



Foxhunting in Paradise

Michael Clayton

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Young men intent on hunting in Leicestershire used to be warned that they could lose their horses, their wives, their money, and their nerve, yet the Shires packs have for over 200 years attracted foxhunters from all over Britain and overseas. In Foxhunting in Paradise, a major work of research and practical exploration in and around the hunting field, Michael Clayton brings entirely up to date the histories of the Quom, Belvoir, Cottesmore and Fernie Hunts. He describes the glamour, the risks and the controversy surrounding hunting in the paradise of Leicestershire's ridge and furrow grasslands, divided by fly fences and dotted with fox coverts. Royalty, captains of industry, young bloods from the services, and not a few fortune-hunters and courtesans have been among those gracing the houses and hunting fields of Leicestershire. Yet the sport depends ultimately on the continued goodwill of the vast majority of Leicestershire's farmers and landowners, a prize which has always been retained. Clayton does not shrink from the essential conservation issues which he believes justify hunting, and he deals with the most recent accusations against the sport's conduct in Leicestershire. Foxhunting in Paradise throws new light on a peculiarly British phenomenon in an area of understated beauty in the heart of England, described by the great hunting correspondent Nimrod thus: 'In the absence of all perfection, it is, as a hunting country, as nearly approaching to it as nature and art can make it, and its fame may be said to have reached the remotest corners of the civilized world.'



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