



JANUARY.

CURLING MATCH.

Our northern brethren have a fine athletic game, peculiar to the country, called *curling*—a word strange to southern ear, at least in connection with a manly sport. Winter is the season for enjoying the exercise, and when the Scottish lakes are frozen over, *curling* becomes the order of the day. Our engraving will at once explain the character of the game; but although the means are simple—requiring no expensive horses, well-kept hounds, valuable yachts, preserved manors, or other costly adjuncts—yet for sturdy exercise and high excitement, *curling* is not excelled by any of the more exclusive enjoyments. Whilst the skill and dexterity of the player are tested to the utmost, the very progress of the sport tends to increase the sum of that strength and activity which it calls into play; and health and pleasant recreation go hand in hand together in sisterly companionship.

ANGLING.

Fishing with the artificial fly is the most scientific mode of angling, requiring great tact and practice to make the flies neatly, and to use them with success. The learner cannot do better than go out with an old hand, and imitate his movements. It would extend far beyond the space we can afford in this almanack to enter into detail, but refer the reader to "Blair's Encyclopaedia of Rural Sports." Fly-fishing with either the natural or artificial flies does not commence till about the end of April. Bottom fishing may be practised all the year round with varied success. In this month, chub, pike, and roach, are the only fish that can be taken; in the middle of the day is the most seasonable time, provided the water is tolerably clear, and free from ice. Pike may be caught by spinning, and at this season the best bait for chub or roach is bullock's brains, pith, or greaves.

On a day when it may be freezing, the water from the line will cause the large rings to fill with ice; the easiest plan to get rid of this is to put the ring into your mouth, and afterwards keep the line on the move to prevent it from freezing.

When a Jack takes the bait, on no account give him the least check: where trees are growing in the water, it is a famous harbour. When fishing where trees are in the water, put the point of the rod under water; as it will allow him generally to go clear, you will feel by his discontinuing to take the line out; when he stops, keep the line tight; and should he wait for a few minutes only; instead of the required time ten minutes, do not let him have more line.

HINTS FOR ANGLERS.

It is generally understood that when two or three persons are angling in the same stream, there shall be a distance of thirty yards between them.

If the learner wish to become a complete angler, he must use fine tackle; as the skill and care which such tackle requires will soon make him a master of the art.

When the tackle breaks, the angler must not repine at the accident, but do his best to remedy it, by speedily repairing the damage, and resuming his sport.

Avoid sitting on the grass.

Prefer angling at mill-tails, and in deep water, under overhanging banks, and by the entrance of small streams.

Let your line (with the plummet) remain in the water to stretch while you ground-bait.

Choose a mild cloudy day with little wind or fine rain, with the water just coloured.

A number of fine shot is to be preferred to a few large ones.

The Thames, at Richmond, Hampton, Twickenham, Shepperton; the Mole; the Brent; the New River; the Ravensbourne, at Lewisham; Dagenham Breach; Pond on Hampstead-heath; Pond on Clapham-common; Pond in Hornsey-wood; Pond at Wanstead; Regent's canal; Croydon canal; and Camberwell canal.

January presents many amusements to sportsmen. Stag and fox-hunting are in the ascendant; and coursing, if not frosty, is in full spirit: while partridges, woodcocks, snipe, and pheasants, are all fair game for those who can handle a fowling-piece. If the weather be "fair and frosty," the lover of out-door exercises may indulge in the healthful and exhilarating amusement of skating.

IN-DOOR AMUSEMENTS.

January is one of the most festive months of the year. Its calendarial festivities are New Year's Day and Twelfth Day.

Although the custom of presenting New Year's gifts is now but little observed in this country, the day is observed by many a mirthful party.

There is not a more rational mode of amusing a party than by optical exhibitions, such as the Magic Lantern, Phantasmagoria, &c. The following is, however, a more novel amusement:—

The *Thaumatrope*, or *Wonder-Turner*, is an exceedingly amusing toy, of very simple construction and pleasing effect. It is made in the following manner:—Cut out a piece of card-board of circular form, and fix to it six pieces of string, three on each side. Paint on one side of the card a bird, and on the other a cage; being careful to draw them upside down to each other, otherwise the desired effect will not be produced. When showing the toy, take hold of the centre strings between the forefinger and thumb of each hand, close to the card, and twist or twirl the card rapidly round; when lo! the bird will appear snugly enclosed in its cage. The principle on which this pleasing toy acts, is, that the image of any object received on the retina or optic nerve, which is at the back of the eye, is retained in the mind for about eight seconds after the object causing the impression is withdrawn; consequently, the impression of the painting on one side of the card is not obliterated ere the painting on the other side is brought before the eye; it therefore follows that both sides are seen at once. The subjects suited to the *Thaumatrope* are very varied: amongst others, the following are well calculated for display: a juggler throwing up two balls may be drawn on one side of a card, and two balls only on the other, and according to the pairs of strings employed, he will seem to toss two, three, or four balls; the body and legs of a man on one side, and his head and arms on the other; a candle and its flame; a mouse and a trap, and a horse and his rider; this last is a very good one, as by using the different pairs of strings, the relative positions of man and horse may be varied most singularly.

Twelfth Night, though comparatively but little observed, occasions the assembling of many cheerful circles. Drawing for King and Queen may be amusing enough; but we have seen an ingenious attempt to turn the custom to better account by substituting for the usual grotesque Twelfth Night representations, portraits of the leading characters of Shakspeare's plays, each having beneath it a quotation from the "part." This is a graceful combination of amusement and high intellect.



FEBRUARY.

HARE-HUNTING.

This sport is now seldom seen in its primitive shape; time and manners have not failed to act upon hare-hunting as they are wont to do upon all things; indeed, the latest changes, by introducing the dwarf fox-hound, have quickened the sport and taken from it, as a subject of illustration, its main characteristic, by banishing the "blue-mottled harrier." This "newest fashion" we eschew, and give hare-hunting as it should be given—such as it was when Somerville sung, and such as it yet is in some sylvan corners of Old England—a whit slower perhaps, but not less hearty, healthful, or exhilarating, than the rattling system of a later day. The dwarf fox-hound, with its superior pace, possesses very fine qualities of nose, but cannot in the latter respect surpass its predecessor; while the "blue-mottled harrier" gives at a glance, to a true sportsman's eye, the peculiar character of the scene which our sketch of hare-hunting seeks to portray.

How inferior soever may be the estimation in which hunting the hare is held in comparison with hunting the fox, no animal of the chase affords so much true hunting as she does. The *Country Squire*, in his *Essay on Hunting*, says: "The chase after the fox or stag is violent, and little more than riding or running; but the hare displays the very art of hunting; she affords a pleasure worthy of the philosopher, a curiosity that may justly raise the admiration of the wisest statesman, physician, or divine. I, therefore, hope for pardon from my more sprightly brethren, if I give my vote for the innocent hare above all other game." The modern *Nimrod* says: "For our own part, speaking as fox-hunters, yet abandoning all prejudices against a sport it is too much the fashion to hold cheap, we consider, that, to any man who is a real lover of hunting, that is, of seeing hounds do their work, and that work well, a twenty minutes' burst over a good country, with a well-bred pack of harriers, of the present stamp and fashion, affords a high treat."

While upon this subject, we record with regret, the death of Hylton Jolliffe, a true sportsman of the good old school—one whose presence has given life and spirit to many a well-run chase.

Mr. Jolliffe was one of the oldest members of the House of Commons, having represented the borough of Petersfield more than forty years; and in this character no less than as a soldier and a sportsman, his

memory deserves the compliment we pay it, by the publication of his portrait. He entered the army early in life, holding a commission in the Duke of York's regiment when little more than sixteen years of age. In the course of the war with Republican France he was frequently engaged

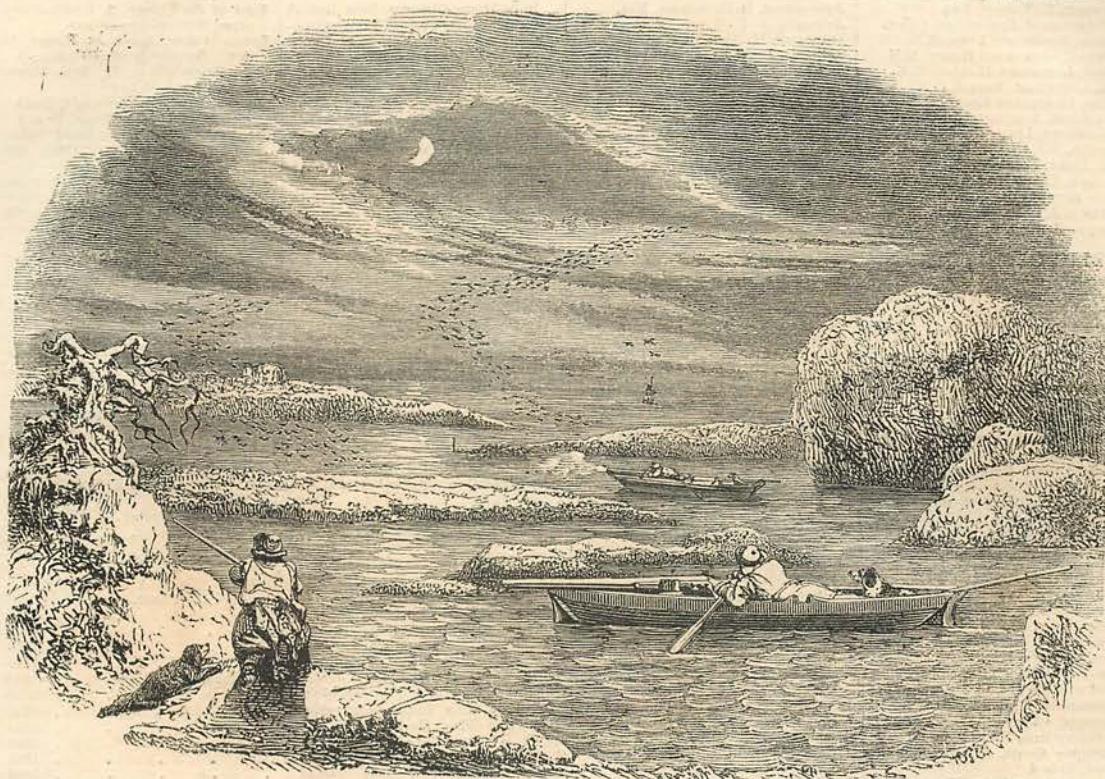
in active service; and in the memorable campaign in Egypt, which terminated with the victory of Alexandria, Colonel Jolliffe commanded a battalion of the Coldstream Guards on the decisive day, the 21st of March. On his marriage with the heiress of the Earl of Ferrers, he quitted the profession of a soldier, and directed his attention chiefly to those pursuits which constitute the avocations of a country gentleman. His hours of amusement were devoted to the sports of the field, in which he attained such celebrity as to have acquired the designation of "the hero of the chase." Descended from a family of very high antiquity, some of his estates in the north of England have been continued in uninterrupted succession, in one branch of his family, for more than a thousand years. A claim to revive a cherished hereditary title, long in abeyance, was at one period favourably entertained by the ministers of the day; but as it was considered invidious or injudicious to restore so ancient a barony, George III. expressed his sentiments as preferably disposed to a new creation; but this not being in accordance with the views of the father of the deceased gentleman, the idea was never realised. When pressed by the late Earl of Liverpool to accept a baronetcy, the suggestion appeared to Mr. Jolliffe to convey something so much like an insult, that he is reported to have made the following sarcastic reply to the minister: "Your proposal, my lord, if accepted, would only enable me to do by patent what I already practise as a gentleman—namely, walk out of a room after the very numerous tribe who have recently been elected as fit subjects for such a dignity!"



PORTRAIT OF HYLTON JOLLIFFE, ESQ.

Toward the latter end of this month when the weather becomes somewhat mild, carp, gudgeons, and minnows may be taken, as well as pike, chub, and roach. The perch spawns either in this or the next month. The same as last month will answer.

During the progress of this month, sports with the gun begin to decline. The whole tribe of wild fowl fly the approach of spring, and seek a colder climate more congenial to their habits. The partridge and pheasant season is over.



MARCH.

WILD DUCK SHOOTING.

THE different methods of taking the wild duck afford capital sport and never-ending adventure. "Common wild fowl shooting with a shoulder duck gun," observes Captain Lacy in the "Modern Shooter," "has long been in vogue, and has often been the theme of ancient sporting authors; but, until Colonel Hawker's work appeared, wild fowl shooting on salt-water had scarcely been touched upon; still less had any one of 'gentle blood' ventured to commit his valuable case to 'the vasty deep,' in case so fragile as that yecept a shooting punt. The merit, therefore, of having invented this new pleasure, or, at least, of having added it to the stock of sporting recreations, attaches exclusively to the gallant colonel. As a practical performer, he is most successful, and is, perhaps, the very best wild fowl shot round the British coast. Hail, Hawker! Mao Adam of duck shooters, hail!" The colonel's well-known book contains the modes of hut shooting, &c., and some particulars relating to decoys.

The usual weight of the mallard or drake is about 2½ lbs., and that of the duck somewhat less; but the foreigners are generally larger than the home-breds. Captain Lacy has shot wild ducks in the Tees Bay above six pounds and a half the pair; but, if much beyond this weight, their purity of breed may be suspected. Wild ducks, excepting a few home-breds, whose full-grown ones are fine eating in August, do not appear in the Tees Bay until November, or, at all events, in any number worth mentioning. The mallards are very poor in condition after the middle of February, not so the ducks. The captain adds: "a common trick played upon the London cockneys is to serve them out with a couple of shell ducks in lieu of wild ducks. The heads and white legs of the former having been cut off, and the birds plucked, as they are just about the size of the latter, and always look plump, they sell better, and it is thus that wild ducks are libelled for eating so 'fishy!'"

The captain enthusiastically sings:—

"If tame-ducks were wanting,
And wild-ducks were flown,
Oh! who would inhabit
This bleak world alone!"

Colonel Hawker says: "It often happens that wild-ducks, dunbirds, and other fowl, come down at night to large rivers, ponds, or lakes, which are so deeply surrounded by floating reeds, that no one can approach the water; and the birds, aware of this, do not lower their flight till they come near them. So far from this defying the shooter, it is one of the finest opportunities that can be afforded for death and destruction. Let him sit, in a small punt, or canoe, fore and aft, among the rushes, where, towards dusk, he will be so completely hid, that he may either shoot at birds flying within pistol-shot, or wait for a good chance on the water; from whence, his boat being hid on each side, and foreshortened to the only point of view he will be pretty sure to escape the observation of the birds. This plan may be resorted to where there are no rushes, such as under the bank of an island, or in a small brook, near which there may be no hiding-place."

The fens of Lincolnshire, Cambridge, and Martin Mere in Lincolnshire, are excellent localities for duck as well as every other wild fowl shooting. This species of shooting, both of duck and flapper, can likewise be pursued in perfection on the borders of many of the rivers of North and South Wales.

The nest of the wild duck is generally made in some dry spot of the marshes, and not far from water, to which she can lead her progeny as soon as hatched. It is composed of withered grass and other dry vegetable matter, and usually concealed from view by a thick bush, or some very rank herbage, though other and very dissimilar situations are occasionally chosen, as several instances have been recorded where they have deposited their eggs on the fork of a large tree, or in some deserted nest.

The Yankees have what they call their "ducking," i. e. when they form a party to go shoot ducks on Duck Island, in Chesapeake Bay. These are the

celebrated canvass-back duck of the American gourmand, and the estimation in which they are held may be gathered from the fact that, in Baltimore market, the price of a single duck is one shilling, whilst the common wild ducks are but threepence a couple. The former has been acclimated in Britain, and why the breed has not been more extensively encouraged is somewhat surprising, as they are sizeable and handsome birds, and, as a table luxury, most delicious.

ANGLING.

IN March, minnows, roach, chub, gudgeons, tench, carp, and trout, form the bill of fare. Bleak, pike, perch, and dace, spawn. In this and the preceding month, the middle of the day is the best for angling. The blue dun cow-dung flies make their appearance, and may be used throughout the year. The March brown fly appears about the same time, but is out of season at the end of April; it is a capital bait, and it kills most from eleven till three.

YACHTING.

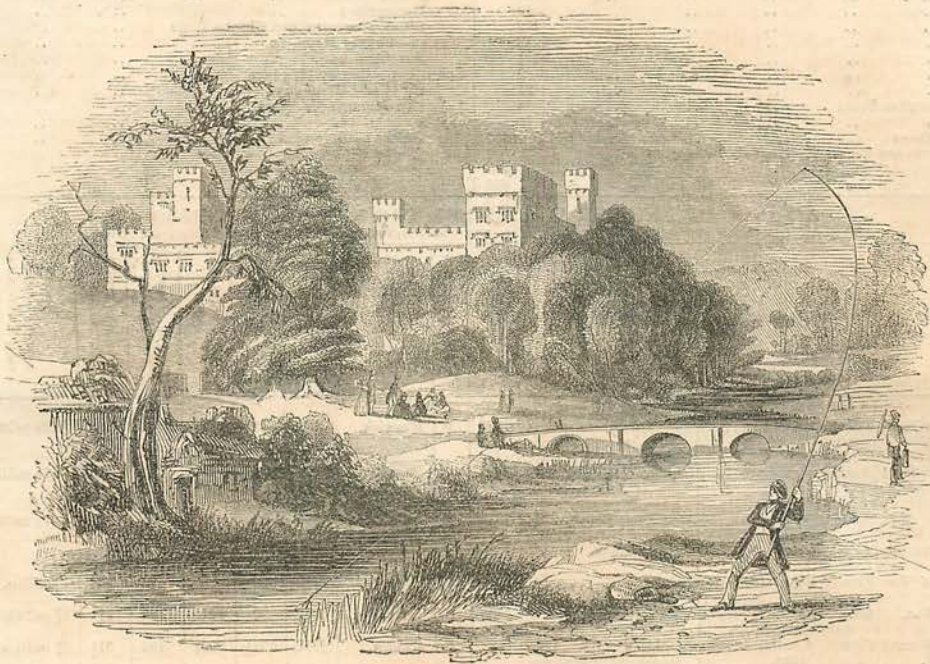
THOUGH early in the season, yachting commences on the Thames during this month. The Thames Yacht Club rendezvous at Greenwich. The first law of the Club states its object to be "the encouragement of yacht-building sailing on the river Thames." The funds of the Club, after paying necessary current expenses, are appropriated to the purchase of cups and other prizes, to be sailed for by yachts belonging to members only. Another law of the Club throws open one of the matches, to be called "the Grand Match," to all yachts eligible to sail, winners of the same season not excluded.

STEEPLE-CHASING.

STEEPLE-CHASING or RACING, is one of the sports of this month, when the St. Albans steeple-chase takes place. The ancient borough of St. Albans, at present, appears to be to steeple-chasing what Newmarket is to legitimate turf practices; how long it may retain its metropolitan importance, over this connecting link between turf and field riding, it is not easy to predict, so much do caprice and fashion influence these matters. The benefit which this town receives from these sporting meetings, has stimulated its inhabitants to exert themselves to the utmost to provide the very best accommodation for both actors and spectators; while the liberality of the landowners cannot be too highly praised for throwing no impediment in the way. Thus, St. Albans offers its fields to bespatter the ardent riders, and its brooks to wash off the accumulated stains. Its hedges have waved under the jumpers, and its ancient town has opened its hotels to greet the conqueror and console the vanquished. Steeple-chases are also held this month at Banbury, Northampton, Burton Constable, York, Burton-upon-Trent, Bedford, Leamington, Boston, &c., &c.

English steeple-chasing appears to be rapidly gaining ground, and, in the absence of hunting, it offers one of the very best means of keeping up the wind and condition of our field-horses, and the emulative spirit of field-men. Our method of conducting a steeple-chase is not fettered with so many rules and enactments as those of Ireland; nor is it marked with much other ceremony than that of previously agreeing on the stakes, marking out the ground by means of flags on eminences, within certain distances, to the right or left of which the riders are confined in their course; neither must one horse follow the track of another, nor leap the same fence within so many yards of any other rider; nor is he allowed to take his course on any lane or road, beyond a certain distance. The horses are started by a preconcerted signal, such as a bugle sound, the firing of a pistol, &c. &c.

ARCHERY MEETINGS usually commence in this month.—FOOT-BALL play is still kept up on Shrove Tuesday, in some towns, as at Derby, and Kingston-upon-Thames.



A P R I L.

FLY-FISHING, NEAR HADDON HALL, DERBYSHIRE.

"No man should in honesty catch a trout till the middle of March," quoth the father of anglers, quaint, philosophical old Izaak Walton; and, in obedience to their master, all true brethren of the angle have by long usage fixed the 14th of March for fly-fishing to begin. The leaf-buds now give out the first evidences of returning spring. Around the village church the jack-daw comes again—the marsh fitmouse begins to raise its note; and, of all nature's signs of spring—the most watched for by the trout-fisher, various flies appear. The trolling-rod now gives place to its more pliant compeer, and floats, plummet, snags, and gorge-hooks are supplanted by hackles and flies. All the mysteries of a fly-fisher's wallet are now displayed, with varied spoils of bird and beast lying ready to the angler's practised hand, as from their gaudy colours he contrives mimic resemblances of the insect tribes who flutter over rippling streams. And learnedly does the "Complete Angler" discuss these things, telling how to weave "the lower fur of a squirrel's tail with the wing of the grey feather of the drake—the hairs of Isabella: coloured mohair, and the wings of a bright mallard's feather"—and a hundred other such compounds for constructing "an admirable fly, and in great repute as a killer." Learned piscatorial disquisitions are indulged in, too, as to the flies best suited for each successive month; but here a golden rule presents itself. Let the angler watch the insects which hover over the stream where he seeks his sport—let him catch one and imitate its size, shape, and colour, and then he has the bait at which the fish will bite most readily. The fly-rod, says good authority, should be about twelve feet three inches long, and about fourteen ounces in weight. It must not be top-heavy, nor must it have too much play in the lower part, but the play should be just in proportion to the gradual tapering, by which there will be very little spring, till after about the third foot of its length. A rod too pliable is as bad a fault as being too stiff; and, from being too small, there is, of course, more liable to be top-heavy, which nine rods in ten are; the consequence is, they tire the hand, and do not drop the fly so neatly. Colonel Hawker has best described the proper mode of practising the art. He says, "In throwing a fly, raise the arm well up, without labouring with your body, send the fly backwards by a sudden spring of the wrist. Do not draw the fly too near, or you lose your purchase for sending it back, and therefore require an extra sweep in the air before you can get it into play again. If, after sending it back, you make the counter spring a moment too soon, you will whip off your tail-fly, and if a moment too late, your line will fall in a slovenly manner. The knack of catching this time is, therefore, the whole art of throwing well. The motion should be just sufficiently circular to avoid this; but if too circular, the spring receives too much check, and the gut will then most probably not drop before the silk line. In a word, allow the line no more time than just to unfold before you retreat the spring of the wrist; this must be done, or you will hear a crack, and find you have just whipped off your tail-fly. For this reason I should recommend beginners to learn at first with only a bob, or they will soon empty their own or their friend's fishing-book; and, at all events, to begin learning with a moderate length of line."

Thus much for the practice of fly-fishing, and now a word for our illustration of it. The angler here whips one of the best trout streams in England—the old baronial residence of the Vernons, the "Kings of the Peak," standing in picturesque stateliness upon a neighbouring eminence. The Wye flows at his feet—now all quiet and placid, floating a lucid mirror above its bright pebbly bed—anon dashing over some rocky impediment in tiny cascades, then coursing swiftly through a narrow, or streaming all impetuous down some sloping course, until again it floats placidly, as its waters expand and deepen. From its source near Buxton, through its course by Ashford, Bakewell, and Haddon, until it falls into the Derwent at Rowsly, it affords trout worthy of all the praises of old Izaak; while the scenery around is rich in variety of hill and slope and dale, with here and there rocks rising in

bold prominence, and giving that character to the landscape which renders Derbyshire one of the most interesting and picturesque of the counties of England.

QUOITS.

This game is much played during April. It does not depend so much upon superior strength as upon superior skill. The quoit has evidently derived its origin from the ancient *discus*; at the present day, it is a circular plate of iron, perforated in the middle, not always of the same size, but suited to the strength and convenience of the several candidates.

To play at this game, an iron pin, called a hob, is driven into the ground, within a few inches of the top; and at the distance of eighteen, twenty, or more yards, for the distance is optional, a second pin of iron is also made fast in a similar manner, and two or more persons who are to contend for the victory, stand at one of the iron marks, and throw an equal number of quoits to the other, and those nearest to the hob are reckoned towards the game. Having cast all their quoits, the candidates walk to the opposite side, and determine the state of the play, then, taking their stand there, throw their quoits back again, and continue to do so alternately until the game is decided.

The most skilful stroke in this game is what is termed *ringing the quoit*: that is, casting it in such a manner that the hole in the middle shall fall exactly on the top of the hob.

It appears that quoits are used as implements of war by the Seikhs, an independent and martial tribe in India. Captain Mundy says, "The Seikhs have a great variety of weapons. I observed the musket, matchlock, sword, spears of sundry forms, daggers, and battle-axe; but the arm that is exclusively peculiar to this sect is the quoit: it is made of beautiful thin steel, sometimes inlaid with gold; in using it, the warrior twirls it swiftly round the fore-finger, and launches it with such deadly aim, as, according to their own account, to be sure of his man at eighty paces."

ANGLING.

A SOCIETY has recently been formed, under the sanction of the Lord Mayor as Conservator of the Thames, for the purpose of preserving the fish of that river, by preventing the use of illegal nets, and putting a stop to other unfair practices, which have been long resorted to for their destruction. Deep has been staked, and other plans are in progress, to secure sport for the angler. If the society be supported as it ought to be by all who delight in the healthful and tranquil amusement, the Thames will, within a short period, become as unequalled for sport and enjoyment, as for its interest and beauty.

Upon the banks of the Thames the noblest of British worthies have lived, flourished, and died. Scarcely can we stand upon a spot that is not hallowed ground; or contemplate an object unassociated with some triumph of the mind. Thus the angler, while enjoying his sport, is revelling with nature, or with memory—the present, or the past.

Who loves not his own company,
Will feel the weight of't many a day.

COWLEY.

The increasing warmth of the weather, brings also increase of sport; with tench, perch, trout, roach, carp, gudgeons, flounders, bleak, minnows, and eels. Barbel, pike, chub, ruffe, and dace, spawn.

In April, the green tail and gravel flies come out: they are soon out of season, the former continuing not more than a week, and the latter about a fortnight. The black gnat, which continues till the end of May, and the stone fly complete this month's list.

The Aquatic Season commences; the various Yacht Clubs hold meetings and settle preliminaries for the matches of the season.



JUNE.

OTTER-HUNTING

THE chase of the Otter is still an item in the catalogue of "the sports of England;" but its proudest records must be sought in the older annals of sporting in this country.

"The pomp and circumstance" of the olden Otter-chase were very striking: the huntsmen sallied forth arrayed, in vests of green, braided with scarlet, their caps of fur encircled with bands of gold, and surmounted with ostrich plumes. Boots, much of the fashion of those known to modern hunting-fields, reaching to the tops of the thighs, and water-proof, encased their lower limbs, and were ornamented with gold or silver tassels. Their spears were also embellished with carving and costly mountings; the whole set-out of the higher classes engaged in these water-huntings being of a very picturesque and imposing character. "Towards the latter end of the last century, otter-hunting was one of the most popular of our field sports, and the list of establishments supported for its pursuit would have, probably, outnumbered those devoted to hunting in any of its other forms. Regular packs of otter-hounds were kept in almost every parish, and an otter-pole was as common an instrument in the peasant's hands as a walking-stick. It was much more simple than the spear now in use; it was merely a stick of straight ash, shod with a common iron barb head, or a fork of two prongs, also arrow-headed. With these weapons in their hands, and a motley group of miscellaneous curs at their heels, the village rustics would hie them to the neighbouring streams, to chase, in humble imitation of their betters, the *Mustela lutea* of the naturalist." (Craven.—*Sporting Review*.)

But otter-hunting is now fast dying away, though it is still kept up in parts of Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Mr. Macgillivray informs us that Mr. Lomair hunted the Dumfriesshire rivers in 1833, 1834, 1835: and that Lord John Scott keeps a pack of otter-hounds for the streams of Roxburghshire. "The modern otter-spear," says Craven, "is an article of some artistic pretension. It is, like its predecessor, a long flexible ash pole, but headed with a barb somewhat scientifically constructed. The smaller end of the pole being bored and fitted with a counter-sink (a female screw and collar), a spring barb is screwed to it. The barb is so constructed, that, being driven into the hide of the quarry, it expands, and gives out two hooks, which effectually prevent the hold of the spear being destroyed by any efforts of the animal to release itself."

In England but few other packs exist, but a splendid run is occasionally enjoyed. Thus, on September 14, 1841, the Haworth and Stockton otter-hounds commenced running on the river Tees; at Dinsdale Spa fish-locks, and, on the first day, terminated at Low Middleton Deep, where the otter was seized, but again set at liberty, and hunted till dark. The chase was renewed next day at Dinsdale-bridge, when, after another glorious run, the otter was secured. His length was four feet two inches and a half; and, taking the time occupied during both days, fifteen hours were devoted to the chase—a circumstance unparalleled in the annals of otter-hunting.

The best of modern otter-slayers, however, and the most experienced authority on the sport, is the Hon. Grantley Berkeley, of Beacon Lodge, in Hampshire: who, with four old fox-hounds and three white terriers, enjoyed some splendid otter-hunting in the New Forest, during the summer of 1840, when he put four other otters down, and killed them all.

We understand that the crack pack of otter-hounds belonging to E. Dixon, jun., Esq., of Worcester, has had some splendid hunts of late. Near Bromyard no fewer than three otters were killed in one day, but not before some of the hounds were so knocked up as to require putting into a warm bath.

Although the otter rejects all baits in the trap, an instance occurred in August, 1799, in the river Buckland, near Dover, of his taking a line bait. An otter suddenly darted from his hold, and seized the bait of a gentleman trolling for pike, who thought the bait was taken by an overgrown fish, in conse-

quence of the animal's violent struggles. After a long contest, in which the troller displayed much skill, to his great astonishment and that of others upon the spot, he drew the otter to the shore completely exhausted.

RACING.

THE Sporting Calendar of this month boasts of the gaiety and splendour of the races at Epsom and Ascot Heath. The Derby day at Epsom is an illustrated epitome of the history of English sports, manners, and society. It is, truly, a national scene, and one so peculiarly and so completely national, so identified with the very nature of Englishmen, that it will show more of the national character to a foreigner in a few hours than months of residence and inquiry could furnish even to an industrious and judicious investigator. There is a sort of magic in the words Epsom Races, which arouses the hopes, recollections, anticipations, and sympathies of hundreds of thousands of people of all classes of society throughout the great metropolis of Britain, from one end to the other, and throughout the whole length and breadth of the land. The spirit of horse-racing is peculiar to this country; it is a spirit indigenous with Englishmen, and though it has of late years been extended to the Continent, it is there as yet but a sickly importation, and can only be kept alive by the usual means and appliances for the preservation of exotics and interpolations. Here may be seen an almost endless succession for several hours of those elegant carriages, the workmanship of the celebrated builders of Long Acre, &c., unequalled, and not to be equalled, in lightness, strength, convenience, and beauty, by the coachbuilders of all the rest of the world put together. These carriages are drawn by horses of matchless strength and action—horses that are superior to any others to be met with in France, Italy, Germany, or Spain. Here may be seen, "going along" at twelve miles an hour, nearly five hundred pairs of "posters," the property of a single post-master, driven by "boys" dressed in the neat costume of their "profession," besides several hundred of other "posters" of nearly, if not of quite, equal worth and goodness. Here, too, are to be seen the splendid "turn-outs" of the noblemen and gentlemen who drive their own "teams," the Corinthian "drags" of the "four-in-hands" of the crack "whips" of the day, all hurrying to Epsom, and freighted with the most fashionable and lovely women in the world, by whose presence the sports are exalted, and the whole business of the day harmonized and humanized into rational and elegant recreation. The train of carriages that passes along this outlet of the western end of the town is of itself a sight well worth the being seen—a sight which, to look at, as the Roman poet says,—

"Would make old Nestor young."

and one which many will long remember with pleasure, and talk of hereafter as one of the best things in memory's waste.

The first Arabian, which had ever been known as such in England, was purchased by the royal jockey, of a Mr. Markham, a merchant, at the Price of five hundred pounds. That illustrious master of the science of equitation, the Duke of Newcastle, in his treatise, describes this Arab as a little bay horse, of ordinary shape, and judges he was good for nothing, because, being trained and started, he could not race, but was beaten by every horse which ran against him.

ANGLING.

IN JUNE, roach, dace, minnows, bleak, gudgeons, eels, barbel, ruffe, perch, pike, and trout, are in season. Carp, tench, bream, and gudgeons spawn. The white gnat, cock-tail, gold spinner, governor, blue gnat, whirling dun, hares' ear, and kingdom flies, make their entrée. The gold-spinner, governor, and kingdom flies continue till August; the blue gnat for about a fortnight, and the other flies in this month's list, during the summer.



J U L Y .

DEER STALKING.

W. SCROPE, Esq., one of the best deer-stalkers in the world, and quite the best writer about deer-stalking, says—

“Your consummate deer-stalker should not only be able to run like an antelope, and breathe like the trade-winds, but should also be enriched with various other undeniable qualifications. As, for instance, he should be able to run in a stooping position, at a greyhound pace, with his back parallel to the ground, and his face within an inch of it, for miles together. He should take a singular pleasure in threading the seams of a bog, or in gliding down a burn, *ventre à terre*, like that insinuating animal the eel,—accomplished he should be in skillfully squeezing his clothes after this operation, to make all comfortable. Strong and pliant in the ankle, he should most indubitably be; since, in running swiftly down precipices, picturesquely adorned with sharp-edged, angular, vindictive stones, his feet will, unadvisedly, get into awkward cavities and curious positions:—thus, if his legs are devoid of the faculty of breaking, so much the better,—he has an evident advantage over the fragile man. He should rejoice in wading through torrents, and be able to stand firmly on water-worn stones, unconscious of the action of the current; or if, by fickle fortune, the waves should be too powerful for him, when he loses his balance, and goes floating away upon his back (for if he has any tact, or sense of the picturesque, it is presumed he will fall backwards), he should raise his rifle aloft in the air, Marmion fashion, lest his powder should get wet, and his day's sport come suddenly to an end. A few weeks' practice in the tilt will make him quite *au fait* at this. We would recommend him to try the thing in a spout, during a refreshing north wind, which is adverse to deer-stalking; thus no day will be lost pending his education. To swim he should not be able, because there would be no merit in saving himself by such a paltry subterfuge; neither should he permit himself to be drowned, because we have an affection for him, and moreover it is very cowardly to die.

“As to mental endowments, your sportsman should have the qualifications of an Ulysses and a Philidor combined. Wary and circumspect, never going rashly to work, but surveying all his ground accurately before he commences operations, and previously calculating all his chances both of success and failure. Patience under suspense and disappointment, calm and unruffled in moments of intense interest, whether fortune seems to smile or frown on his exertions; and if his bosom must throb at such times, when hopes and fears by turns assail it, he should at all events keep such sensations under rigid control, not suffering them to interfere with his equanimity, or to disturb the coolness and self-possession which at such moments are more than ever necessary to his operations.

“That Deer-Stalking is a chase,” says Mr. Scrope, “which throws all other field-sports in the back ground, and, indeed, makes them appear wholly insignificant, no one, who has been initiated in it will attempt to deny. The beautiful motions of the deer, his picturesque and noble appearance, his sagacity, and the skillful generalship which can alone insure success in the pursuit of him, keep the mind in a state of pleasurable excitement.” Yet, with all this excitement, the fall of the noble animal recalls the lament—

“Magnificent creature! to reach thee I strain
Through forest and glen, o'er mountain and plain;
Yet, now thou art fallen, thy fate I deplore,
And lament that the reign of thy greatness is o'er.”

THE HON. T. LIDDELL.

The localities of Deer-stalking are principally confined to the Highlands

of Scotland, consequently they embrace some of the most interesting scenery imaginable. The Highlands are nominally divided into the West and the North. The former owns the shires of Dumbarton, Argyle, Bute, and part of Perth; the latter comprehends the counties of Inverness, Ross, Sutherland, &c. In early times, the red deer and roe particularly abounded. Since, increased population, and the attention paid to local agriculture, have reclaimed much of the ground, and appropriated it to the culture of cattle, particularly to rearing of sheep. There, however, still remain the Highland forests, which, being the property of persons of rank and wealth, are yet preserved for the accommodation of wild game, but particularly of red deer. It is common to call all the vast tracts which form the natural range of the red deer, by the name of forest; but the reader must not consider these as a continuous tract of vast woods; on the contrary, many of these so-called forests are entirely destitute of wood, except occasionally, scattered patches of brushwood. Ancient chronicles, however, assure us that many of them, in bygone days, were thickly wooded, although their other features were those of rocky heights, of vast extent and wildness, abruptly terminating in morasses, which frequently ended on the bank of some expansive loch.

CRICKET.

THIS truly English game of strength and activity is now in its zenith, and all the cricket clubs are open for the season. Formerly, cricket was almost confined to the southern counties: Kent, Sussex, and Surrey, more especially, have always been famous for skill in it. Of late years it has spread a good deal in the northern quarter of the island; there is scarcely a county in England without its regularly established cricket club; and in Scotland, where, a few years back, cricket was altogether unknown, it is now making a surprising advance.

The rules of cricket are, at once, too well known, and too complicated, to be here explained: they are subject to variations, at the pleasure of the Marylebone club, which meets at Lord's cricket ground, St. John's Wood. The laws and decisions of that society are recognised by cricket players in general, in the same way that the authority of the jockey club is held definitive, in questions relating to horse racing. Corrected laws were issued by the society in May, 1844. Cricket is played almost exclusively by the British, who have carried it into many parts of the world, where the climate seems little suited to the exertion which it requires: as, for example, in Bengal.

To one intimate with the country, and, therefore, fond of rural enjoyment, July offers two very peculiar sources of pleasure. It is the season of hay-making, and of sheep-shearing, both of which operations still retain much of the gaiety of ancient festivals. Shakspeare and Drayton have poetically described the recreations of our ancestors at these rural feasts; and a writer of more recent date, Dyer, has made “The Fleeca” the subject of a beautiful and patriotic poem.

ANGLING.

IN July trout, dace, flounders, eels, bleak, minnows, pike, barbel, gudgeons, and roach, afford good sport. Bream and carp spawn.

In July, August, and September, the fly-fishing lists are very scanty; in the first-named month, the red ant; in the second, the whirling blue; and in the last, the willow fly, are the only novelties; they continue in use till the conclusion of the fishing season.



AUGUST.

GROUSE SHOOTING.

AUGUST the twelfth is the day fixed in the British sportsman's calendar for the commencement of the pursuit of the grouse, which, in his general estimation, says Captain Lacy, "if not deemed the very fox-hunting of shooting indisputably occupies a very high place, and most deservedly so, whether we consider the extreme beauty, elegance, and gameness of this truly British bird itself; its deep, rich plumage, so charmingly in harmony with the lovely heather it dwells among, whose tender tops it crops for support, and under whose friendly fringed shade it cowers for protection; or whether we turn to its native haunts, whose dreariness it enlivens and ennobles—the isolated majestic heights in some of the most romantic parts of our highly-favoured isle—we are alike induced to regard it with esteem and admiration. Besides, grouse shooting is not only the most laborious of all shooting, but is a science in itself."

Grouse shooting in general, and on a subscription moor in particular, is a very different sort of thing in England to what it is in many parts of the Highlands, where the best sport of the kind in the known world is unquestionably to be obtained; "though even," says Captain Lacy, "that varies very materially in different districts; so much so, that it behoves an English shooting party to have better authority than a mere advertisement before they agree to pay a heavy rent for grouse shooting quarters, or 'shootings,' and especially if the intention be to take them on a lease; for, though the hills be represented as abounding with game—the burns and rivers as swarming with trout and salmon, with a plentiful sprinkling of roe, red deer, cocks, and wild-fowl, by way of a refreshing change—the reality is often found to fall not a little short of the glowing description. Moreover, the complaint of late years alleged against the mountain lairds, of not taking sufficient pains to keep a good stock of game on their grounds, is, in general, but too well founded."

All dogs for grouse shooting should, at all times, be particularly steady; not a syllable should be required to be spoken to them, but all done by hand-work, unless the whistle be occasionally used as a signal for them to turn, grouse being the most sensitive and the soonest disturbed of all game.

A popular sporting writer says—"There is no department of the chase wherein the gun is used as the instrument of capture that approaches, much less equals, it in the quantity of excitement, and of positive enjoyment it affords its followers. The tawny tiger, it is said, once having tasted human blood, thirsts for it evermore, and hereafter is dissatisfied with ignoble prey; the modern shooter, it is known, once having rejoiced in a perfect day's grousing, from that time forward places it highest among his affections, sets a lesser value upon all other kinds of fowling, and naturally seeks occasion for renewing the pleasure as frequently as he may in future.

"Again, whether you choose Scotland, Ireland, the north of England, or Wales, for the scene of your sanguinary exploits, the total change, not merely in scenery, but in the manners, customs, and language of the people, is equally striking and delightful. Accustomed, probably, to town life—or it may be, to the rich but monotonous campaigns of the southern counties—with what vivid emotion do you greet the sky-piercing summit of Ben Lomond, of Skiddaw, or Helvellyn, of Snowdon, or Cader Idris!"

The red grouse of the principality are notoriously the largest existing. In the south, good red grouse shooting will be found in the counties of Glamorgan, Carmarthen, and Radnor; in those of Cardigan and Brecon, excellent; also, in Merioneth and Montgomery, in the north. To those sportsmen from the midland and southern parts, with whom brevity of time and distance is a consideration, we would heartily recommend an excursion to Wales, in the full assurance that they will not be disappointed in their object.

We would recommend the novice never to visit any extensive moors for the purpose of grouse shooting without a companion, or a guide who perfectly understands the nature of the locality to be visited, and the required preparations to be made for it, in the way of dogs, guns, ammunition, and personal appointments, &c., &c. One who does not do thus, often meets with many mortifications and disappointments in his high-raised expectations. We have heard of one who, by some recommendation, having determined to fix his shooting quarters at a village in the precincts of the grouse grounds of the Bishop of Durham, was joined by another grouser, equally experienced and intelligent. The following memorandum of the united efforts of both, as we suppose, was found on the return:—"Retired to rest at eight in the evening, rose at half-past twelve, and having breakfasted, set off by starlight to our grounds; but, as when we arrived there it was still starlight, we sat down on the heather, flattering ourselves that as soon as it was light, our strength being recruited, we should be the better prepared for the work of destruction we contemplated. A dense fog, however, succeeded the dawn, which hid every object from our sight, although our ears were tantalised not only with the chattering of birds, but with the sound also of many shooters in pursuit of them on the other side of the mountain, less obscured by fog. Their guns, as we distinctly heard, were in full practice; but we knew too little of the country, and were too tired, to follow them; so we returned to our quarters, purchased a few young grouse (poult we suppose) at a great price, packed up our traps, sent away Poote by the waggon, and took ourselves off by the coach,—*rismus tenacis amici*." In the detail of red grouse, black grouse, and ptarmigan shooting, which follows, the reader will be presented with many pictures, which bring him into more minute acquaintance with this romantic district. Here Nature appears to wear her sternest features, yet here the sportsman revels in the joys of the chase; for here the lofty precipices swarm with ptarmigan, whose snowy pinions rival the snow itself. A little lower down, on the same mountain, he meets with the blackcock, and, if very far north, he may see the red-deer stalled, and the roe-buck pursued. The eagle and the hawk will hover around him; and, if he be fond of the sublime, he may here indulge himself in viewing Nature in her wildest dress, and look with veneration on that Providence who has given even to these regions charms sufficient to call the southron from his home to visit them.

ANGLING.

BARBEL (this and next month, the best), bream, gudgeons, roach, flounders, chub, dace, eels, bleak, minnows, pike, ruffe, and perch, bite freely.

Ant flies may be procured from June till September in their hills: they are never-failing baits for chub, roach, and dace, if you let your hook hang about six inches from the bottom of the stream.

The great white moth, which can be obtained in the summer evenings in gardens, on trees and shrubs, is a serviceable bait when dishing for roach in the twilight.

The hawthorn fly makes its appearance on hawthorn trees, when the leaves are beginning to sprout; it is a dark-coloured fly, and is used as a bait for trout.

The bonnet fly, which frequents standing grass, is an extremely good bait for chub and dace.

Common flies are, by some anglers, reckoned the best baits for dace and bleak: two or three of them at a time should be put on a No. 10 hook, for dace, and one on a No. 12 hook, for bleak.



SEPTEMBER.

GOLFING.

GOLFING is played with a club and ball. The club is from three to four feet long, according to the height and length of arm of the player. It is seen curved and massive towards the head, to give it scope, weight, and strength. This head, or knob, is formed, for strength, from some very tough wood, as beech; and as it curves and proceeds upwards, it is planed off, so as to adapt itself to the handle, to which it is very firmly glued, and tightly corded down. A want of due attention to these particulars, in the manufacturing it, will render the head liable to split and fly off by either a very hard or indirect stroke. The face of the club is farther secured by a piece of hard bone, and occasionally of ivory, at least half an inch thick. It is also loaded with from four to six ounces of lead, according to the will of the player. The handle is usually bound with cord, list, or velvet, at the pleasure of the owner. It is, however, to be remembered, that the form of the club, the materials of which it is made, and the numbers taken to the golfing ground, vary considerably, according to circumstances and to the habits of the players, the attendant caddy or caddy having usually many varieties to suit every peculiarity under which the ball may be placed; for, in many clubs, it can never be touched by the hand until holed.

The golf ball is about the size of an egg, and is made very firm. It is composed of stout leather, which, having been previously soaked in boiling water, allows of its being first very firmly sewed, and then turned inside out, leaving a small opening only by which it is very forcibly stuffed with feathers. The leather being yet wet, it contracts into a ball of the dimensions stated, but nearly as circular as that used in the game of cricket. It is subsequently painted over with several coats of white paint, in doing which it is requisite that the white lead used should be pure, and exceedingly well ground down; as well as that each coat laid on should become perfectly dry and hard before another is applied. The game is played by two or more persons, so that there be an equal number on each side; but only two balls are used, one belonging to each party, each party also striking in turn; but if the last striker does not drive his ball so far on as that of his opponent, one of his party must then strike one, or perhaps two, more; and the game is thus marked, by calling out one, two, or three more, as the case may be. If more than two are playing, the same person does not strike twice in succession; a miss is counted one. The party who puts the ball into the hole at the fewest strokes wins the game.

The grounds used for this sport vary in different parts of Scotland. Some are nearly square, in which case a hole is made at each corner; but if it be irregular in figure, it is not uncommon to place one at each angle, so that the party still traverse the whole surface, and finish at the spot from whence he started; a quarter of a mile, more or less, being usually allowed between each hole. Besides the club described, as already stated, there are others, usually carried by an attendant for each party. These are called, by way of distinction, *putters*, of which, however, there are several sorts; one being short, stiff

and heavy, similar in figure, but larger in the head, for making a steady and direct stroke when near the hole. Another, formed of iron instead of wood, is used for making a hit at a ball when very unfavourably placed; as in a rut, where the common club would be in danger of breaking. When a ball falls into a hole or rut, from which it is impossible to strike it out, the party is allowed, by a special agreement in some clubs, to take it out with his hand, and throw it up in a line with the spot, which is accounted as one, and he then strikes from where it chances to rest; but, as already observed, this indulgence does not extend to every golfing society.

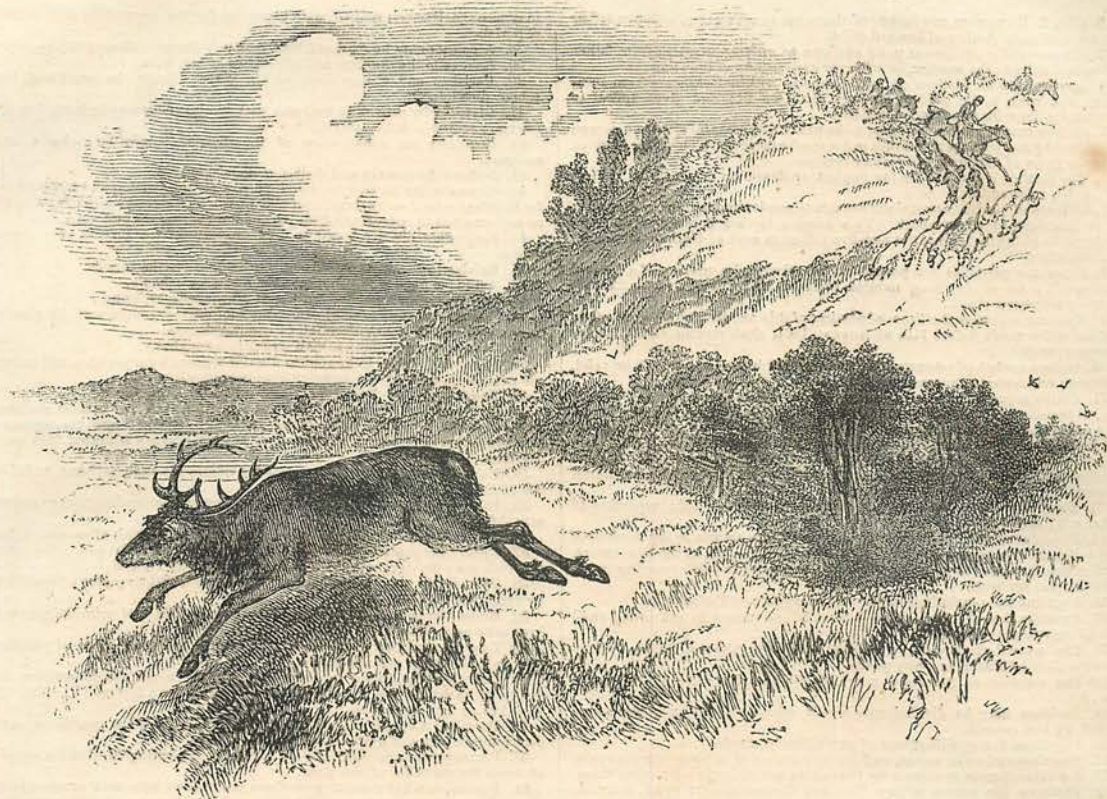
PARTRIDGE SHOOTING.

PARTRIDGE-SHOOTING, the reader need scarcely be told, commences with the present month, and that literally; for, as Colonel Hawker observes, "Most young sportsmen, and many old ones, fancy that *nothing great* can be done on the first day, without they go out as soon as they can see to distinguish a bird from a dog." This, for several reasons, the Colonel considers to be the very worst method that can be adopted; and much game as the Colonel has seen killed in a September day, he does not recollect one solitary instance of anything extraordinary being done very early in the morning, though many persons *talk* of killing ten and even twenty brace before breakfast. Colonel Hawker briefly states the great object in partridge shooting is, first to have good markers judiciously placed, and then to disperse the birds; the best way to do which, is to head your dogs, by taking an extensive circle. The second is, to make no more noise than what cannot absolutely be avoided, by doing as much by signal and whistling, and as little by hallooing, as possible. Thirdly, go first on hills to find, and drive down from them the birds, and then in vales to kill them. Fourthly, when distressed for partridges in a scarce country; at the end of the season, take a horse, and gallop from one turnip-field to another, instead of regularly slaving after inaccessible coverts. After a storm, as soon as the ground is dry, or the next day, birds will lie in a calm; and, after a calm, they will lie in windy weather. Birds are frequently as much on the listen as on the watch; and this is why, towards the end of the season, we sometimes do best in boisterous weather. — *Instructions to Young Sportsmen*, 9th Edit., 1844.

A gamekeeper of Mr. D. Grosvenor, in Dorsetshire, hearing a partridge utter a cry of distress, was attracted by the sound into a piece of oats, when the bird ran round him very much agitated; upon his looking among the corn, he saw a large snake in the midst of the infant brood, which he killed; and perceiving the body of the reptile considerably distended, he opened the belly, when, to his astonishment, two young partridges ran from their horrid prison, and joined their mother; two others were found in the snake's stomach quite dead.

ANGLING.

ROACH, gudgeons, dace, chub, eels, tench, bleak, minnows, barbel, bream, ruffe, pike, trout, perch, and grayling, are in season.



OCTOBER.

HUNTING THE STAG.

THE accompanying sketch is to illustrate the cheering scene described by Somerville in his poem of "The Chase"—Stag-hunting is little known to our metropolitan sportsmen, but as connected with the mimic scene of hunting, such as the Queen's and one or two others. Where it is followed in the wild natural state, according with the habit of the animal and the scenery congenial to it, it is at once noble and cheering, full of daring exploit and courage; and it is the last link of the primitive chase brought down by our forefathers. The deer has suffered no mutilation; its antlers show him to be a stag of full head, therefore arrived at maturity; and from the determined manner of his going, he is likely to lead his followers "through wood and brake, o'er moss and moor," a pretty good chevvy. There are few hunting establishments now such as this describes, where the animal is drawn for and found in his wild state. One reason may be that they are not numerous enough to afford sport, the forest and wild districts no longer being so extensive as formerly; and we have lost the real stag hound, which, of course, robs it of much of its real character. But it is a noble sport, full of mimic war and exhilarating scenes.

The following poetical sketch of the Hunted Stag is very beautiful:—

What sounds are on the mountain blast?
Like bullet from the arbalast,
Was it the hunted quarry past
Right up Ben-tedi's side?
So near, so rapidly, he dash'd,
Yon lichen'd bough has scarcely plash'd
Into the torrent's tide.
Ay!—the good hound may bay beneath
The hunter wind his horn;
He dared ye through the flooded Teith
As a warrior in his scorn!
Dash the red rowel in the steed,
Spur, laggards, while ye may!
St. Hubert's staff to a stripling reed,
He dies no death to-day!
"Forward!" nay, waste not idle breath,
Gallants, ye win no greenwood wreath;
His antlers dance above the heath,
Like chieftain's plumed helm;
Right onward for the western peak,
Where breaks the sky in one white streak,
See, Isabel, in bold relief,
To Faney's eye, Glenartney's chief,
Guarding his ancient realm.
So motionless, so noiseless there,
His foot on rock, his head in air,
Like sculptor's breathing stone!
Then, snorting from the rapid race,
Snuffs the free air a moment's space,
Glares grimly on the baffled chase,
And seeks the covert lone.

Hunting has been a favourite sport in Britain for many centuries. Dionysius (B.C. 50) tells us that the North Britons lived, in great part, upon

the food they procured by hunting. Strabo states that the dogs bred in Britain were highly esteemed on the Continent, on account of their excellent qualities for hunting; and Cæsar tells us that venison constituted a great portion of the food of the Britons, who did not eat hares. Hunting was also in ancient times a royal and noble sport: Alfred the Great hunted at twelve years of age; Athelstan, Edward the Confessor, Harold, William the Conqueror, William Rufus, and John were all good huntsmen; Edward II. reduced hunting to a science, and established rules for its practice; Henry IV. appointed a *master of the game*; Edward III. hunted with sixty couples of stag-hounds; Elizabeth was a famous huntswoman; and James I. preferred hunting to hawking or shooting. The bishops and abbots of the middle ages hunted with great state. Ladies also joined in the chase from the earliest times; and a lady's hunting-dress in the fifteenth century scarcely differed from the riding habit of the present day. Even the citizens of London anciently had their stag-hunt. In short, in former times, hunting was almost the sole business of life among the English squires; and though their tastes are now much varied, this original pastime, in all its forms, continues to be eagerly followed.

Stag-hunting was formerly very perilous, because, when the stag turned to bay, the ancient hunter went in upon, and killed or disabled, the desperate stag. At certain times of the year, this was deemed dangerous, a wound from the stag's horn being considered poisonous, and more to be feared than one from the tusks of the boar: hence,—

"If thou be hurt with hart, it brings thee to thy bier,
But barber's hand will boar's hurt heal, thereof thou need'st not fear."

SIR WALTER SCOTT.

PHEASANT SHOOTING.

ON the 1st of October, that beautiful bird, the Pheasant, becomes a legitimate object of pursuit, though many persons postpone the commencement of pheasant shooting till November, and wisely so, since these birds, generally speaking, are not sufficiently grown by the first-named period. The pheasant is common in almost all the southern parts of the old Continent, whence it was originally introduced into this country; but, in America, the true pheasant is not known.

The pheasant is a bird of slow flight, presenting a large mark, and is easily killed by the experienced sportsman; but we are doubtful whether the tyro does not stand a better chance when a twiddling snipe rises before him. The tremendous bustle and whizzing which a pheasant makes in getting on the wing, so agitates the inexperienced shooter, that he not only pulls the trigger too soon, but generally without taking aim, and has to endure the mortification of seeing the bird fly away unhurt. A cock pheasant, when pushed from a bush or thicket, generally rises perpendicularly, till he has cleared every obstacle, before he goes off horizontally; the moment for shooting is when he assumes the horizontal direction; if the bird be fired at while it is rising, nineteen times out of twenty, the shot will be thrown below the pheasant. The hen pheasant, when pushed, seldom rises so high as the cock, or yet takes so long a flight.

ANGLING.

TENCH, gudgeons, roach, chub, dace, minnows, bleak, pike, trout, and grayling, are in season; trolling or bottom fishing for chub and roach may be successful; fly-fishing is generally over.



NOVEMBER

FOX HUNTING

TALLY HO! Tally ho! all unconsciously shouts the reader as he glances at our sketch of the thoroughly English sport of fox-hunting. Tally ho! echo we; and the cheerful sound wakes a feeling, strong, fresh, and invigorating, in the hearts of all true lovers of the chase.

See how he steals along! Now, if he lasts forty-five minutes, with huntsman and hounds at him upon such good terms at starting, and then a check should come, the odds are in favour of pug. Note the pace of the fox!—it is extraordinary—he does not seem to go fast, or to be alarmed, or in a hurry; for the first field or so you fancy that the leading hounds would pick him up, but the nearest hedge-row settles that point; you lose sight of him there, and the chances are that you do not see him again that day, if you have anything less than a first-rate horse. With a good scent for the first half-hour, you have little to think of but to keep as near as you can to your hounds, without distressing your horse, for at this season especially foxes travel a long way from home; they do not ring about or wait, and if baffled at one point quickly make for another. The first thirty minutes weed off the majority of a large field, and then begin the joys of the chase; pace is settled down to a steady rate when horse and hound can live together, and the fury of the onset has ceased.

But who shall tell of fox-hunting or Melton, while Nimrod himself is in the field? Hark to him:—

“The pencil of a painter is now wanting; and unless the painter should be a sportsman, even his pencil would be worth little. What a country is before him; what a panorama does it present! Not a field of less than forty—some a hundred acres—and no more signs of the plough than in the wilds of Siberia. See the hounds in a body that might be covered by a damask table-cloth—every stern down, and every head up, for there is no need of stooping, the scent lying breast-high. But the crash! the music! how to describe these! Reader, there is no crash now, and not much music. It is the tinker that makes great noise over a little work; but at the pace these hounds are going there is no time for babbling. Perchance one hound in five may throw his tongue as he goes to inform his comrades, as it were, that the villain is on before them, and most musically do the light notes of Vocal and Venus fall on the ear of those who may be within reach to catch them. But who is so fortunate in this second burst, nearly as terrible as the first? Our fancy supplies us again, and we think we could name them all. If we look to the left, nearly abreast of the pack, we see six men going gallantly, and quite as straight as the hounds themselves are going; and on the right are four more, riding equally well, though the former have rather the best of it, owing to having had the inside of the hounds at the last two turns, which must be placed to the chapter of accidents. A short way in the rear, by no means too much so to enjoy this brilliant run, are the rest of the *élite* of the field, who had come up at the first check; and a few who, thanks to the goodness of their steeds, and their determination to be with the hounds, appear as if dropped from the clouds. Some, however, begin to show symptoms of distress. Two horses are seen loose in the distance—a report is flying about that one of the field is badly hurt, and something is heard of a collar-bone being broken, others say it is a leg; but the pace is too good to inquire. A cracking of rails is now heard, and one gentleman's horse is to be seen resting, nearly balanced, across one of them, his rider being on his back in the ditch, which is on the landing side. ‘Who is he!’ says Lord Brudenel to Jack Stevens. ‘Can't tell, my lord; but I thought it was a queerish place when I came o'er it before him.’”

Have we led your imagination, good reader, into the sport! If so, we

can but wish you a good place in the fray, and the ability to keep it.

In 1793, a fox in the neighbourhood of Imber, Wilts, being hard run, took shelter under the covering of a well, and by the endeavours used to extricate him thence, was precipitated to the bottom, a depth of one hundred feet: the bucket was let down; he laid hold of it, and was drawn up some way, when he again fell: the bucket being let down a second time, he was drawn up safe; after which he was turned off, and beat the hounds.

Dr. Goldsmith asserts, that a bitch fox, which it appears had but one cub, was unkenelled by the hounds, near Chelmsford, in Essex, when the animal, braving every danger, took the cub in her mouth and ran with it for some miles. At length being driven through a farm-yard, she was attacked by a mastiff, and obliged to drop her cub, which was taken up by the farmer. She, however, beat her pursuers, and got clear off.

In the year 1785, the hounds of Mr. B. Dudley frequently had a good drag on the banks of the Crouch river in Essex, but without finding their fox. As, however, they were one morning drawing the remote church-yard of Crickseth, which was overgrown with thick bushes, a labouring man informed the huntsman that he was too late, as renard had crept off when he heard the hounds challenge about a quarter of an hour ago. In consequence of this information the hounds chopped in different spots for several miles; but a fall of sleet prevented their reaching the fox that day. A week or two afterwards he was found in an adjoining copse, and after a lingering run of upwards of two hours he shaped his course to the churchyard in question. The hounds reached the place and came to a check; upon which a bitch, named Gaylass, raised herself against an old buttress of the church, and gave tongue. The master of the hounds dismounted, and, with another of the gentlemen, ascended the buttress up to the roof of the church, which was very low, and thickly covered with ivy, amongst which they found several fresh kennels. Some of the sportsmen below lifted several of the hounds upon the roof, where they were instantly in full cry, and where the fox was immediately killed.

The late Mr. Selby had a tame fox that used to run with his fox-hounds; and this circumstance had not the effect of preventing the dogs from pursuing their chase in the fields, in which, it would appear, the tame fox eagerly joined.

In 1805, Mr. Salter, of Rickmansworth, Herts, had a fox that lay constantly in the kennel with his harriers; he was completely master of the feeding-yard, not suffering a hound to eat near him until he was satisfied himself.

In the year 1813, a curious exhibition took place in the Hundred House Meadow, Witley:—Five wild rabbits were singly turned down, at an assigned distance, before a dog-fox, trained by Mr. C. Tearne, of Stockton, Worcestershire; and, after an excellent course, were severally killed by renard in very capital style.

At the Golden Bear, Reading, some years ago, a young fox had been placed in a wheel, and taught to turn the jack. After some time, he escaped and regained his native woods. Here he met the fate common to his species; he was pursued by the hounds, and, in his flight, ran through the town of Reading, and, springing over the half-door of the kitchen, jumped into the wheel and resumed his old occupation, in the very place where he had formerly been brought up, and thus saved his life.

ANGLING.

ROACH, pike, chub, trout, and grayling, are the only fish in season. The baits used in January will do for this month.