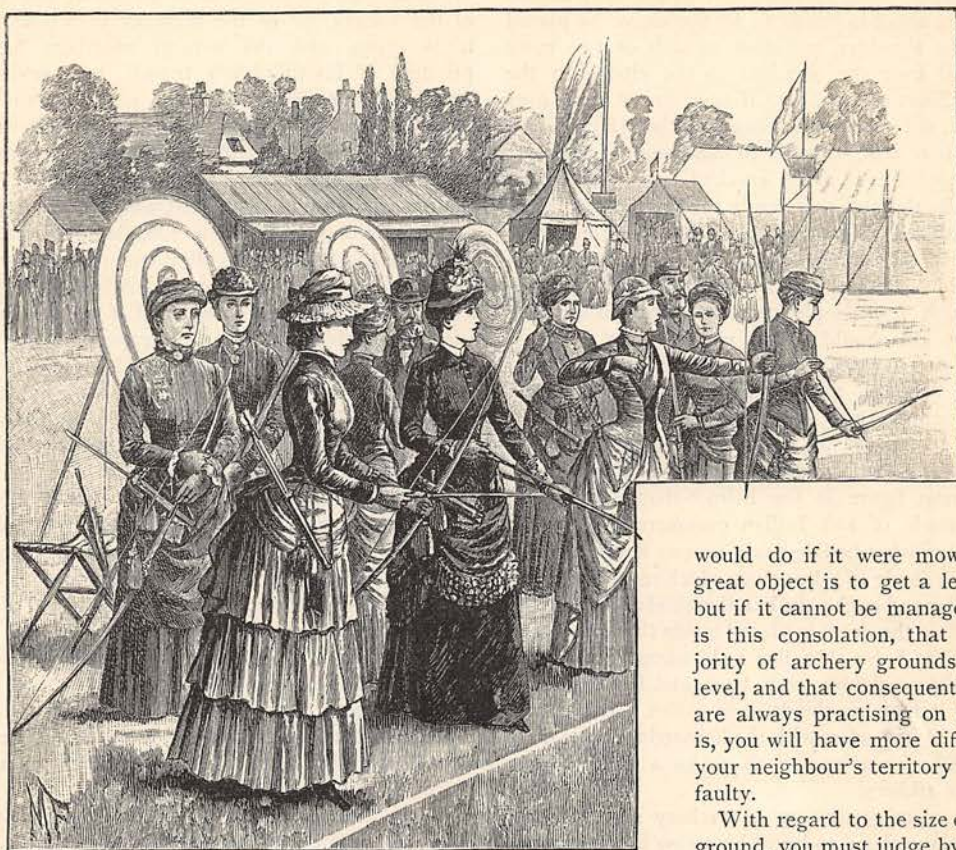


THE PASTIME OF ARCHERY.



"Stout arm, strong bow and steady eye,
Union, true heart and courtesie."

would do if it were mown. The great object is to get a level one, but if it cannot be managed, there is this consolation, that the majority of archery grounds are not level, and that consequently if you are always practising on one that is, you will have more difficulty in your neighbour's territory which is faulty.

With regard to the size of such a ground, you must judge by the distances which I will now give. In the old-fashioned archery club meetings in the country, the men

used to shoot at 80 yards for the long distance, and 60 yards for the short; the ladies, at 60 yards long distance, and 50 yards short; the number of arrows being determined by the rules of the club; now what is called the York Round is adopted by gentlemen. It was first used at the Great Northern Archery Meeting held at York in 1844, and is as follows:—72 arrows at 100 yards, 48 arrows at 80 yards, and 24 arrows at 60 yards.

The ladies adopt the National Round—48 arrows at 60 yards, and 24 arrows at 50 yards. The targets are placed at 85 yards distance, and the point at which the shooter is to stand is marked by a cork sunk in the ground, or some easy method of the kind, and the prevailing rule is that they are only allowed to extend it on either side to the length they can step from that mark in a straight line.

At prize meetings the gentlemen generally shoot in the morning, while the ladies shoot in the afternoon. There are two shooters to each target, and mostly three targets.

Our illustration shows a bevy of ladies at a popular country archery meeting where no particular uniform is enjoined: a plan which prevails largely just now. In

THE above is a very appropriate motto for that pastime on which Roger Ascham, great scholar as he was, did not disdain to write one of the most exhaustive treatises now extant. The subject has never since been more carefully and thoroughly dealt with, and if you are an archer you will know that the cupboards in which bows, arrows, &c., are kept, are now called, after him, "Aschams."

Considering the enlarged population, the number of people who practise archery is not increasing, though the standard of proficiency has gone up considerably. It is so healthy and so enjoyable, and there are so few difficulties in the way, it is a pity that the art does not revive as a general amusement in the country. All that is needed in the way of implements is a bow, about six arrows, a quiver, an arm-guard and finger-stalls attached to a sort of glove.

Ladies' arrows are lighter than those men use, and must be selected according to the strength of the bow, which for the stronger sex is from 25 lbs. to 80 lbs., and for ladies from 25 lbs. to 40 lbs.

In selecting the ground, almost any grass field

old days white dresses, relieved by green, found most favour; and on a damp day very miserable such costumes looked. One valuable hint to my lady friends who care to shoot in comfort: let the sleeve be placed high on the shoulder, and allow an inch or two more than usual from the shoulder to the elbow, in the length. Short sleeves, even if they do not come over the elbow, are most objectionable; they ride up and show the bare arm, which is in bad taste out of doors. What is needed is to avoid cracked seams, and to be able to raise the arm sufficiently to secure the straight line essential to good shooting, which as a rule should be on a level with the nose.

Large loose gloves are a comfort and a protection, though few people care to shoot in gloves; those who do should select wash-leather. Whatever you do, avoid long ends of ribbons, which in the wind are apt to become entangled, and the full fashionable vests are anything but the correct costume. I should be inclined to select from our illustration, as the best-dressed woman of the group, the foremost figure in the helmet-shaped hat; her gown is made of soft Indian cashmere of a green shade; the jacket bodice has a narrow flat inner vest of the dark shade of ruby velvet, which reappears again in the collar and cuffs; the handkerchief drapery of the same stuff as the dress is placed inside the bodice, and a small white habit-shirt like a shirt-front inside that. The cap has a double peak, back and front, shading the face; it matches the dress in colour. Large hats, though shady, interfere with the bow-string. It is quite worth while for a woman to make a study of her toilette for archery.

It is usual in getting up an archery society to lay down certain rules; to begin by giving it some name, to choose patrons, patronesses, an hon. secretary, an hon. treasurer, and a committee, and to admit members on a certain fixed subscription and entrance fee; and they are required to give a month's notice of removal. Once or twice a week, days are fixed for practising from April to the end of October, and in the interval members can practise when they like.

There are usually in every society two or three

annual prize meetings held in the different grounds of the members, if the society have no special ground of their own; a luncheon is served at the expense of the society, or of the member in whose ground it is given, and the several members have the privilege of inviting their friends, but they are not generally the people in the neighbourhood, who ought, it is considered, to subscribe themselves. The prizes are either specially presented, or are provided out of the subscriptions; they are mostly given for the first and second best score, and for the best gold, and sometimes there is a consolation prize. The winner of the best prize is often compelled to be handicapped for the rest of the year. A badge is generally awarded for the best score, and if gained for three years successively becomes the property of the winner. Strangers' prizes are also given. The scoring is mostly founded on the following counting of points:—1 for white, 3 for black, 5 for blue, 7 for red, and 9 for gold; and occasionally in some clubs the hits are added to the score, but it is a bad plan.

One word or two more as to the ground. Look well after the drainage, if you are planning one; a damp swamp will not do at all. Among the prettiest grounds we have are those of the Royal Toxophilite Society in the Regent's Park, surrounded by trees, the birds singing and telling of the country.

Each shooter chooses arrows of a distinguishing colour, and the ladies and gentlemen shoot at different targets. At prize meetings these are placed as far apart as the ground will admit, for otherwise a stray arrow of a bad shooter might alight on a wrong target.

I have little space in which to lay before my readers the many virtues that appertain to archery, for I have been desirous in a very few words to practically point out how they may set about the practice of the same, so I shall content myself, in conclusion, by giving four lines, which tersely and truly sing its praises—

“It lengthens life, it strengthens limb,
It adds to beauty's glow;
Disease flies off on rapid wing,
From her who twangs the bow.”

ARDERN HOLT.

AUNTIE'S ROSE.

IT is only a rose, my darlings,
Do you ask what the tale can be—
Why a rose that is withered and faded
Should be so dear to me?

Somebody sent it me, darlings,
Back in the days of yore,
On the night that his ship was sailing
Away to the dreadful war.

But I had my rose, my darlings,
To comfort me day by day,
As I read the bitter tidings
Of the fighting far away.

Till it drooped and died, my darlings,
And I read its message plain,
That he who had given that little rose
Would never come back again.

And now I am old, my darlings,
And life draws near its close,
You know why my heart is happy
As I watch my sweet dead rose.
Our life has another chapter
To read in the world to be,
And love like a new rose, darlings,
Will blossom for him and me.

FREDERIC E. WEATHERLY.