

**THE BELVOIR HUNT; THE  
QUORN HUNT;  
THE BILLESDON HUNT;  
THE BADMINTON HUNT;**

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The Belvoir hunt; The Quorn hunt; The Billesdon Hunt; The Badminton hunt; by Cecil

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**CECIL**

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THE  
BELVOIR HUNT.

By Cecil.

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*With Distances from Railway Stations.*

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## THE BELVOIR HUNT.



MOST majestically situated on the summit of a hill, Belvoir Castle stands eminently conspicuous as an object of grandeur and magnificence that may be happily associated with the elevated conceptions of a ducal residence. The ancient title of the domain, as it was written Bellevoire, is strikingly applicable to the castle, which appears towering above majestic oaks and other timber trees of venerable growth surrounding the base, and conveying to the stranger sentiments of its fitness as the residential seat of a distinguished family; and it is discernible from many



parts of the country as far distant as the eye can reach. To attain the summit, the stranger is impressed with the idea that he will have to encounter hills of much magnitude; but so admirably are the roads arranged, that the ascent is almost imperceptible, while every turn, or deviation, presents a scene novel and attractive. While it is quite consistent to admire woodland scenery and picturesque views, it may at the first glance appear somewhat incongruous to associate floral beauties with the hunting season; but a visit to the beautiful precincts of Belvoir Castle will dispel that impression. "Oh, you are about to treat us with an introduction to the hot-houses and conservatories," I fancy some of my readers may exclaim. Not a bit of it, for, much as I admire them, they would be out of character on such occasions as hunting tours. It is the tasty and judicious arrangement of the walks through

the woods and glades around the castle, but below its elevation, that are so enchanting. Proceeding along winding paths, you come imperceptibly upon patches or beds of different hues and characters; thus the interest is constantly varied. Occasionally you come to an opening displaying the vale, significant of a burst with the hounds, whose somewhat distant harmonious notes may possibly greet you from their kennel. These diversities are produced by stately oaks in their winter garb, mingled with pines and evergreens of many kinds. The paths and tracts are not too scrupulously kept, as if the hand of man was desirous to clear away the designs of nature, and as though every fallen leaf was regarded as an obnoxious intruder; yet they are so exquisitely managed, that no impediments occur when walking. A species of variegated kale, of many hues, far superior to any I have

seen elsewhere, is planted in clumps, producing pleasing effects; and when a pheasant rises from before you, your eye reverts to a neighbouring bed of the kale, almost suggestive of its being his nest, and from which he had derived the beauties of his plumage. Mr Ingram, who presides over the horticultural department with so much skill, most obligingly supplied me with some of the seed, which I cultivate most assiduously in patches on my little lawn; and, as I look upon them from my dining-room, they remind me of the beauties of Belvoir; and if such a stimulant were wanting, which indeed it never can be, of the kind courtesies I have invariably received from the Duke of Rutland.

The interior of the castle contains many valuable paintings and other works of art. Among them is a striking portrait of the late Duke, and in the state drawing-room, the late Duchess of Rutland is exquisitely