

**THE CAMPING-OUT
SERIES, VOL. V:
FOX-HUNTING, AS
RECORDED BY RAED**

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The camping-out series, Vol. V: Fox-hunting, as recorded by Raed by C. A. Stephens

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C. A. STEPHENS

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EDITED BY C. A. STEPHENS.

ILLUSTRATED.



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1873.
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AT LOS ANGELES
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NOTE.

WE are well aware that the title of our little narrative will have to brave public opinion. Our people generally despise fox-hunting: not without pretty good reason, it is to be feared; for your local fox-hunter is often no saint. In short, what the "impecunious Bohemian" is to the town, the fox-hunter is to the country, — "poor, slack, and shiftless," in rustic phrase; "too lazy to work," the farmers say of him.

Furthermore, fox-hunting, considered as a business, is notoriously unprofitable. This of itself would be stigma enough in any average Yankee community. Our people have a radical antipathy to unremunerative callings. They will neither engage in such, nor yet, so far as public sentiment goes, allow their fellow-citizens to do so. Hence

a hound following at a man's heels, and claiming him as master, discounts his owner's character at a pretty heavy percentum.

But, beyond these considerations, there is undoubtedly another, and what may be termed an *hereditary*, antipathy to this sport. In England, the squires, even the lords and dukes, used to hunt the fox. It was a standard amusement with the landed gentry. The land was theirs, and they overrode it at will: fences and fields were no barriers to them. Now, the class of people who emigrated from Old England to New England were not of the fox-hunting class: they were of the class the fox-hunters had overridden. They brought with them well-defined objections to the sport. Our "institutions" were projected on a different plan. No troop of aristocrats would be allowed to ride down our fences, and poach our fields. The law would stop them promptly; and, if the law did not, *something else* would, very quick. Our people have their rights, and the temper to sustain them.

Nevertheless, an infusion of fox-hunting blood must have come over even in "The Mayflower." It crops out here and there. In every inland county

there is always at least *one* whose instincts declare the fatherland, be it never so rudely.

But we should not, methinks, deal too hardly with this hardy old Anglo-Norman sport. Much of the robust English health started here ; and we cannot but hope some good from fox-hunting on American soil. Our youth, our young ladies especially, are lamentably destitute of healthy out-door sports. The ill effects of this lack are sad enough, Heaven knows, to fill us with well-grounded anxiety for the future, lest we see the delicately-beautiful Anglo-American fade utterly from the Western continent.

Some such feeling as this has emboldened us to submit the account of an attempt to Americanize, in a clumsy way, this grand old field-sport of our ancestors.

J. W. B.

Boston, May, 1873.

