

HINTS TO RIFLEMEN

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Hints to Riflemen by H. W. S. Cleveland

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H. W. S. CLEVELAND

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BY

H. W. S. CLEVELAND.

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PREFACE.

My object in the following treatise has been to create and promote a general interest in a subject which I have long believed to be one of National importance. As I make no claim to the title of a scientific man, I should hardly have presumed to put forward opinions which have been drawn mainly from practical experience, but for the encouraging reception which has been given to my shorter essays, which I was induced to prepare, from the strong conviction I felt of the deficiency of public interest in the subject, and because (so far as I am aware) the only recent publications in this country relating to it, were scientific treatises, not calculated to interest the general reader.

I offer these "hints" as the contribution of an old sportsman, and if I succeed in any degree in

exciting an interest in the subject, my end will have been gained, even if the future investigations of those who are thus attracted, should prove any of my opinions to be erroneous.

To the friends who have furnished or aided me in procuring materials and information, which have proved of value to me in its preparation, as well as to those who have given me the encouraging help of a friendly interest in the undertaking, I offer my grateful acknowledgments.

My thanks are especially due to Messrs. WM. READ & SON and Messrs. PALMERS & BATCHELDERS, for furnishing me with arms and materials, which have been of essential service in conducting my experiments.

H. W. S. C.

DANVERS, MASS., Nov. 1863.

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CHAPTER I.

SKILL OF ANCIENT ARCHERS, AND SPIRIT OF EMULATION EXISTING IN THEIR DAY.

THE skill of the old English archers is one of the many facts in history, which everybody recognizes as a general proposition, but of the actual power which they wielded there is at this day but little realizing appreciation.

We know, generally, that many of the hardest fought battles of those days were won by the power and skill with which they plied the bow, but comparatively few people are aware how important a part that weapon has played in England's history, or to what an extent its use was encouraged and enforced upon the people. The social and military necessities of the present day are so changed from those which existed five hundred years ago, that it is as difficult for us to realize the feelings and interests which then held the most prominent place in the minds of the great masses of the people, as it