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CONTENTS.

Pedigree and Performances of Pussy 289
Liverpool Aintree Meeting, by *Alfred Highflyer* 291
The Grouse Season.....296
On the Comparative Merits of Horses and Ponies, by *Rasper*.....297
The Derby and Oaks Stakes for 1835..304
Destruction of the Callendar Deer 309
Prospect of Sport in Shropshire.....314
Traits of English Foxhunting—the Pytchley Country, and Crack Riders in, *concluded*, by *Old Harkaway* 315
Hunting in Scotland:—Duke of Buccleuch's Establishment—the Linlithgow and Stirlingshire Pack—the Fife Hounds, &c. 324
Newmarket July Meeting, by *Craven* ..329
A Shy at One or Two Clauses in the "New Game Bill"—Poaching and Poachers—Old George Land, an Amateur Poacher of the Old School, &c. by *Ringwood* 337
The Grouse Shooter's Call.....342
The Bildeston Breeding Stud 343
Racing in Jamaica—St. James's—Westmoreland 345
Badger Hunting.....348
Some Fragments from the Life of the late James Ella, Esq. of Wymeswold..349

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE:—
Turf Intelligence Extra—Nominations for the Newmarket July Stakes 1835—Stud Sales—The Chase—Cricket—Aquatics—Pigeon Shooting—Cocking—Bettings at Tattersall's, &c. &c. 351

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

RACING CALENDAR.....33

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SOME FRAGMENTS FROM THE LIFE OF THE LATE JAMES ELLA, ESQ. OF WYMESWOLD.

SIR,

THE only gloom that comes over even a *Hermit*'s mind in fox-hunting is that which one feels when the season returns, when the hounds and sportsmen are again met at some well-known rendezvous, but when some old familiar faces are wanting, and when the crape or dark vest worn by some son or brother tells they are gone to that place "where the weary are at rest." Such were my feelings, and the feelings of all at the first meeting after the death of the lamented Goodricke: we all felt, and *shewed* that we felt, that a light and a glory had departed!

Leicestershire had a heavy loss last year in Mr. Cradock: this year has robbed us of another veteran of the Chase, JAMES ELLA of Wymeswold, who, after seventy-two winters—more than fifty of which he had been known in the field—"went to ground" last month*.

Mr. Ella began his sporting career under old Meynell. During his *reign*, and that of Lords Sefton and Foley, Tom Smith, "The Græme," Osbaldeston, Lord Southampton, and the late Sir Harry, he was well known in the Hunt as a breeder of good hunters, a strict preserver of foxes, a hospitable friend to sportsmen, and a frequent attendant in the field. Some of the very best horses in the Quorn Stud, and one or two purchased for His late Majesty by Mr. Delmè Radcliffe, were from his stables. He also sold one a year ago to Lord Clanwilliam for a large sum.

As a chronicler of the annals of the chase few men were better companions than Ella. He remembered every distinguished run, man, horse, and dog, for the last half century: he hunted when there was scarcely a fence or a drain in the county, and he was, like most *elders*, "*laudator temporis acti.*" I well remember hearing him say to a Nobleman—I think Lord Robert Grosvenor—"My Lord, you and I were both in the long run from this spot *forty-eight years ago*, when we had seven horses stone blind."

In the five hours fifteen minutes' run from Costock in 1795 he was one of the three "survivors."—(*Vide* Jones's *Diary of the Quorn Hunt*, in which Mr. E.'s name is honorably mentioned.)—Often when at the fireside, and "running all the *chases* o'er again," would he dwell with delight on many of the hunting customs of his early days, one of which he termed "swearing in the youngsters." This always took place after a hard run with a brush at the end of it; when all the *colts* were obliged to offer up a bowl of punch as a libation to Diana, *stirring it with the victim's pad!*

During the last season our venerable friend still continued to avail himself of all the near fixtures—not on his once famous mare—not on his Vivaldi—not even on that beautiful grey pony for which Sir John Kay offered

* I should be unwilling to make a joke at Death—I abhor profaneness; but the expression, which was one of his own, seems too *a-propos* to be altered.

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100 guineas; but in his gig; and with his knowledge of the country he always contrived to see some of the sport. Some time in last January, I think it was, the hounds met at Six Hills—a fox was found in Mundy's Gorse—Ella was the first to view him break away, and never shall I forget his enthusiastic shout! Gout and dropsy were forgotten; he raised himself in his gig, bared his silvery head to the wintry gale, and moved his castor with all the glee of other days—

"And lighted up his faded eye
With all a *Hunter*'s ecstacy."

At that moment Colonel Cheney, who will be forgotten when Waterloo ceases to be remembered, rode up, and, delighted to see an old brother sportsman, grasped his hand with more than ordinary fervor. Whether from the warmth of the tug, or the restiveness of the Colonel's horse, or from Ella's forgetting he was not on horseback, I know not, but over the gig went—a complete summerset. Though the fox had gone off, and though the maxim is generally "*sauve qui peut*," respect for the Patriarch of the Field drew hosts to the spot. Every one thought Mr. Ella, in his helpless state, must be killed! What were our surprise and joy on hearing him say, from under the vehicle, "Zounds! Colonel, if you *charge* me so again, you will send me to Davy's Locker, as you did those French Invincibles!" He was unhurt; and when, a few days after, he met the hounds at Stanford Park, he seemed to hold a levee for congratulations.

Ella had one foible: his long standing—for he was really the Father of the Hunt—gave him, as he thought, some claim to be noticed in the field; and if he at any time encountered what he termed "a shirk" from any of the Grandees, he would turn his favorite mare's head homewards in mood of mind something like high dudgeon, declaring his coverts should be cut up, the foxes banished to Belvoir, and war declared against all Meltonians. But the next fixture saw him in his place — the slight forgotten, the slighter forgiven. Some fancied slight of this sort, after years of intimacy as fellow sportsmen, caused a coldness between him and that excellent and well-known Nimrodian Lord Rancliffe; and I shall long remember the truly noble and handsome peace-offering His Lordship sent, nay brought, Mr. Ella in his last illness. They had not spoken for years: Lord R. had often missed the old Sportsman at the rendezvous: he learnt that illness was the cause of his absence; and, forgetting past differences, His Lordship stopped his carriage at Mr. E.'s door, sent in such a cargo of hot-house luxuries and other dainties as few Midland gardens can produce, and begged once more to shake the veteran's hand. "What's amiss with me?" said Ella, *blowing his nose* as the noble gift and Noble Giver were announced—"this is too much!"—He could not stand it! Oh how I love, all Hermit and half misanthrope as I am, to find and to record instances of feelings that do honour to our nature! They had quarrelled: Bunny Park was forbidden ground to the one, the Wolds to the other; but a brother Sportsman is ill; and His Lordship seemed to say, "He

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shall not leave the world at enmity with me at least!"

The world, Sir, the whining, canting part of it at least, would represent Fox-hunters as devoid of thought, and sense, and all the better feelings. How do instances like this give the slanderers the lie! 'Tis true Fox-hunters, as well as place-hunters, and money-hunters, and fame-hunters, must die—

"Linquenda tellus, et domus, et placens Uxor:"

but what I hold as a maxim is, that they generally live *longer*, and *better* too, than their detractors; that they preserve to a later period vigour of mind and body, and all those social and kindly feelings without which life is not life. Ella was a fine proof of this: the hale tint of his unwrinkled cheek—his sonorous voice—his steady seat and erect form on the saddle—would lead one, till his late and *only* illness, to take him, as we say in Leicestershire, "for a *forty* man." Like most Fox-hunters, he had a heart "open as day to melting charity."

The "give-and-take system," of allowing our fields for the sports of others, and then, in our turn, dashing over theirs, constantly reminds us of that practical lesson so early taught us in our horn-books—"*We are all* dependent on each other's assistance: who is there that can subsist by himself?" Our Meetings will no more be enlivened by the presence of my valued and venerated friend: his tales of other times will no more cheer the gloom of my *cell:* he is gone! gone quietly, peacefully, and resignedly; and I feel a firm conviction that he will not fare worse in that world to which we are all hastening, because he joined in the sports of the field!

I am, Sir, &c.

The Hermit in Leicestershire.

The Hermitage, Wymeswold,
July 14, 1834.

SPORTING INTELLIGENCE.

The Turf.

INTELLIGENCE EXTRA.

NEWMARKET Second October Meeting 1834.—Monday: The Garden Stakes of 100 sovs. each, T. M. M.

Ld. Chesterfield's Colwick, 6 yrs, 9st. 7lb.
Ld. Chesterfield's Glaucus, 4 yrs, 9st. 5lb.
Sir M. Wood's Vespa, 4 yrs, 8st. 5lb.
Lord Jersey's Glencoe, 3 yrs, 8st. 3lb.
Sir F. Johnstone's f. by Merlin, dam by Phantom, grandam by Pericles out of Mary (foaled in 1817), 3 yrs, 7st. 10lb.

July Meeting 1835.—Tuesday: The following are the Nominations for the July Stakes:—

Duke of Grafton's b. c. by Saracen out of Zeal.
Duke of Grafton's b. f. by Zinganee out of Problem.
Sir M. Wood's b. c. by Whisker or Cetus, dam by Blacklock out of Altisidora.
Sir M. Wood na. Mr. Greville's b. c. Martello, by Defence, dam by Moses.
Colonel Peel's c. by Bedlamite out of Jason's dam.
Colonel Peel's br. c. by Emilius out of Versatility.
Duke of Rutland na. Mr. Sowerby's br. f. Corunna, by Skiff, dam by Sancho (Catalonian's dam).
Lord Exeter's Muezzin.
Lord Exeter's Sister to Green Mantle.
Lord Exeter's f. by The Colonel out of Lamia.
Mr. Sowerby's b. f. Tamburini, by Skiff out of Toso.
Mr. Wilson's ch. c. by The Colonel, dam by Pyramus out of Euphrasia by Rubens.

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