

THE STRAW

photographer, whose hunting is a chase of celebrities and a wild escaping in and out among their horses' heels. But already the scarlet was sprinkled thicker and lit up the landscape, threatened as it was by fugitive flakes of snow. On a day like this there was no mistaking the pale Londoner huddling near the wall, feeling all this misery dear at three guineas, eyeing his hireling as a treacherous enemy with whom he was unacquainted, and shuddering in his skin. The hardy follower turned out with an extra thickness of flannel under his waistcoat and an invincible complexion fired instead of shrivelled by the wind.

There are men who can hunt with a pack for years and still slink into the field unnoticed, but Gay had no chance of that. He rode in at the gate hailed on all sides as a prodigal, because he had been missed of late. His brown mare picked her way with practised friendliness into the group of squatting hounds, but the huntsman was being cross-examined by an importunate lady, who wished to find out the faults of an animal that had once passed through his hands, and who was not to be contented by his non-committal verdict: "All I can say is, my lady, he's not your