

SHOOTING.

A SHOOTER'S NOTE BOOK.

The Barbicock Season.

THE Barbicock, let us hope, is only the first of a succession of good shooting seasons. In England, at all events, as regards partridge country, such a succession was never more badly needed. Year after year until this summer we have had the same story to tell about the opening year of this season as if it were going to be the last. The birds were scarce; the sun just pined; the work by keeper and owner or tenant in trying to see that all that man can do shall be done; fair prospects for the hatching season, hopes and fears from day to day as May wears into June and June towards July, and the end of the year, birds sitting on eggs that will never hatch, chicks drowned in furrows and ditches and open grass—the story each year has been nearly the same, and the end of it the same, whatever may have been the beginning. The same partridges are left for the breeding season of the following season, and unless they can hatch off a brood to provide young parents for the season after, there is an end of the prospects of a good head of partridges on that particular moor. Well, at last 1911 has set a check to the run of bad luck, and with the first dry summer for five years has vanquished the annual and periodic reasons as well as the disappearance of the English partridge. We hear no more this year of the dozen and one alleged causes, beginning with farm manure and ending with flying machines, of the decline in the numbers of partridges. It has simply happened as the wiser and more patient of us said it would happen; the warm, dry summer has brought broods to maturity which in wet seasons would have died out, and the consequence has been that bags have gone up again, and so have the hopes of a healthy young breeding stock of partridges. The dry weather has done what was to be expected prescribed for every ailing partridge moor in the kingdom, and most of the patients are now benefiting from the first half of the dose.

Grouse in West Perthshire.

But if the partridge season has been a good one, what are we to say about the grouse? The best year for many years seems to be the report from most parts of Scotland and the north of England, where the partridge has not been so successful in its wonderful shooting. Here is a case in point, of which the details have been kindly sent me by a correspondent. The game book which he has been allowed to inspect belongs to Glentworth, East, and the astonishing results which have been obtained on the moor are so remarkable that I will give the total of the bag—6270 grouse for 5125 acres, or an average of more than six grouse to five acres. How many of the most productive of the English moors can show a better average than that? My correspondent asks, and we will return to the question shortly. He says the moor is a fine, well-cared moor which the game book gives to the credit of the chief deer of the moor, which is across the Barvick Burn. The accompanying table shows the individual scores of each butt for the first seven drives and the last drive of the season:

THE BARVICK DRIVE.

Table with columns: Date (Duits, Aug. 22, Sept. 4, Sept. 6, Sept. 8, Sept. 14, Sept. 21, Sept. 27, Dec. 2), and rows of numbers representing scores for different butts.

These figures, adds my correspondent, are the more remarkable in view of the fact that the Barvick has usually been the best gun in the county, and in the last year, the third drive in a single week actually showed 924 brace of grouse to three guns—a truly wonderful record. There were several more drives between Sept. 27 and Dec. 7, which are not included in the table, but altogether the Barvick produced close on 1000 brace for the season.

Grouse per Acre.

We may turn to some records of other grouse moors in England and Scotland, not for purposes of comparison, we cannot do better than set down the records of bags given in that most valuable book of reference The Grouse in Health and in Disease. In the chapter on "Moor Management" Lord Lovat has collected and analysed the totals of the bags obtained on four picked moors—two in England and two in Scotland. On the Caughley moor, in Northainshire, 50,000 acres, the average bag in the five years 1895-1909 was something over 3000 brace, while in 1910 the bag up to Oct. 9 was 6615 brace. That is thirteen birds to thirty acres, or roughly, one bird to 2 1/4 acres. On the Broomhead moor, 3000 acres, the bag during the five years 1907-1909 averaged 1114 brace, which is one bird to four acres. In 1910 the bag was 1500 brace—that is, one bird per acre. On the Bolton Abbey Moors in Yorkshire, 14,000 acres, the best five-yearly average of bags occurs between 1895 and 1897, when the guns on an average obtained something over 5200 brace, which is one bird to about 5 1/2 acres. The moor which the Grouse Disease Committee describe as at once the best burned and carrying the biggest stock of birds per acre is, however, the Broomhead moor in Yorkshire, 4000 acres, which, according to the average between 1908 and 1910 of something under 2500 brace, is one bird to four to four and a half acres. This last average appears to beat the six birds to five acres record of Glentworth. But, of course, as regards all these moors we have no details later than 1910. The records for 1911 may quite possibly largely exceed those of any other year, and it is not unlikely that, in many English and Scottish moors. And if that is the case, the next question which will occur to most people is whether the year which is to follow the present year will not illustrate once more the familiar cycle, and bring disease with it. It seems to be the unvarying law—the bumper year, the two bumper years, the lean year, the year of the moor avarant. However, if disease comes, or threatens to come, we are at all events in a better case than we used to be. Having reduced disease to a question of heather and room, at least we know what to do to try to prevent it.

Airguns.

How many men who have used an airgun could give the date of the invention of such guns? I was asked that question the other day, and I thought I would answer it. It is generally safe to assume that everything is much older than you think it is, and that our grandfathers knew the way with an egg as well as our grandmothers; but even those assumptions did lead us to the truth. About the beginning of the nineteenth century, it is believed, the first airgun was made for collectors and naturalists to discover that they might require small guns for small birds. Having thus given hand to the questioner the opportunity he grimly availed of. The "History of the Airgun" was then written, and the "History of the Airgun" is now published by the original progress and improvement of them. Furnished with a variety of instances and examples, showing forth the excellency of Humane Wit, it bore on its title-page the date

and place of publication—London 1861. And on turning to a page which was in my mind well worth a perusal, I found "There are certain *Woolly Sleds*, or wind-muskets, that some have devised to shoot bullets withal, without powder, or anything else, but wind comrest with the bore thereof, or injected with a spring (as boys use) to shoot pellets with Elderwood, by breaking into them, which will shoot as well with as great force as powder." Having read that I turned again to look at the date. "Five years before the Fire of London," said the owner of the book. "And I only discovered it yesterday." That, I told him, seemed hardly enough. "But you might have known it," he went on, "in such manner. The proper step to take at the moment—in a house which contained no works of reference dealing with the history of the gun—appeared to be to refer to the last edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*. But that admirable library, though it concisely defines an airgun, does not mention the date of its invention. To judge the bullet is the elasticity of compressed atmospheric air," preserves as to the date of its invention a golden silence.

CHIEVOT.

BIG GAME SHOOTING IN 1911. THE DEATH ROLL among big game sportsmen this year was long and listless, and, happily, the names of some distinguished hunters whose absence from the ranks of their fellows will be long and greatly mourned. Chief among these was the Maharajah of Cooh Behar, who died on March 15th, at the age of 47, after a long and arduous career. He was a devoted sportsman, and his death was a great loss to the game world. He was succeeded by his son, Prince Raj Rajendra, who was educated at Eton, and under whose rule the great hunting grounds of Cooh Behar will probably be preserved much as they have been for a generation past.

Most lamentable to a large circle of friends and relations was the untimely death of Mr. George Grey, brother to Sir Edward Grey, Foreign Secretary, and one of the best known and most popular of African pioneers and sportsmen. Mr. Grey, during his adventurous career, had faced innumerable dangers, and he was killed while hunting a lion in the bush. He was a man of great energy and courage, and his death was a great loss to the game world. He was succeeded by his son, Mr. John Grey, who was also a sportsman and a man of great energy and courage.

This year we have had no great Odyssey of big game shooting such as that of the late Mr. Selous. He was a man of great energy and courage, and his death was a great loss to the game world. He was succeeded by his son, Mr. John Selous, who was also a sportsman and a man of great energy and courage.

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performance of the "scatter gun" and S.S.G. He mentions two species which were in his mind well worth a perusal, which, striking a lion in the head, put him at once out of action.

Messrs F. D. Fox and E. F. Varian have given an interesting account of the present status of "Big Game" in Angola (Portuguese West Africa), dealing more especially with the country on the route of the new line now being constructed from Luanda to Benguela, and the Congo from the whole, this route is specially recommended for sporting purposes. A species of wild dog, which seems to be new to science, is found near Sapa Mountain; it is known to the natives as the "bingo" and is a very large animal, and more like a puma or small lion in the distance. An excellent description is given by Mr. J. E. Hughes, in "The Haunts of the Situngu," of sport in the huge swamps of Lake Mweru. The Situngu is a very large animal, and more like a puma or small lion in the distance. An excellent description is given by Mr. J. E. Hughes, in "The Haunts of the Situngu," of sport in the huge swamps of Lake Mweru.

One of the principal events in Asiatic shooting among this year was the "Elephant Shooting in Burma," which was a most stirring account of a successful hunt, in company with a brother officer. The downfall of two takers was gratefully acknowledged by a native Burmese officer, who quietly and without a murmur of complaint; it is pleasant to find that he was afterwards comfortably provided for as a "camel sowar." Bears, when they catch a man, certainly inflict a great deal of damage on his person, but the Burmese officer has described in "A Lady's Experience in the Himalayas" a successful fair hunt in those sublime and difficult regions. Few ladies have accomplished the feat of shooting tigers, and the "Elephant Shooting in Burma" is a most stirring account of a successful hunt, in company with a brother officer.

The wild animals in India are still very plentiful is evident by the official returns of the number of animals slain under reward last year. This included 1421 tigers, 2222 bears, 529 rhinos, and a large number of other animals. It is pleasant to find that he was afterwards comfortably provided for as a "camel sowar." Bears, when they catch a man, certainly inflict a great deal of damage on his person, but the Burmese officer has described in "A Lady's Experience in the Himalayas" a successful fair hunt in those sublime and difficult regions.

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shanty, towards which the buck had approached within thirty yards. No less than four antelopes were obtained by the gunner and his friend...

At the Festival of Empire, held at the Crystal Palace this year, one of the most notable exhibits was the magnificent collection of big game trophies, gathered in a handsome pavilion, the facade of which erected at the Vienna Sports Exhibition last year...

The literature of big game shooting has not shown a very happy output this year. The following are some notable volumes. Chief among these may be cited Lieut. P. T. Eberhart's 'Across the Roof of the World...'...

LENGTH OF BARRELS.

SIR.—With your wider experience of guns and their behaviour you will be able to give "Woodcock" the information he desires. May I, however, give you my opinion...

EXAMINE AFTER "SQUIBS."

SIR.—A very extraordinary thing happened to me whilst coast shooting on Saturday. Just as I was about to beat I noticed that the right barrel had not exploded properly...

Stockwell Lodge, Knareborough, Yorks. [Our correspondent does not in the least exaggerate the seriousness of the accident...

RING UP NEW SHOOTING SCHOOLS.

Fully equipped and staffed. ADJOINING BRISTON-ROAD STATION. Twenty minutes only from Baker-street, Metropolitan Railway. EXPERTS ALWAYS IN ATTENDANCE.

CHARLES LANCASTER & CO., Ltd., Gunmakers, 11, St. George's Place, Haymarket, London, S.W. [Advvt.]

WANTED SURPLUS GAME OF ALL KINDS.

M. GEISMAR, 110, Charterhouse-street, SMITHFIELD MARKET, LONDON, begs to remind gentlemen who have surplus game to dispose of that he always pays the highest market prices for DEER (antelope), and other game...

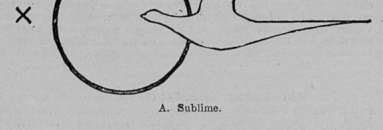
GUNS AND RIFLES BOUGHT for Cash; the highest market value given, or taken in exchange. Secondhand Guns of 300, and by all the leading makers. Call and see my stock of 300, and by all the leading makers...

"COOPAL" No. 2 SMOKELESS POWDER was the first Flake Powder introduced into this country...

WANTED. GUNS wanted for cash or exchange; surplus game of all kinds...

METHODS OF KILLING GAME.

SIR.—Without presuming to say that there is anything wrong with the style of killing game adopted by such a well-known shot as I believe "Contortionist" to be, yet...



greatly exceeding the limit, if he likes—to be a charge of shot, and mark off the range by a couple of lamp posts. If I—the cock pheasant—have arrived at the middle of the street when "Contortionist" is passing his post...

Now, then, I have made three drawings of birds, crossing at 25, 25 to 30 yards, choosing pheasants because they are more



certain of recognition as birds by reason of their long tails. The X represents the point at which the gun is directed at the moment of discharge and the circle the charge of shot. En passant, I may remark that I shoot a 35, which throws a rather closer pattern than a half choke 12, and that the lead will vary with pace and range.

Taking my diagrams, then, A represents what it pleases me to think does actually happen, and B what I think would be the only too well happens when circumstances occur which I have no control cause me to fire as "Contortionist" recommends, and



C is what it maintains happens, but which I can only imagine would be possible if his gun was loaded with an instantaneous plate instead of a cartridge. "Contortionist's" contention was correct C represents a class of work which, at any rate, in covert shooting, would only be preferable to that shown in B by reason of the increased weight of meat it would yield.

Now, however, it seems to me that the "queen of weapons," the shooter may, if he chooses, provide himself with a sort of bastard shooting iron from which he may discharge salvos of bullets in a way and at a range which renders any special skill in stalking or shooting an unnecessary accomplishment.

SCATTER RIFLE. SIR.—In spite of being considered—by those who have never tried the sport—as something a trifle worse than a pot hunter, I look upon days of "creeping" with a small-bore rifle as some of the most sporting and enjoyable I have spent.

WIDOWLY IN CO. KERRY.—I do not know to what part of Kerry J. D. refers in his note of the 26th Oct. 23, who mentions that usual in Kerry. My own experience, and that of many others to whom I have spoken, is quite the reverse, and I have never known them scarce, at any way and at a range which renders any special skill in stalking or shooting an unnecessary accomplishment.

GUNMAKER, GUN FITTER, AND BARREL BORER, 15, St. Mary's-row, Birmingham. Shooting Schools Birmingham and Manchester. Guns Refitted. Shooting Restored. All Kinds of Repairs.—[Advvt.]

THE POCKET GAME REGISTER.—A handy little notebook for recording the results of each day's sport, amount of game killed, and disposal of the same. Sent post free to any address. Apply to the Secretary of Schultze Co. Limited, 251a, Gray's Inn-road, London, W.C.—[Advvt.]

GUNS AND RIFLES BOUGHT FOR CASH.—Highest prices given by W. J. Jeffery and Co. Ltd., of 13, King-street, St. James's, and 60, Queen Victoria-street, and Co. Ltd., of 11, St. George's Place, Haymarket, London, S.W.—[Advvt.]

SECONDHAND EJECTORS, Hammerless, Hammer Gun for Sale, by best makers. Old Guns taken in Exchange. Liberal prices given for all kinds of guns and rifles.

TRUE CYLINDERS.

SIR.—After reading both contributions to the discussion on "True Cylinders," by P. N. Horns, several points occur to me. (1) The barrels that lost so much weight belonged to a best-quality gun; (2) the barrels of Whitworth fluid steel; (3) why a man who shoots 12,000 cartridges in a season did not use a pair of guns...

The barrels are 23in. and made of Whitworth fluid steel. It seemed to balance so well that I tried the weight of barrels and stock and action, and I found the weight of the barrels of the 2lb. (not bad for a gun built in '82).

It is the cock pheasant, and I am not certain that I am not alone—should like him, and others who advocate shooting straight at crossing birds, to point out the weak spots in the following parable, which, with allowances perhaps, fairly represents the case in point. Imagine your humble servant, briskly crossing an ordinary street, to be a cock pheasant, "Contortionist" in his car—

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