

HERON HUNTING.

Heron hunting is a sport which has almost sunk into oblivion, but now seems likely to be brought into vogue again, for the Emperor William has declared his intention of using falcons in hunting the herons that are so numerous in the neighborhood of Konigs-Wusterhausen. This species of chase, which is not to be confounded with hawking, is conducted as follows: A number of ladies and gentlemen, who are to accompany the chase as spectators, assemble on a large heath or plain over which the herons pass daily, with a certain regularity, in going from their fishing grounds to the heronry. A few steps from them are the falconers, usually two or three, each one carrying on his gloved hand a hooded and fettered falcon. Near the falconers are servants who carry light wooden frames on which are reserve falcons, also hooded and fettered. On an elevation in the distance is a single rider who acts as a sentinel and whose duty it is to signal to the falconers the approach of a heron. He does this by alighting from his horse as soon as he discerns the bird coming from the fishing place or the woods, and turning his horse's head in toward the

swoop until the heron gives up all resistance and with outstretched legs and raised head lets itself fall perpendicularly. Sometimes one or both of the falcons cling to the heron, and then all fall together in a confused mass. At some distance from the ground the falcons release their hold on their victim so as to avoid the shock of the fall, but the next minute they are hanging on him again. During flight the heron does not use his sharp pointed beak, but as soon as he feels firm ground under him he uses it in a vigorous defense. Formerly a rough-coated greyhound was taken on heron hunts which was trained to catch and hold the heron by the neck as soon as it fell. If the heron is not severely wounded in this fight, he is given his freedom after a ring bearing the date and the names of the huntsmen has been fastened on one leg.

In the middle ages falconry was a favorite sport in all the European courts, but it was given up in France during the reign of Louis XIV. and in Prussia in the time of Frederick the Great. In the smaller German courts, however, it was practiced until the end of the last century.

Falconry (called by the French *la haute volerie*)

was called a large rat taking the berries off with his mouth and dropping them to other rats below. Presently another climbed the tree and helped to gather the berries. In a little time both came down each with a berry in its mouth, having a curious appearance. Mr. Reade saw the performance several times repeated. Then he placed a wire cage under the tree, and in three days caught nine of the intruders.

Kerite.

At certain intervals solutions of rubber in paraffine wax are brought out as insulators, and a substance of this kind has been called "kerite." Rubber dissolves slowly in paraffine wax and forms a compound combining the properties of paraffine wax and the original rubber. It will be found that very little rubber goes a long way in this compound. Some time ago one of our staff experimented on the vulcanization of this substance. Paraffine wax does not dissolve sulphur, so a little was dissolved in anthracene, which dissolves it easily and mixes with paraffine without precipitating the sulphur. The solution was thus vulcanized into a gray substance. This does not melt properly, but one



HERON HUNTING—ORIGINAL DRAWING BY LUDWIG BECKMANN.

heron. The falconers then move slowly from two sides in the direction indicated and allow the heron to pass quietly above and between them, then the hoods are removed from the falcons' heads, and as soon as they have descried the prey, their fetters are taken off and they are "thrown." The falcon seldom flies directly toward the heron, but generally moves rapidly at a moderate height above the ground until near its prey and then mounts. As soon as the heron notices that he is pursued, he tries, in case he is coming from fishing, with a full crop, to lighten himself by stretching out his neck and throwing out the fish that he has swallowed, and then as he knows by instinct or experience that the falcon will fall on him as soon as it succeeds in reaching a higher point, he uses all his strength to fly higher than his pursuer. Sometimes the heron succeeds in doing this, and then he vanishes in the clouds, but he is generally overtaken by the falcon, which then, quick as an arrow, rushes on the heron and tries to seize him by the neck or wing. The first attempt is often unsuccessful, because the heron skillfully avoids the falcon at the critical moment. This gives him an advantage, for the falcon is frequently carried far below him by the force of its movement, but now a second falcon comes to the assistance of the first one, and then follows swoop upon

should not be confused with the ordinary hawking (*la basse volerie*). For the latter, low-flying birds, such as hawks, are used, and also a dog to act as a retriever, the prey being grouse, hares, and water fowl. In England there are many "hawking clubs."

The terminology of falconry and hawking is extremely complicated, especially in regard to the names given to the birds, which depend not only on their species, but also on their age, the time of catching and training, and the nature of the game they hunt. The literature relating to the subject is very rich. James C. Harting's illustrated "Bibliotheca Accipitraria," which was published in London last year, brings the number of works on falconry up to 378. The first book published in Europe on the subject (1245) was the celebrated work of the Emperor Frederick II., "De Arte Vendandi cum Avibus." The beautiful work of Schlegel and Wouwerholt, "Traité de Fauconnerie," appeared in 1853, in Leyden and Dusseldorf. —*Illustrirte Zeitung*.

Gooseberry Rats.

Mr. G. Reade, in the *Zoologist*, says that the ripe gooseberries in his garden were disappearing very rapidly this year, and he supposed that the mischief was being done by blackbirds. However, his attention

of its most curious properties is its adherence to glass. The beaker in which the vulcanization was carried out fell, but the glass did not separate from the compound. The beaker was then battered into little pieces purposely, but they adhered strongly to the compound. As paper and waxed paper are now so much thought of as insulators, it is likely that paper saturated with kerite may become of considerable use. Its properties are, no doubt, very well known to those who make it; but, unfortunately, such matters are generally kept secret for commercial reasons.—*Industries*.

Interesting Gun Trials.

According to the Reading (Pa.) *Times*, some rather surprising results were lately obtained with a new multicharge gun, of Haskell's pattern, half-inch bore. The trial took place at the Kurtz House proving ground. A solid hammered wrought iron target, 7½ inches thick, was penetrated entirely through, backed by a boiler plate ¾ of an inch thick, which was also penetrated through, making a penetration of 7⅞ inches. The shot was made of Carpenter steel, and the charges of powder were 10 ounces.

This penetration is nearly sixteen times the diameter of the projectile, or more than four times greater than has ever been obtained by any other gun.