

cent pleasures which man enjoys to perfection when alone with nature, away from the strife and turmoil of society, where the gun and rifle are his truest and most trustworthy friends.

The first episode in field sports I can remember was hunting water-rats, by the side of a beautiful trout-stream that flowed round the lower portion of the grounds attached to my boyhood's home. In those days I possessed a brace of terriers, which were my constant associates; they understood my voice as well as if they had been of my own race; they obeyed my orders more promptly than any Eastern slave; there existed between us a bond of affection that was indescribable, yet all-powerful. Wherever I went, they accompanied me; whether it was to fish, walk, or ride, Quiz and Gip were never far off, and at night they frequently became my bedfellows.

In the autumn, when the crops had been gathered and housed, the unfortunate rats sought seclusion and shelter among the tangled weeds and rushes that margined the stream, for the scythe of the reaper had exposed their ordinary retreats and hiding-places.

As soon as lessons were over, I and my canine pets repaired to our hunting-ground. The dogs knew well their work; every possible hiding-place was beaten; flags, burrs, or waterlilies, were thoroughly scrutinised, till at length a hole containing our game was found, or a new and strong trail discovered. A sharp quick bark would indicate the welcome news, and the fun and excitement soon became fast and furious. At length the game is driven to the water; a sudden splash, as if a