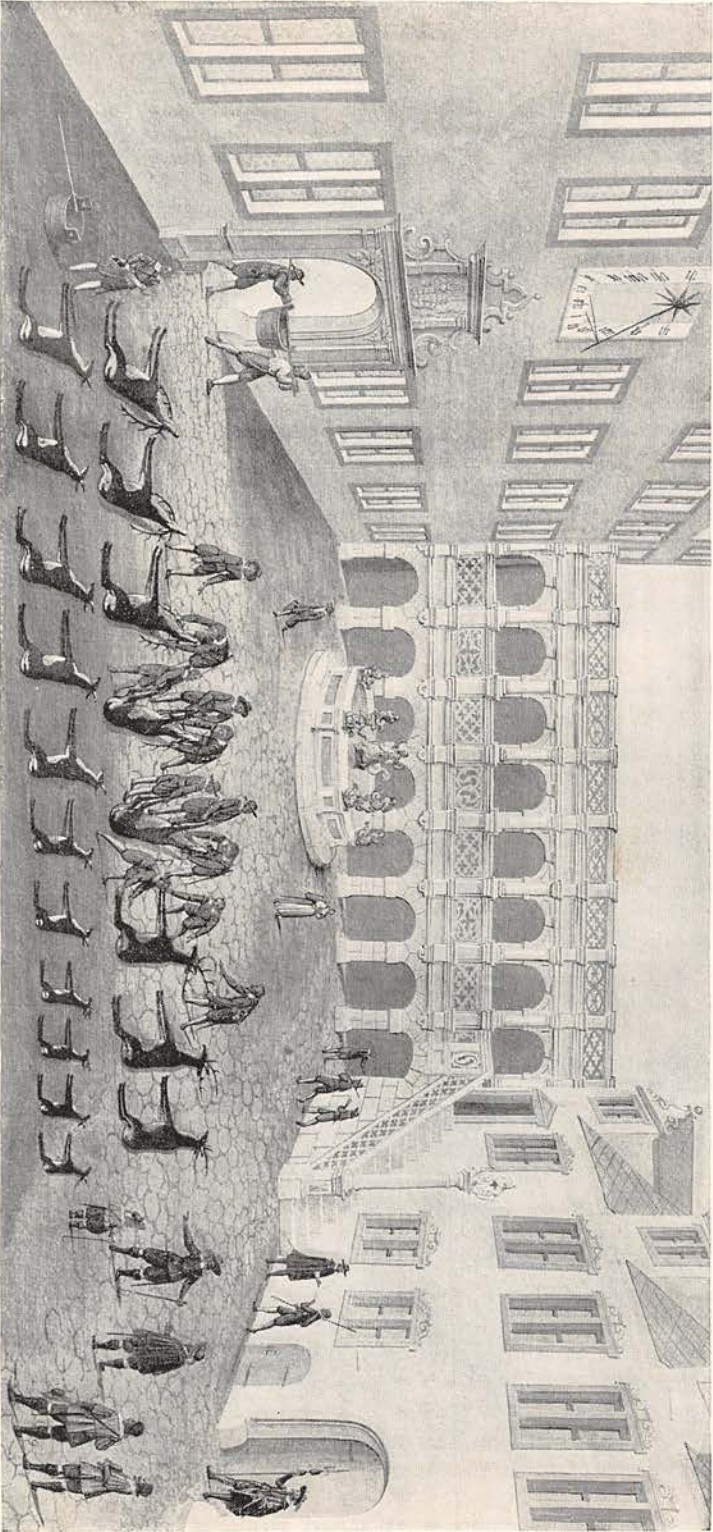
With men of this stamp the chase took precedence of everything else, and the most urgent affairs of state were neglected, or had to bide the time the lord could spare later. So when the deputation of great Bohemian nobles came to offer the crown of their country to Elector John George I of Saxony, the mighty Nimrod of whose prowess the enormous bags we mentioned spoke so eloquently, he sent word that if the deputation wished to see him they would have to come to his shooting-lodge; for during « the rutting-time of stags he could not well be expected to absent himself from that locality. » His answer to their offer of a king's crown was equally that of a sportsman in whose eyes the chase was the only consideration in life. He refused the offer, so one is told, because the Bohemian stags were not as large or as plentiful as his Saxon deer.

Bears were no longer very frequent in Germany in the seventeenth century. The 102 representatives which figure in the shooting-list of the Elector John George I in forty-five years were, we may well suppose, obtained only by dint of the greatest exertion and con-

stant watchfulness on the part of an army of huntsmen. Bears' paws, we find from numerous records, were frequently sent as presents from one court to another, as they were considered the greatest delicacy. The usual manner in which bruin was hunted was to track him with hounds and have the forest surrounded by beaters. When the hounds had bayed the beast, men like Maximilian, or other fearless sportsmen, would approach their quarry in the same way that they would a wild boar—namely, with the spear; but this was not every royal hunter's business, and in most cases we may take it for granted that the firelock ended bruin's days. The old custom according to which the head of the bear and the right fore paw belonged to the duke, while the left paw was the perquisite of the priest who accompanied the hunting-party to administer the last sacrament to those injured in the fray, betokens that it was considered a fairly riskful sport. Of accidents there are, of course, numerous records; for firearms were not only clumsy, but much less effective than modern arms of precision. One of the worst accidents in bear-hunts of which record has come down to us occurred in a hunt of Henry IV of France, when a wounded bear killed seven beaters who could not get out of his way.

Bear-baiting, as has already been shown, was a very favorite amusement; the bears were often matched against other beasts, among them the lion, the rare aurochs, and wolves. When fights with the latter were arranged, a large, heavy tub filled with water was put in the middle of the arena, and into this receptacle the worried bear promptly got, and from it he defended himself by a free use of his powerful paws, affording thereby much amusement to the audience. It was not always easy to induce the bear, if he remained victor, to return to his cage. One of the means employed to bring this about was to dress up a man in the guise of a dragon, with the flames of torches issuing from mouth and eyes, and thus frighten the bear, and so induce him to retreat in the desired direction.

All great lords had bears in walled-in spaces in their castles, and in more than one this custom is kept up to this day. For instance, at the *Festung* at Coburg a family of bears occupy the four-hundred-year-old *Zwinger*, or bear-garden, with its ancient grilles and trap-doors. Predecessors of the present occupants were two hundred years ago the heroes of an amusing incident which illustrated woman's courage in unexpected



FROM AN ANCIENT ILLUMINATION.

THE PARADE OF GAME.



Dem Mannlein in der Ecke dort wolln wir das Pörr
 mit Beulen die hoch furchen thier wir uns nicht lassen
 Schutzhelb hat die Scham So wie hier die Krage hattern moß
 kein noch unruhiger Dämoner wie schmerdel
 der Condit mit auch die Kirschen aus
 lassen

THE COURAGEOUS DUCHESS OF COBURG PACIFYING THE BEARS.

PAINTING BY SCHNEIDER.

emergencies. The bears had somehow got loose, and made their appearance in the banqueting-hall, where the ducal family and court were at dinner. The only person who preserved her presence of mind was the duchess, who, taking a large platter of sweetmeats, of which she knew the bears were very fond, went toward them, and thus pacified them. A large fresco in the castle hall represents the scene shown on the opposite page.

One of the most singular innovations was the sport of fox-tossing, in which the court ladies took a prominent part. This fox-tossing consisted, as our illustration shows and the name indicates, in tossing animals into the air by means of canvas or cord tossing-slings, which were narrow bands some twenty-five feet long, held at both ends by the two tossers. This game was usually played in the large courtyards of royal castles, about which a high canvas screen was stretched so as to prevent the animals escaping. As the terrified foxes or other game were running wildly about the inclosure, leaping over the slings, the center of which rested on the ground, it behooved the tossers to jerk the animals into the air as forcibly as their strength permitted. Skilled male tossers could toss a fox twenty-four feet high. To prolong the sport the ground was covered with a thick layer of sand or sawdust, so as not to kill the wretched animal at the first toss. A great number of couples—generally a lady and gentleman were partners—could participate at the same time, and the quantity of game thus slaughtered on great occasions was something almost beyond belief, the rivalry between the separate couples giving additional zest to the cruel amusement. At the Saxon court, which was then the most pleasure-loving one in Germany, Elector Frederick Augustus, who subsequently became King of Poland, and who is perhaps better known as Augustus the Strong, was the first to introduce this amusement. This monarch, while mentally one of the most vacillating of rulers, was physically one of the strongest men of any age. Considering that he could hold standing on the palm of his outstretched hand a fully equipped cavalryman, it can hardly surprise one to hear that when he engaged in fox-tossing he would hold his end of the tossing-sling with one finger, and notwithstanding that the two men who held the other end were the strongest to be found,

they were no match for him. It was he, also, who introduced heavier animals, such as two-year-old wild boars and even wolves. At a famous fox-tossing in Dresden there were tossed 687 foxes, 533 hares, 34 badgers, 21 wildcats, and at the end 34 young wild boars and 3 wolves were turned into the inclosure, «to the great delectation of the cavaliers, but to the terror of the noble ladies, among whose hoop-skirts the wild boars committed great havoc, to the endless mirth of the assembled illustrious company.» That injuries on such occasions were not infrequent need hardly be mentioned, and more than one tosser was marked for life by the claws of a wildcat or the tusks of a young boar. The former animals, as one writer remarks, «do not give a pleasing kind of sport, for if they cannot bury their claws and teeth in the faces or legs of the tossers, they cling to the tossing-slings for dear life, and it is next to impossible to give one of these animals a skilful toss.»

At some of the minor German courts fox-tossing remained long in favor. Landgravine Emily of Hesse, an ancestress of the present grand-ducal house of Hesse-Cassel, was a great patroness of the sport; but it was left to Duke Louis of Brunswick to add a further element of grotesque absurdity to this amusement by inventing masked fox-tossings. Not only did the players put on bizarre costumes, dressing themselves up as Dianas, sprites of the wood, nymphs, hobgoblins, centaurs, sphinxes, and other creatures of mythology, but these master-buffoons did the same thing to the animals they tossed. By means of cardboard, bits of gaudy cloth, and tinsel, the wretched foxes and hares—these latter being the favorites for this purpose—were dressed up in the most fantastic manner imaginable, unpopular personages or political foes being represented in as lifelike a manner as possible. At the end of this farcical buffoonery, when the layer of sand in the great courtyard was sodden with the blood of the wretched hares and foxes, the whole company of courtiers, cavaliers, and noble ladies finished off the day's «sport» by a torchlight masquerade through the rambling park of the château; or they took part in some bombastic stage-play, where they represented themselves as gods and goddesses, or personified the great warriors of history or heroes of mythology. It was indeed a period meriting the name *baroque* in sport, as well as in art, manners, and customs.

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