

### My Only Day's Hunting.

"Please, sir, are these for you?" It was my man who spoke, and as he did so, he held up for inspection an immaculate pair of "tops" in one hand and a pair of painfully new breeches in the other, while his countenance wore an expression of mingled fear and astonishment.

With an inward sinking at my heart I turned from my morning paper and outlet, and having nodded a gloomy assent to his query, said, "That will do, James; lay them on the sofa."

The above conversation took place in my bachelor apartments in the Albany, the reason for the appearance therein of the aforesaid tops and breeches I am about to explain. I am not a hunting man. I never could see any joke in bumping about on a hard piece of pig-skin in pursuit of a dragged piece of vermin called a fox, although some people say the fox enjoys the fun. It is all very well for those that like it; and Mr. Jorrick's of immortal memory, may call hunting "the sport of things—the image of war without its guilt and only 25 per cent of its danger," if he likes, but I confess I can't see it in that light. It is with feelings the reverse of pleasant therefore, that I received and accepted an invitation from Sir Harry Bullfinch to stay a week at his "box" in Warwickshire, and avail myself of his hospitality and mount with the renowned pack which hunted the county. I was urged to this acceptance of what in my saner moments I should have indignantly treated as a practical joke by a sile attack of the master passion. I met Sir Harry and his daughter Kate in London, during the past season. We had frequently met at various balls and entertainments, and on several occasions had enjoyed the fragrance of Bushy park and the still delights of a boat on the upper reaches of the Thames but with my natural timidity I had never ventured to ask the question which was forever on the tip of my tongue, but never got further. The invitation appeared to hold out promises of quiet *te-a-tete*, so I electrified my tailor and boot-maker with orders for the necessary "togs" with which to carry on the campaign.

I remember having somewhere heard or read that in order to acquire an easy and graceful seat on horseback, sitting astride on a chair and holding on by the back, was excellent practice, so, having called James and given him most express instructions to deny me even to my most intimate friends, I proceeded to struggle into perhaps the tightest pair of cords that were ever made for mortal man, and, with the aid of a brandy and soda and a couple of boot hooks, to pull on a pair of boots which nearly gave me a fit of apoplexy and made my corns burn for hours. Armed with a cutting whip, I then mounted astride the strongest chair in the apartment, and continued the exhilarating exercise with the the firmness of a stoic and a martyr, and with only one interval for luncheon, throughout the entire day.

My train left the Great Northern station at 4.30 and landed me safely at my destination. In due course I found myself seated next to the fair Kate, with my legs comfortably stretched under Sir Harry's mahogany.

"I suppose our dull country pack will seem quite a second rate to you," said Kate.

I was murmuring something in reply, when Sir Harry cut in with:

"Ah! I've got a splendid mount for you to-morrow, my boy! A trifle playful perhaps—hasn't been hunted this season, but will carry you like a bird."

"Oh, yes," said Kate, "Czar is such a nice creature."

"Indeed!" said I. "I am rejoicing to hear it. Of course you accompany us to the meet?"

"Yes," she replied, "and papa has said that as you are going out I might even follow the hounds a little way. You'll look after me, won't you, Mr. De-Boot?"

I promised to do my devoirs, but in my heart of hearts thought I should require some one to look after me.

The following morning at breakfast, which was early on account of our having to go some distance to the meet, the horses were brought round—a sturdy, thickest, quiet-looking weight carrier, a neat-looking gray mare, and a bright fidgety chestnut. The latter gave his attendant groom some trouble, and insisted on waltzing around on his hind legs a good deal more than appeared to me to be necessary.

"I am afraid your papa will find that animal rather troublesome," I remarked to Kate.

"That," she answered, "oh, that's not papa's—that's the one you are going to ride—Czar."

My appetite left me, and as I rose and walked, in as unconcerned a manner as I could assume, to the window, saw that Czar had reversed the order of things by putting his head between his fore legs and lashing out with his heels in a very vicious-looking and anything but "playful" manner.

A general move was now made to the front door. Kate looked at me and evidently expected me to "put her up" but I knew better than to attempt it, and

pretended to be intent on buckling a strap of the pair of spurs Sir Harry had lent me until she was safe in the saddle. Czar was then brought up for me to mount, which, after several abortive attempts, I effected, and we all jogged along together toward the meet. Contrary to my expectations Czar behaved in a most exemplary manner, and I even ventured to swing my whip with a jaunty air without his taking the slightest notice. But it was too good to last. Presently a red coat popped out on us from a by-lane and the Czar's ears began to twitch. Two or three more horse men overtook us, and his tail began to describe circles, and he proceeded on his way with a crab-like movement, which was anything but elegant and eminently disconcerting.

Almost before I could realize the position, a stern voice shouted, "Now, you sir, mind the hounds will you?" and a muttered oath, accompanied by an expression which sounded very much like "tailor" drew my attention to the fact that we had arrived in a field by the side of a wood, in which was gathered some seventy or eighty horsemen and a pack of hounds. Luckily for myself, and also for the hounds, on whom Czar seemed to think it fun to prance, the master gave the order to "throw off."

It nearly came being prophetic in my case. In less time than it takes to write a fox was started. I lost my hat and my head at one and the same moment, and nearly my seat, and the next thing that I remember with any degree of distinctness is clinging with the blind energy of a drowning man to the pommel of the saddle, regarding with despair a huge fence which seemed to approach me at a terrible rate. There was a sudden rush, a tremendous spring—I seem to have left the lower part of my waistcoat and its contents on the other side of the obstacle—and, with a jolt which pitched me somewhere in the vicinity of the Czar's ears, we were over.

The field we landed in was a stifiish fallow, but Czar still "urged on his wild career" with unabated speed. I shook back into the saddle, and a passing regret that I had neglected to insure my life against accidents fitted through my mind. I concluded to cling to the pommel, and in this manner we negotiated three more fences, and got into a quiet lane, when to my astonishment, Czar stopped dead short. We had, to my sincere delight, lost the hounds. I patted Czar gently on the neck, and quickly dismounting, led him slowly down the lane. We had not proceeded far when I discerned a country lad coming towards me carrying in his hand my lost hat, which had been battered out of all shape by a horse's hoof. I recovered my lost head gear, climbed back into the saddle intending to walk Czar quietly homewards, when I could discover in what direction home was. But as ill luck would have it, at that precise moment the sound of a horn was heard far off in the distance. Czar pricked up his ears and gave a sudden start, and on my attempting to check him, had reared straight on end, while I lovingly clasped him round the neck with both arms, and with one plunge forward and upward we left that country and lane forever. We landed in a pasture, and were going at a fearful pace up a slight incline. Arrived at the top, the whole hunt was to be seen coming down the valley.

And now Czar would take no denial. Rushing down the slope, at a speed to which all former exertions of his had been mere child's play, flew over a double post and rails, and I found myself a good first in front of the foremost flight of horsemen and close on to the hounds. Onward! still onward! until looming up in the distance appeared a straggling line of stunted willows which, even to my uninitiated vision meant "water." Splash! there goes the fox! Splash! splash! there goes the hounds!

I hear voices shouting behind me as if in warning, but all I can do is to hold on and trust in Providence. Our pace, if possible increases, and, with a sort of idea of going up in a balloon, Czar and myself seemed suspended in the air miles above the brook. It seems ages before we come down again, which we do with a jerk that would have unseated me had it not been for Czar suddenly springing forward and shaking me back to my proper place. We rush on to where the hounds seem to be scrambling for something and quarrelling amongst themselves—they have run into the fox and Czar comes to a standstill just outside the worrying pack.

Up comes the first whip and flogs them off their prey, and I see Sir Henry advancing towards me red in the face, and violently gesticulating with his heavy hunting crop. What have I done? Have I unconsciously fringed some point in hunting etiquette or have I hurt Czar? Neither one nor the other. Sir Harry hastily fingering himself off his steaming horse, comes up to me, and seizing me by the hand nearly wrings my arm off and bursts out with:

"Well done, my boy! You rascal, you! You've pounded the whole of us. Never saw such going in all my life. Don't believe there's another man in the field that could have done it. Here Lord George—to the noble master who at this moment rode up—"permit me to introduce my friend Mr. De Boots."

"Delighted to make your acquaintance, sir," says his Lorkship, shaking me heartily by the hand. I trust to be able to show you some good sport if you are thinking of remaining in our country, though if you do we shall all have to look to our laurels, for you went like a bird, sir."

While he was speaking several gentlemen rode up, to all of whom I am introduced, and all of whom praise what they are pleased to call my "plucky riding." Miss Kate comes up as the last obsequies are being performed, and on the huntsman, obedient to a nod from his lordship, who is no lover of women in the hunting field, presenting me with the brush, I handed it to her with all the grace compatible with mud stained habiliments, and a crushed and battered hat.

We rode home together—Sir Henry and an old crony of his riding some distance in the rear. Czar was complacent and had apparently had quite enough at any rate for that day; so thinking that I might never have another such opportunity, I gently took Kate's whip and ventured to put that question which had been so long on the tip of my tongue.

Her answer was a whisper "yes," but suddenly turning to me she added—"On one condition."

"Name it dearest," I replied.

"You are so rash and daring that you must promise me never to hunt after we are married!"

Need I say how readily I gave the required pledge, and how faithfully I kept it.

#### The Great Maudie.

I was at an "at home" yesterday, and saw a restheticism in its glory, although it is to be observed that many devoted disciples of the guild, unable to resist the pressure of public ridicule in the papers and on the stage, have gone over to the Philistines. Oscar Wilde was, however, there, and in his glory, for his long hair and sickly-green cravat had an unique coat and a pair of trousers to keep them company. "His trousers are indeed, too too," whispered my neighbor, "for there is material enough in them to make four pair!" The great Maudie was flopping on a divan, his hands folded, his eyes upturned, while a "precious" creature in kindred "art colours" communed with him. Presently, while a long-haired being played upon the violoncello and ere a young lady had burst forth into a rapturous German lied, I noticed in the hallway a decidedly pretty girl who had just arrived. She was trying to take off a Newmarket coat which fitted her so closely that one of the buttons burst as she did so, and this Newmarket coat—oh, "precious" incongruity of cut and material!—was made of "crushed strawberry" hued cloth. When, with the assistance of the page and her friends, she had succeeded in disembarrassing herself of this garment she stood revealed in a "quite too too" robe of palest green cloth, trimmed with olive velvet, and made in the exact style of that worn by Marguerita in "Faust," down to the chatelaine pocket and the old silver clasp and girdle. Top this with an unmistakably nineteenth century bonnet, and foot it with boots of our day, and you may well believe that this lovely but misguided girl looked as though she had just stepped from some such extravaganza as "Le Petit Faust."

The hostess did not on this occasion—and does not—encourage this style of attire by personal emulation. Like the Baroness de Chamber in "Frou-Frou," she lets other people make themselves ridiculous.

#### Unfair Advantages.

An Irishman, finding his cash at a low ebb, resolved to adopt "the road" as a professional means of refreshing the exchequer; and having provided himself with a huge horse-pistol, proceeded forthwith to the conventional "lonely common," and lay in wait. The no less conventional "farmer returning from market with a bag of money" of course soon appeared, to whom enter Pat with the regulation highwayman offer of choice, "Your money or your life!" a remark fortified by the simultaneous exhibition of the firearm in the usual way. The farmer, who was a Quaker, essayed to temporize. "I would not have thee stain thy soul with sin, friend; and didst thou rob me of my gold, it would be theft; and didst thou kill me, it would be murder. But hold! A bargain is no sin, but a commerce between two honest men. I will give thee this bag of gold for the pistol which thou holdest at my ear." The unsuspecting amateur Macbeth, yielding perhaps to the Quaker's logic and solicitude for his spiritual welfare, made the exchange without a moment's hesitation. "Now, friend," cried the wily Ephraim, leveling the weapon, "give me back my gold, or I'll blow thy brains out!" "Blaze away thy sin, darlint!" said Pat. "Sure, there's niver a drop of powder in it!" The result was a sold Quaker.

#### July.

During this month summer complaints commence their ravages. To be forewarned is to be forearmed. Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry is the best known preventative and cure for all forms of bowel complaints and sickness incident to the summer season.

#### Free of Charge.

All persons suffering from Coughs, Colds, Asthma, Bronchitis, Loss of Voice, or any affection of the Throat and Lungs, are requested to call at your drug store and get a Trial Bottle of Dr. King's New Discovery for Consumption, free of charge, which will convince them of its wonderful merits and show what a regular dollar-size bottle will do. Call early.

#### August.

The summer season now reaches its climax, and is prolific in developing bowel complaints. Over-indulgence in fruit, immoderate drinking of iced waters and summer beverages, in a few hours produce fatal ravages among children and adults. Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry is the most reliable remedy for all forms of summer complaints. Safe, pleasant and prompt in its effects. All dealers keep it.

#### Do Not be Deceived.

In these times of quick medicine advertisements everywhere, it is truly gratifying to find one remedy that is worthy of praise, and which really does as recommended. Electric Bitters we can vouch for as being a true and reliable remedy, and one that will do as recommended. They invariably cure stomach and Liver Complaints, Diseases of the Kidneys and Urinary difficulties. We know whereof we speak, and can readily say, give them a trial. Sold at fifty cents a bottle, by all druggists.—[Adv.]

#### Nature Makes no Mistakes.

Nature's own remedy for bowel complaints, cholera morbus, cholera, cramps, vomiting, sea sickness, cholera infantum, diarrhoea, dysentery, and all diseases of a like nature belonging to the summer season, is Dr. Fowler's Extract of Wild Strawberry, which can be obtained of all dealers in medicine.

#### The Modern Anecdote Relator.

"You remember that fellow who wrote, what's his name? You know, he made some money on one of the western railroads; I forget what they call it."

"Well, what of him?"

"Why, not long ago he was in, what's that town in Wisconsin? You know."

"Don't mind the name of the town; what did he do?"

"What the deuce is the name of that town? A big politician came from there. You know him. Well, this fellow—"

"What fellow?"

"I can't think of his name. It's a good joke and I nearly died when I heard it. He'd come from that big plantation in Louisiana kept by—by: Who's that big banker in St. Louis? The man who built a line of steamboats from Keokuk to—T'll think of the name in a minute—the town at the mouth of—you know that river in Arkansas. Anyway he'd come up on the—that road that runs at the west bank of the Mississippi from that place opposite Cairo. Consolidated with the Cairo and Fulton road. What's the name of that line?"

"Don't know. Never in that country. What did your man do that was so very funny?"

"Why, he'd come up from that platform on this line to the town in Wisconsin, and struck for the—that hotel on the corner of Jefferson and that other street. Named after a Frenchman. Strange I can't remember it. Don't you know the house?"

"Never heard of it. Don't know anything about it. Go on with your story."

"Well, he got there, and he perpetrated the best pun you ever heard on the landlord's name. The landlord got off a pretty good thing on this man's name, but I can't remember what it was. Any how, this man asked the landlord, 'Why are you like an insurance company?—he named the company, but I've forgotten what it was. 'Why are you like this insurance company?' Give it up."

"Yes, I give it up."

"Well, sir, the answer is the funniest thing you ever heard. It broke me all up when I heard it!"

"What is it?"

"Why, if I could remember the name of the landlord, I'd know in a moment. Who's that fellow that invented the—pahaw! that machine for making—what are they called? You understand, something about stair rods."

"Never heard of him."

"It's the same name except the last syllable. Funny I didn't catch it."

"Is that all of your story?"

"Why, yes. You see if I could remember my man's name and the insurance company and the landlord's name, I'd bust you right open with the best thing you ever listened to. By the way, we had a large party at our house last night, and the queerest thing is that I didn't know I'd forgotten to invite you until my wife asked why you wasn't there. Good one on you, wasn't it! I said to—, that fellow I loaned twenty-five dollars to on your guarantee, what's his name, fat fellow? Never paid it, and I wish you would let me have the money."

"Don't remember the name; don't recollect the circumstance, and didn't know you had a wife. I'd heard you had a party, but didn't remember the number of your house. I would have forgotten to come if you had invited me," and the bored man departed in dudgeon.

A vast proportion of society is made a vacuum to memory, and some of the shining social lights of this place will compare pleasantly in conversational ability with the genius here portrayed.

**AFTER THE FIRE.**  
**JOHN STORY**  
The Tinmith is still to the front.  
I have pleasure to state that despite the inconvenience I was put to in my business by the recent fire in my premises, that I am now in full blast again, prepared to give the greatest bargains in Goderich in  
**STOVES, TINWARE, LAMP GOODS,**  
and every other line in the business.  
I would also return my thanks to the Fire Brigade and people of Goderich for the successful efforts in saving my property in my absence from home, at the late fire.  
**John Story.**

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