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Richard Jefferies (1848–87) remains one of the most thoughtful and most lyrical writers on the English countryside. He had aspirations to make a living as a novelist, but it was his short factually based articles for The Live Stock Journal and other magazines, drawn from a wealth of knowledge of the rural community into which he had been born, which when brought together in book form brought him recognition (though not wealth) and which continued to be read and admired after his early death. The Gamekeeper at Home (also reissued in this series) and The Amateur Poacher were both collections of essays in the style of reminiscences of a rural way of life which, though never idyllic, was by the 1870s beginning to undergo a period of rapid change, through both the onset of mechanisation and agricultural depression.



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The Amateur Poacher

RICHARD JEFFERIES





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THE

AMATEUR POACHER



THE

AMATEUR POACHER

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'THE GAMEKEEPER AT HOME' AND 'WILD LIFE

IN A SOUTHERN COUNTY'

LONDON SMITH, ELDER, & CO., 15 WATERLOO PLACE 1879

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PREFACE.

THE following pages are arranged somewhat in the order of time, beginning with the first gun, and attempts at shooting. Then come the fields, the first hills, and woods explored, often without a gun, or any thought of destruction: and next the poachers, and other odd characters observed at their work. Perhaps the idea of shooting with a matchlock, or wheel-lock, might, if put in practice, at least afford some little novelty.

R. J.



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