FALCONRY.

From "Bell's Life in London."

Mr. Editor.—Having been in the habit of amusing myself during the last few years with the training and flying of different species of hawks, I am induced to offer a few observations on the subject for the assistance of those who, like myself, wish to see an old national sport once more in or those Without, however, any pretension to assume the title of "an accomplished falconer," I should feel glad to be the means of pointing out to say who may not hitherto have had practical experience of the art what they are likely to expect. In the first place, no man becomes a falconer, in the proper sense of the word, at once; unlike the poet, a falconer 'fit non nascitur," and the beginner has generally far more to learn than to teach, which time and observation alone can effect. A little work called "Observations on Hawking," by Sir John Sebright, published in 1828, gives an outline of all that is necessary, but in carrying these instructions into practice, every one must, to a certain extent, act upon his own judgment. In the next place, I think I may fairly say that the only own judg British species of falcon really worth the time and trouble devoted to the training is the peregrine. Sad it is that so noble a bird should in general be handed over as "vermin" to the gun and traps of the keeper, and in consequence that it has now become so difficult to procure. There are other species, as the hobby, merlin, and sparrow hawk, which, though of but little value, when peregrines can be obtained, still afford amusement and practice to the young falconer; the two former being falcons, or longwinged hawks, are trained in the same manner as the peregrine, with the exception that I think it a more simple plan to dispense, in their case, with the lure, and accustom them always to return to the fist, like shortwinged hawks; while the latter, being of a very different disposition, require an equally different mode of treatment. The great objection, however, to the merlin and sparrow hawk, as I have found, is that both of them are very apt indeed to die suddenly before their first moult, and probably when their training is just completed. The hobby appears to be of a more hardy constitution, but as those I have had have been, generally, adult, wild-caught birds, I cannot say how the case might prove with nestlings.

To commence with the management of the peregrine falcon. This bird may be taken and trained at any age. The easiest mode, however, and in some respects the best, and that to which I have been most accustomed, is to secure nestlings. It is of the utmost consequence that these should not be taken from the parent birds at too early an age, say before the young feathers have, in a great measure, taken the place of the down, usually about the first week in June; for although the young birds may not, for a few days, apparently suffer injury from an earlier removal they will generally be found to fall victims to cramp before they have be come fully fledged. Supposing them to have escaped this early danger, beep them, if in a situation where it is possible, quite at liberty, providing for them, however, a retreat from the rain, until they can fly well, when they will disregard it. Feed them from the first invariably from the hand, and at the call of a particular whistle. Before they can fly they require food (good fresh beef) three times a day; after they can fly, and before they are taken up, twice; and after they have been taken up, and their education has commenced, only once during the day. The longer they are allowed to fly at large, the stronger and better birds they will become, and if well fed early in the day, they will not attempt to prey for themselves for at least a month. They should be accustomed, during this period, to come to and feed upon the lure, and as much as possible to follow their trainer about. He should be particularly careful not to startle them in any way, and, above all things, never to lose his temper with them. Few animals are improved by harsh treatment, but hawks may be utterly ruined by five minutes' ill usage, as they never forget it, or again place confidence in the hand which injures them. When taken up, the first point is to take care that the hood fits well, not pressing unfairly upon any part, and capable of being securely fastened it is a good plan to tie it on at first, so that the hawk cannot possibly pull it off; for, if the bird once discovers that it can do this, it will af terwards be very difficult to keep a hood upon it, without an additional fastening to that in general made use of. All falconers should learn to make their own hoods, and but a small portion of the trouble and skill necessary in hawk training is requisite for this. They may, however, be procured, as patterns, from several of the dealers in bird skins in Lon-

The hawk must also be furnished with jesses, slips of whit-leather, well greased, about six inches in length, fastened to each leg, and attached at the loose end to a swivel, so as to be easily removed when the bird is required to fly, as also a pair of bells, on one of which the name and residence of the owner may be engraved; it must also have a block to sit upon, made of wood of a slightly conical shape, and sufficiently heavy to prevent the bird moving it, the top of which had better be covered with thick green baize, or some equally soft substance A leash, of about eighteen inches in length, made also of whit-leather, should connect this block with the swivel attached to the jesses of the bird, and as the hawk will probably struggle a good deal when first confined, it is necessary to have the ground for some little distance around the block covered with matting, straw, or some such soft substance, to prevent the points of the wings being injured.

The hawk must now be carried on the fist as much as possible, and broken to the hood, or, in other words, taught to allow it to be taken off and put on without resistance. As soon as this is accomplished, and it has, in addition, learned to come to and feed upon the fist and lure without any signs of fear, let it fly (being sharp set at the time), and wait same lesson daily, keeping it by degrees longer upon the wing. This is the time to prevent it from acquiring the great fault of carrying or flying away with its game; and, in order to do this, accustom it to take pieces of meat from the hand while feeding on the lure, and induce it, if possiof meat from the hand while feeding on the lure, and induce it, if possible, even to leave the lure for the hand. After this the bird only requires to have whatever description of game it is intended to use it for given to it; at first from the hand, and then in a string, so as to make certain of the capture, young hawks being very easily disheartened by failure, and it may be pronounced ready for the field. Accustom hawks from the first to dogs, particularly those they are to hunt with, and in a short time they become quite indifferent to the presence of all discriptions of animals, or even of noises. I saw one of mine a few days ago bear with permals, or even of noises. I saw one of mine a few days ago bear with perfect composure the rush of a railway train, although at liberty, and sitting close to the line.

It is now that the pleasure as well as the frequent disappointment of the falconer commences. All hawks differ more or less in disposition, and until their trainer has found out by practice the particular mode of treatment each bird requires he will certainly have the mortification of seeing them either obstinately immoveable on a tree, or perhaps raking out far and wide, indifferent to his call or whistle at the very time that the dogs have come to a dead point, and there is every prospect of a fine open flight. So much depends upon appetite, that the same bird which has just behaved so hading more of a prother part of the day afford the finest just behaved so badly, may, at another part of the day, afford the finest sport; and then comes the excitement of a good flight—all previous disappointment vanishes in a moment, and for the time you are heart and soul with your bird.

In game having the principal pleasure consists in seeing the birds and dogs work in concert. The flight is soon over, except with grouse, which have been appropriately appropriate to the seeing the birds and dogs work in concert. bird, both from its own strength of wing, and also from the nature of the ground on which it is found, affords by far the best sport of all descriptions of the strength of th ground on which it is found, affords by far the best sport of all descriptions of game. Pigeons, particularly the wild ring-dove or cushat, fly well, and often lead a cast of tiercels a long chase. Better still is the rook, which shifts to avoid the stoop of the hawk with great rapidity, and is not easily taken by a single falcon. The herring gull will also I have seen afford a famous flight. Many hawks, however, and even good ones, will not make the attempt, and the wild duck, though not difficult to capture, looks well when bagged. With herons I have not had any experience. Should these few remarks at all assist any of your readers who take an interest in the sport. I shall be happy, on another occasion, who take an interest in the sport, I shall be happy, on another occasion, to communicate what little I have learnt regarding the other species used.

Mr. Editor.—My former communication having met with so ready a place in your columns, I have new much satisfaction in adding to the bints on training hawks therein offered. The merlin should, I think, stand second and have a second second and have a second second and have a second stand second on the list of serviceable hawks, and this bird, though rare throughout the southern counties of England during the summer months, might be procured in considerable numbers from the north, provided there was a demand for them. It is met with, breeding on almost all extensive moors, and were it not for the senseless destruction of it by gamekeepers, might soon become abundant. It combines the properties of the long and short-wineed beauty and tractahight soon become abundant. It combines the properties of the long and short-winged hawks, being like the former exceedingly docide and tractable, and imitating the latter in its mode of flight, starting from the first with considerable rapidity, and pursuing its game in a horizontal line, or making what sailors would term a "stern chase" of it; whereas the peregrine and hobby require to get well into the air before they can put forth their full powers of flight, as their most rapid motions are always in a descending line.

I should, however, mention, before attempting to state what may be

expected from the merlin and the other small hawks, that having been fortunate enough to meet with peregrines since I commenced following the amusement in earnest, I have not attempted to make the most of the other species, and although I have had a considerable number of them in hand, it has been as much from the love of seeing hawks about me, and vatching their habits, as from any wish to make much use of their killng powers; therefore, other amateurs may expect greater results from e trial than I can speak of.

Merlins should be treated, while young, exactly in the same manner as the peregrine, keeping them at liberty, and accustoming them to come to and feed on the fist from the first. They appear, however, to have a more rapid digestion, and should, in consequence, be more frequently fed. There is no necessity to make use of a regular lure with these birds, a small piece of scarlet cloth at the end of a couple of feet of string, to which also the food should be tied, is, when swung round the head, a sufficient attraction to bring them a long distance; with this simple lure the fist is garnished when the bird is required to alight on it. As these birds, from being much carried, soon become exceedingly tame and quiet, a hood may or may not be used, as the falconer pleases. I certainly prefer the use of it at all times during the day; at night hawks should remain unhooded.

As soon as they can fly well, and will return readily to the hand, take them, two at a time, to some open space, unhood them, and throw them off together in pursuit of a blackbird, thrush, or young partridge, which either the falconer or an assistant lets fly for the purpose; a smaller bird will tempt them to carry, although there is less danger of this when two of them are used together, as both of them seizing upon the victim, each prevents the other from taking it away. Of course this system of flying birds thrown up from the hand can only be considered in the light of training or exercising hawks, as, unless they go beyond this, and can take wild found game, they are but of little use. Both the male and female of these hawks will fly larks, snipes, and birds of that size readily. The female will also sometimes attack rooks, pigions, &c., but is not strong enough to be depended on for such flights.

The great drawback to the merlin, as I have previously stated, is the difficulty of keeping them alive any length of time. I believe this weakness to arise entirely from confining them to the flock or perch, as I have preserved several in health during and after their first moult, by keeping them in a large cage in the open air; these, if required, are taken out every morning for the amusement of the day, and replaced before night. The exposure to cold during the winter months does not appear to injure them at all. All hawks should be provided with the means of bathing, which they require the more frequently the warmer the weather is, and

even during the coldest months once a week. The hobby comes next on my list of falcons, and is, I think, when adult, both in form and plumage, the most elegant of all our species. The wings being considerably longer in proportion to the body than in either of the others, gives it a particularly light and swallow-like appearance in the air, and at the same time enables it to mount with great facility; it is pre-eminently the hawk for the lark, and in my own case I should never attempt to accustom it to any other quarry. It should be trained in the same manner as the peregrine, and accustomed to wait on, i e., follow the falconer about, keeping overhead, and not, like the merlin, to start in chase from the fist. It is of a very tractable disposition, old birds training readily in the course of a month from their capture. I have, however, always lost mine eventually, by their taking some small bird and carrying it off. Nestlings should be prevented from acquiring this defect; but those reclaimed when adult are almost certain to show it. The hobby has now become very scarce; it is a truly migratory bird, visiting this country merely for the breeding season, and in a great measure confining its rambles to the southern division of the island. Young ones used some years ago frequently to be met with in the London markets; but I have not of late been able to procure one living specimen, either young or

There is a fourth little falcon, the kestrel, very common and harmless, but, at the same time, quite useless to the falconer-a most elegant and sociable little pet, however, if kept at large, remaining for months about the house, and assisting to keep the garden free from mice; or, failing that, being quite contented with a few worms. It may be trained to come to hand, &c., like the other falcons, but will take little or nothing in the air beyond a butterfly.

The sparrowhawk—the last I shall speak of—is also a very common pecies, but of a totally different nature from those already mentioned. is one of the short-winged hawks, and, although it can fly for a short distance with considerable rapidity, is greatly deficient in powers of endurance. Its natural habit of taking its prey by flying low, and taking advantage of the shelter of a hedge or favoring ground to dash unexpectedly upon its quarry, instead of trying its chance in a prolonged chase, points to this deficiency. It possesses, however, one very redeeming qua-lity, viz., great spirit and determination in making its dash, and is, with the exception of the peregrine, perhaps the only British species which preys entirely upon birds.

This hawk has a very delicate constitution, and is peculiarly susceptible of cramp, both at an early age and also after it has acquired its full size and plumage. Another objection is a very timid, and, at the same time, obstinate disposition, which, however, may prove useful in testing fully the temper and patience of the trainer, for, to one accustomed to use these birds, the management of other hawks will prove an easy task. The sparrowhawk should not be taken from the nest until fully three parts feathered, kept then in a sheltered situation, quite at liberty, and should never be handled (a rule which applies to all young hawks); fed. at the call of a whistle, from the hand, and accustomed as much as possipatiently until it comes down to the lure, reward it well, and repeat the | ble from the first to the presence of different persons and animals. It must be taken up, however, at an earlier age than falcons, say, as soon as it can fly well, because this hawk much sooner learns to prey for itself. Falconers say that this bird should be kept unhooded, and upon a perch

fear that it had received some injury by struggling in the leash; this, however, is all temper, and bad temper too, which must be overcome by an exercise of the exact opposite quality on the part of the trainer. In the course of half an hour or so it will jump up on the fist, and get rid of a little more bile by digging its talons into the glove with considerable vigor. Constant carriage and stroking with a feather will, in a few days, make it sit quiet; it should then be taught to come readily from its perch to the fist garnished with meat, and held at first quite close, and so by degrees at a considerable distance, using the precaution of having a light string fastened to the jesses. When it will do this with birds thrown from the hand, the female will take pigeons, partridges, &c., the male smaller birds, and the education is complete.

When used in the field, the hawk should be thrown from the fist the

moment the game springs; and if the flight is unsuccessful should be called back to it immediately, and rewarded with a mouthful or two. Where landrails are plentiful, it will prove a very useful hawk for these birds; it will also fly partridges, but it is by no means equal to the male peregrine for this purpose. These remarks are intended only for the assistance of those who have not hitherto had their own experience to guide them; and I have confined myself to British species, which can be procured at a moderate cost. There are other valuable birds, such as Iceland, Jer falcons, &c., &c., of the highest repute among falconers, but of such rare occurrence in this country, that they may fairly be said not to belong to it.

Yours, &c.,

MERLIN. Yours, &c., belong to it.

A HUNTING MATCH.

In one of the interior counties of the State of New York, and situate d in a beautiful valley enclosing a chain of small lakes or ponds, is the village of S——, noted among the neighboring towns and villages as a great place of resort for pleasure parties, attracted by the prospect of a sail on its continguous waters, or

-"To glide in the merry merry dance." But everybody knows that in all places, there are seasons when amusements are stale; and this season in S—occurred in the interval between the last run (not of shad), but of sleighing, and the Fourth of July, (between whom and Saint Patrick, a son of the Green Isle once averred, the choice for the better man was in favor of the latter!) About the first of June, no matter in what year, a lot of jolly fellows who con-

Well, the two prominent characters who headed the movement that is here narrated, found that they could muster about sixty others who would enter the field, and they proceeded to select their men, to form each a band, who were, in a specified time and manner, to produce their game, and the party having secured the most counts according to the decision of the umpires, should be provided with a supper and a dance at the expense of the other party.

In the articles of agreement and restrictions drawn up and signed by the parties, it was arranged that nothing should be considered game that had not four legs, a head and tail, and found wild, except it was suitable for the table, and should go towards the supply of the supper, &c., &c.

The two "captains" were on tiptoe, each sure of winning; Captain Smith was the best shot, but Captain Jones had more tact, and each had selected his men according to his own qualities. Early the next morning Captain Smith and his band were away in the

woods, banging away merrily-but Captain Jones wa'nt thar. He, be it understood, was an amateur fisherman, and had the only manageable boats on the lake, besides other fixins, including a very nice fish box, in which to secure his captives alive.

He mustered his men on the shore of the lake, put them into his boats and shoved off. "No doubt," thought the lookers on, "he intends to supply the table with fish!" That was mere guess work, however. When sufficiently distant from shore, not to be overheard by the idlers, who had followed to witness his mysterious embarkation, the boats centred to one point and their occupants held a conference, in which it was communicated to them by the leader that his plan was about to be made known. "Now, boys, you remember we have to get four legs, a head and tail, to count one; there, do you see that 'mud turtle' down there?" and he pointed to a little terrapin that had hardly recovered from his winter's torpor, and was paddling his way slowly along at the bottom of the shallow

"But," said he, "this is not the best place to catch 'em, and the loafers yonder on the shore, will smell the rat, and leak to the other party, then ve are dished!"

The idea took amazingly—and pulling away for the latter location, it was not long ere their boats were alive and crawling with the innocent little animals; and as the game was abundant, and easily secured by the hands, there evidently appeared to be no immediate prospect of an end to the sport. Having taken several thousands of this novel species of game, and conducted them with perfect secrecy to a place of security, and feeling perfectly sure that other four legged game to the same "count" would be unattainable, they returned to land, took their "shooting irons," more by way of appearance than anything else, and made pretext to hunt in the woods, which by this time had been pretty well scoured by the other party.

The day for the count came. The few squirrels and other field game taken by the Jones party made a very small appearance by the side of the pile of rabbits, squirrels, poultry, &c., brought in by Smith's party; the count was about to proceed, but was interrupted by Jones. "Please read over the articles first," said Jones; and they were read. "All right," said Jones, "four legs, head and tail; all O. K. boys," and Smith's game was soon counted. Jones interposed again to have the articles re-read before his game was counted; "because," said he, "I want to have you all satisfied !

After the second reading, and the counting of the few squirrels Jones had produced, he remarked, "you are not quite counted up yet, but just remember, four legs, head and tail count one, and you may proceed to count," pointing to some bags in a corner, which, until then, had been covered with a buffalo skin. The other party looked in amazement, and their surprise was materially increased by the appearance of a couple of bushels of Jones's game, as one of the bags was emptied on the floor before the umpire.

"Count that lot," said Jones, "and average the rest; no use being par-ticular into half a bushel or so!—and if there ain't enough, there are a

few more of the 'same sort' left in the next room!" Smith and his party looked aghast, and as soon as Smith could recover breath to speak, he "gin in" that it was "no sort of use to count'em; I knock under; I knew we could squirrel you, but I did not expect to be "mud turtled" in this outrageous way!" to which the cheers of the crowd responded.

BLOOD HORSE vs. IRON HORSE.

A highly interesting and exciting race took place on the Cincinnati end of the Little Miami Railroad, just at the rising of the sun on Monday morning last. A very beautiful and accomplished young lady, of our acquaintance, was to leave that morning on the cars for Cleveland, en route for the World's Fair, in company with our worthy fellow citizen, Mr. T...., and his family, and had promised to join them at the depot in time; but, rising a little late, and parting words to her good mother, and sisters and brothers, and for aught we know, other near and dear friends, delayed her so long that when she reached the station house, accompanied by her father, (one of the best men in the city,) in his carriage—to their consternation and almost utter despair, they discovered the cars had gone. The father was for giving up and returning quietly home—not so the young damsel—she possessed wore spirit and esolution. She had no idea of abandoning the long anticipated voyage to Europe, and instantly cried out to their faithful driver :-"Robert, drive on-drive for your life-overtake the cars-we must

overtake them."

And, turning to her kind, good father, she said: "John (the name of the horse, and a very favorite one,) has blood, and can beat the iron

Robert lost no time in obeying his fair young mistress, and off they sped "like lightning." And the good horse "John" appeared to realize what was desired, and the very difficult task before him, and seemed to say, as did the gallant Col. Miller, on another occasion, "I will try,"and he did try, so says the Fultonians, for never was seen horse and carefore in such quick time. " not only ran, but flew—so the boys say, and we reckon the mud flew also. John Gilpin's race was nowhere, when compared to the race between the blood horse "John," and Anthony Harkness' iron horse "Franklin;" and although the latter had the start of full a half mile, the former did overhaul, and perhaps might have passed her, had the conductor not thought it prudent to stop. It was not an hour from the commencement . of the race, before the resolute and never daunted young lady was in the car with her friends, who of course had given up all hope of seeing her, and bidding an affectionate and tender farewell to her father, she bade him never despair, and never to sell that favorite horse, "John," for he had gloriously won the race, and Anthony Harkness's Iron horse must

had gloriously won the law, and admit being beat for once.

Long live our fair friend. May she have a pleasant voyage across the Atlantic—have health and pleasure in the old world, and return in due time to the bosom of her affectionate family in the Queen City.

Cincinnati Commercial, May 8th.

LIVE WEIGHT AND DEAD WEIGHT.

A knowledge of the difference between the live weight and dead weight of any animal, is oftentimes desirable. From the nature of the case, an approximation to it may be made. There are various ways of doing this—sometimes by the girth and measure of the length. Many butchers, by the experience they have gained in slaughtering and weighing different kinds of animals, can often judge with surprising accuracy. Different breeds vary very much in the comparative difference between live and does weight. It must appear a wident to any one that the more amount of dead weight. It must appear evident to any one that the more amount of tallow a bullock has to fill up the interstices of the frame, the less is the difference between live weight and dead weight, and, by consequence, the less the tallow the more the difference.

A German agriculturist has made some observations on this subject, and publishes the following as the result:

"An ox, where he is entirely lean, and therefore has no tallow, weighs 260 pounds live weight to 100 of pure flesh in the fore quarters. With 5 per cent. of tallow he weighs only 255 pounds live weight to 100 weight of flesh. At 10 per cent. the proportion of tallow, 246 pounds; at 15 per cent., 235 pounds; at 20 per cent., only 225 pounds, gross weight, for 100 weight of flesh.

"An ox of 1000 pounds, live weight, weighed in a state in which he has not been fed for fattening, has, when entirely lean, therefore without tallow, 385 pounds of flesh and about nine pounds of skin and hair, in which, in the after increase, the tallow, consequently to be weighed by itself, is in the after increase, the tallow, consequently to be weighed by itself, is included. This ox, raised to 5 per cent. proportion of tallow, will weigh 1050 pounds gross, 421 pounds of flesh, and 24 pounds of tallow. He gained, therefore, in this period of increase, 60 pounds gross, 27 pounds flesh, and 11 pounds tallow, and therefore gained an increase of 94 pounds live weight, 60 pounds flesh, and 34 pounds tallow. At 20 per cent. proportion of tallow, the same ox weighed 1850 pounds live weight, 600 pounds of flesh, 120 pounds of tallow; the increase of this period of fattening, therefore, amounted to 134 pounds of gross weight, 91 pounds of flesh, 52 of tallow."

In the improved breeds, the amount of valuable parts which are pre-

In the improved breeds, the amount of valuable parts which are preserved and weighed, after being killed are, or ought to be, greater in proportion to the offal that is not weighed, and unsaleable, than is the uninproved breeds. Indeed, this constitutes a great part of the improvement.