

or for Maude. He paid them their wages, and sent them to their own homes, along with their captains, because he thought English soldiers were best to defend England, and that foreign soldiers were not likely to be kind to the poor English people.

He next made the barons, whether Norman or English, pull down a great many of their castles, because robbers used to live in them, and, after they had robbed the farmers of their cattle or corn, they used to hide themselves in these castles, and the judges could not get at them to punish them.

Then King Henry built up the towns that had been burnt in the wars of Stephen, and sent judges to do justice all through the land, and the people began to feel safe, and to build their cottages, and plough the fields; and the country was once more fit to be called dear merry England.

Instead of fighting and quarrelling with one another, the young men used to make parties together, and ride out with their dogs, to hunt the foxes and deer in the forests; and sometimes the ladies went with them, to see a kind of sport that was very pretty, but it is not used now. Instead of dogs, to catch wild animals, they used a bird called a hawk to catch partridges and pigeons for them. It took a great deal of trouble to teach the hawks, and the man who taught them and took care of them was called a Falconer, because the best kind of hawk is the falcon.

When the ladies and gentlemen went hawking, the birds used to sit upon their left wrists while they held a little chain in their hands; and there was a hood over the birds' heads, that their eyes might be kept clear. As soon as the party got into the fields they took the hood off the birds' eyes, and as soon as they saw any game they loosed the little chain