leaves, and afforded food or cover to the deer ; and *venison* ' signified such beasts of the forest or the chase as were the food of man. When reading old books, it is necessary to keep in mind this acceptation of the word venison.

This state of things continued until by the Charta de Foresta the forest laws were better defined and the penal­ties mitigated. The vast importance attached to the Forest Charter may be inferred from the fact, that although granted by king John at Runnymede, at the same time as the Great Charter, it was not incorporated in it, but was made the subject of a separate and distinct document. The Forest Charter was likewise confirmed by Henry III., contempo­raneously with the Great Charter. On the latter occasion the Forest Charter was counter-signed by sixty-four bishops, ab­bots, and barons; and sentence of excommunication against all persons who should violate it was, with great ceremony, denounced in Westminster Hall, by the archbishop, in the presence of the king, bishops, and nobles, the bishops being robed and bearing torches.

The oath administered, at twelve years of age, to every young man dwelling within the precincts of a royal forest, was in the following rhymes:

You shall true liege-man be

Unto the King's Majesty:

Unto the beasts of the Forest you shall no hurt do,

Nor to anything that doth belong thereunto : The offences of others you shall not conceal. But to the utmost of your power, you shall them reveal Unto the Officers of the Forest, Or to them who may see them redrest : All these things you shall see done. So help you God, at his Holy Doom

After the Forest Charter was granted any one was allowed **to** kill game, except in the royal and other forests, and certain other privileged places,@@1 until the reign of Richard II., when a landed qualification of forty shillings per annum became ne­cessary to entitle a person to keep “ any greyhound, hound, dog, ferret, net, or engine, to destroy deer, hares, conies, or any other gentleman’s game.” The qualification required was increased with the improved value of land, from time to time, until, in Charles the Second’s reign, it was enacted, that persons not having L.100 per annum arising from free­hold, or L.150 from leasehold property, or not being of the degree of esquire, or otherwise privileged, should not keep or use “ any guns, bows, greyhounds, setting dogs, fer­rets, coney-dogs, lurchers, hays, nets, lowbels, hare-pipes, guns, snares, or other engines for taking or killing game.”

It was not until the early part of the reign of George HL that killing game was taxed as a luxury, and made a source of revenue to government· A tax of two guineas was first imposed on all persons who should go out in pursuit of game ; but the price of the certificate was afterwards raised to three guineas, and subsequently to three and a half guineas. The property qualification is abolished, and now any person who has taken out a certificate and obtained permission from the owner or tenant of the land, in which soever the right at the time may happen to be, is privileged to kill game at all seasonable times. During a long period the sale of game was prohibited, which gave a peculiar value to it, as it was not attainable by any but qualified and cer­tificated persons and their friends, except by indirect means. It is now publicly sold by persons taking out licences for the purpose, and such licenced persons are liable to penal­ties, and are incapacitated from renewing their licences, should they purchase game from any but duly certificated sportsmen. The licenced dealers are, however, largely sup­plied by poachers, notwithstanding the penalties to which they subject themselves by trading with uncertificated per­sons.

Falconry fell into dissuetude in the days of the Georges. It is now scarcely known but by name, although the honor­ary distinction of hereditary Grand Falconer of England is still extant. As falconry fell into disuse, another kind of sport, which is now considered as disreputable, and practised only by poachers, was pursued by the country gentle­men ; the capturing of birds of the game species by means of nets and setting dogs. The dogs were trained to lie down when near to game, and to suffer the net to be drawn over them, so that both dog and birds were entangled in the toil. In this manner partridges are still frequently taken by poachers in the night. A poacher’s dog is some­times known by his habit of crouching when close upon game, and this circumstance not unfrequently leads to a detection of the practices of his master. Netting was con­sidered as a fair mode of taking game until the fowling-piece came into general use.

On the accession of the house of Hanover to the throne of Great Britain, falconry, netting, and shooting, were con­temporary amusements. The number of shooters was very limited, the inferiority of the guns and ammunition being such as not to induce their general adoption ; hawking was going out of favour ; and, of the three sports, netting was the most commonly practised, until the beginning of the reign of George III., after which time it was no longer deemed the sport of gentlemen. At what time the fowling-piece first came into use is uncertain. We learn from Pope that pheasant shooting was in vogue in Windsor forest during the reign of Anne.

Shooting, as practised with guns to which flint and steel locks were attached, may be said to have risen and fallen with the Georgian era. During the latter part of that period, great improvements were made in all the imple­ments and materials of shooting. Double barrels came into use, horse-nail stubs were employed in the manufacture of

@@@, The places privileged were of four descriptions, viz. a forest, a chase, a park, and a warren. To these may be added a decoy for water­fowl, which had also peculiar privileges.

“ A *forest* is a certain territory of woody grounds and fruitful pastures, privileged for wild beasts and fowls of forest, chase, and warren, to rest and abide there in the safe protection of the king for his delight and pleasure ; which territory of ground so privileged is meered and bounded with unremoveable marks, meers, and boundaries, and replenished with wild beasts of venery or chase, and with great coverts of vert for the succour of the said beasts there to abide; for the preservation and continuance of which, there are particular officers, laws, and privileges belonging to the same, requisite for that purpose, and proper only to a forest and no other place." *Manwood's Forest Laws,* p. 143. “ Beasts of forest are properly hart, hind, buck, hare, boar, and wolf, but legally all wild beasts of venery." *Coke's Institutes,*

vol. i. p∙ 238. “ A purlieu is a portion of a forest which was disafforested by the Charta de Foresta.” *Manwood,* 242.

\*, A *chase* is a privileged place for receipt of deer and beasts of the forest, and is of a middle nature, betwixt a forest and park. It is commonly less than a forest, and not endowed with so many liberties, as officers, laws, courts, and yet is of a larger compass than a park, having more officers and game than a park. Every forest is a chase, but every chase is not a forest. It differeth from a park in that it is not inclosed.” *Manwood,* 49, 147. “ Beasts of the chase are, the buck, doe, fox, martern, and roe.” *Manwood,* 144.

“ A *park* is a large parcel of ground privileged for wild beasts of chase by the king’s grant, or by prescription. A park must be inclosed.’’ *Read. Game.* “ The beasts of park properly extend to the buck, doe, fox ; but in common and legal sense to all the beasts of the forest." *Read. Game.*

*“ A free warren* is a place privileged by prescription or grant of the king, for the preservation of the beasts and fowl of the warren, vis. hares, conies, partridges, and pheasants.” *Manwood*, p. 44. “ If a pheasant, or other bird of warren, flew into a free warren, the falco­

ner could not follow it, but it became the property of the owner of the warren." *Manwood.*

A *decoy* for wild fowl is to this day privileged, in so far as the owner has the exclusive right to the birds frequenting it ; and no person is allowed to fire a gun or otherwise make a disturbance within a reasonable distance of it, without permission from the owner.