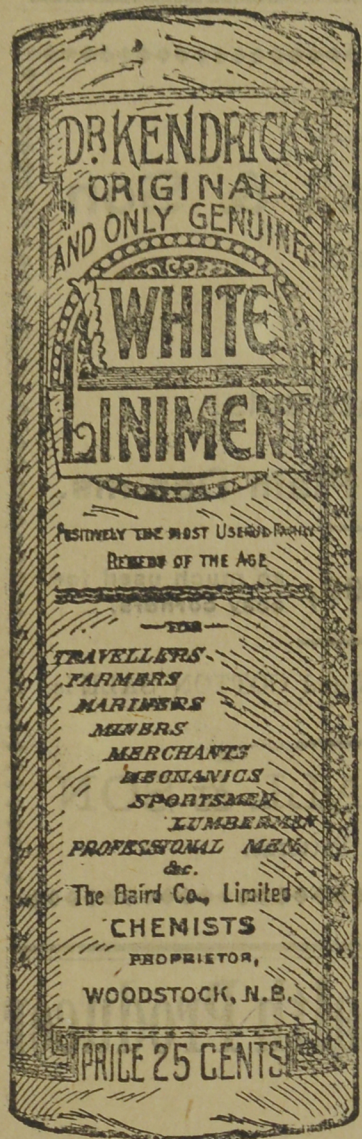




THE KING AS A HUNTER

A DAY WITH HIS MAJESTY AND THE GUN AT SANDRINGHAM.

Has the Reputation of Being One of the Keenest of Shots—10,000 Pheasants Bred At Sandringham Every Year—Uses a Cob to Carry Him to the Place of Meeting for the Day's Sport.

The time of year which King Edward likes best of all is that which affords him the most abundant opportunities for the practice of his favorite sport of shooting. Both at Sandringham and the country seats of his friends he is constantly busy with his gun among the pheasants and other game. Among the best sportsmen of the country the King has the reputation of being one of the keenest shots of them all, says "Tit-Bits." He likes most of all to bang away at an overhead "rocketeer," and rarely misses.

The gun-room at Sandringham is one of the finest in the country. It is lined with glass cases containing a variety of weapons for every conceivable purpose, and yet complete as it is there is rarely a year but the King adds some new gun to it, the special points of which have taken his fancy. The King's guns are, of course, hammerless, and are quite plain and unornamented, while their distinguishing feature is that they have a very light pull on the left trigger.

The game-room, also, where the spoils of the day's shooting are temporarily preserved, is a very wonderful department, and it is said that there is only one in the world—that established by the late Baron Hirsch, which is capable of containing 10,000 head of game at the same time—which is bigger than it. About 6,000 head can be comfortably stored in it at once.

Most elaborate arrangements are made in advance for a good pheasant shooting season on the King's estates. At Sandringham, under the care of the head keeper, 10,000 pheasants are bred every year. The eggs are first of all placed in incubators, and shortly before the hatching time comes on they are removed and laid under 1,000 barn-door fowls. When they are hatched they are arranged in pens and carried on trolleys, especially made for the purpose, all over the estate, each farm being required to keep, rear and grain-feed a certain number of them. So well and thoroughly is this done that when the autumn comes there are no finer pheasants in Great Britain than those which fly on the King's preserves, so white and tender is their flesh and so wonderfully plump are they.

One of the King's shooting parties usually consists of about eight or ten guns, and every man belonging to it is invariably a first-rate shot, for the King himself, being such a good marksman, finds it difficult to tolerate mediocrity in this respect in others. Besides, it is well remembered that many years ago His Majesty on one occasion received a good many pellets in his clothing from the gun of a very reckless and careless sportsman, who was quite oblivious to the safety of future crowned heads so long as he was permitted to fire away at the game in his own fashion. Never in his life has the King injured anyone, or come at all near to doing so.

When the King and his friends are going out shooting notice is given the day before all over the estate, and farm work, except that which can be quietly and unobtrusively pursued, is then practically suspended for the day. Even the country falls

are warned to keep clear of the lanes. The keepers turn out in the royal livery of green and gold, and the hundred beaters wear picturesque smocks, with hatbands of scarlet. Mr. Jackson, the head keeper, finally goes over the whole of the ground to see that all is in apple-pie order, and that the game carts are properly disposed at those points where the guns are expected to be busiest.

On such a morning the King does not usually breakfast with his guests, but leaves everyone to do just as he likes so long as he arrives at the meeting place at the appointed hour, which is most frequently between 10 and 11 o'clock. As soon as the King appears on the scene the shooting begins. Each sportsman works with from two to four guns, two loaders constantly preparing them for him.

The King of late has taken to using a little cob to carry him from point to point when any distance has to be traversed, and he always takes with him a little one-legged shooting stool, for resting during a weary wait, at which times he will usually regale his guests with a good story from his inimitable collection. The lunch in the middle of the day, either taken in the open air, at a farmhouse or in a special apartment at Wolferton Station, is always very substantial, but quite plain, a kind of Irish stew, to which the King is very partial when out shooting, frequently making its appearance on the menu.

The guns cease fire at 4 o'clock. It often happens on the occasion of a really big shoot that from 2,000 to 3,000 head of game will be accounted for. At the close of the day their numbers, down to a single pheasant, are entered in the game book, which has been kept very accurately ever since shooting began at Sandringham. It shows that from 1870 to 1880 between 6,800 and 8,700 head of game were shot every year, and that thenceforth the bags largely increased, until in the winter of 1885 no fewer than 16,000 head were accounted for. After a day's shoot the results of it are always spread out on the lawn for His Majesty's inspection before dinner. Then they are sent to hospitals, charitable institutions, His Majesty's friends and the tenantry.

It may not be generally known that there is scarcely any form of game, big or small, which the King has not shot in his time. He has shot elephants when in Ceylon, and

according to the prescribed custom he personally cut off the tail of the first one that he killed. When he was in India he shot leopards, cheetahs and tigers, and was amazingly skillful and daring in doing so.

On one occasion he shot six tigers in one morning, two of them being killed outright with single shots from his gun. He set his heart on shooting a crocodile when he was in Egypt, and in order to accomplish his purpose he spent many days in anxious search for one, repeatedly being out of bed at 4.30 o'clock in the morning, and lying half an hour later in sand holes or in the mud on the banks of the Nile. At last he shot a beauty. He stayed up the whole night through on several occasions in a most anxious endeavor to add a hyena to his bag, but he failed, and it is the only thing that the King has ever wanted to shoot and not shot.

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No. 317 Suburban for Marysville. 6.15
" 319 Suburban for Marysville. 10.00
" 321 Suburban for Marysville. 11.15
" 323 Suburban for Marysville. 15.00
" 325 Suburban for Marysville. 17.10
" 327 Suburban for Marysville. 18.25
" 329 Suburban for Marysville. 21.00

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No. 302 Express from Montreal, Quebec, Chatham and Loggieville. 13.05
No. 304 Mixed from Chatham Junction, Chatham and Loggieville. 18.25
No. 318 Suburban from Marysville. 8.15
" 320 Suburban from Marysville. 11.00
" 322 Suburban from Marysville. 15.25
" 324 Suburban from Marysville. 17.05
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