

Correspondence.

"CRACK" AND OTHER "SHOTS."

To the Editor of the CANADIAN SPORTSMAN AND NATURALIST:—

"It is generally the *mistaken* idea of those who are no judges of shooting, that if a man kills a certain number of times without missing, he is to be put down as a first-rate shot; and that another person, because he has been seen to miss, is to be considered as his inferior."—COL. HAWKER.

There is, no doubt, a large amount of charlatany in the pretensions of a *soi-disant* "crack shot," an illustration of which I may superadd to the cases alluded to in your last impression. I knew a gentleman, in England, who was said never to miss a shot; and he never, or "hardly ever," did. But then his *modus operandi* was as follows: he rarely pulled trigger on a bird at a greater distance than from 30 to 40 yards, and he scarcely ever even aimed at a bird that flew away to the right. I refer now to Partridge-shooting, and I need not say, that a very ordinary marksman ought seldom to miss a bird flying straight away from him, or to his left, at 30 yards. I knew another gentleman, a distinguished sportsman, who, although an excellent shot, *did*, and not unfrequently, fail to bag a bird he shot at; but, *his* style was somewhat different. He had a keeper always at his elbow with a *seco d* gun, and, having brought down his birds, right and left, with the first, the second, one of Lancaster's No 3, with steel barrels, was placed in his hands, and he *often* bagged a second brace, *generally* a third bird, from one covey. An excellent test of accuracy of aim may be demonstrated in the Old Country by paying a visit, in a boat, to the caves with which the rock-bound coast of Kerry, Ireland, is indented, and which are the haunts of seals, of many varieties of wild-fowl, and Rock-pigeons, *Columba livia*. Send a man in a spare boat into one of these caves, and the pigeons, called also Sea-pigeons, will fly out with meteor-like rapidity; and to drop them as they wing their way *towards you*, will put to the proof the accuracy of your eye and the

steadiness of your nerves. How different and how superior this sport to the almost mechanical process of firing at the same birds from a trap. *Appropos* of trap-shooting, I once saw a number of school boys in a field, in England, some with guns in their hands, and some with baskets. I stopped to watch them, and found that they were about to engage in a pigeon-shooting match. A bird was trapped; the word was given; the trap was sprung; the pigeon was on the wing; a gun was discharged; and down came the bird, wounded, as I supposed, for it lay fluttering on the ground. To my astonishment, however, a boy ran up, seized the pigeon, and *trapped it again*. Explanation: the unhappy bird had a long slender string attached to its leg, and when it was not hit, it was *pulled down*, and submitted to another ordeal. Such is sport as some define the term! V. CLEMENTI.

Peterboro, February 20, 1882.

A BOY'S ENCOUNTER WITH A BEAR.

SIR,—The following true account of an adventure with a bear may be of interest to your readers. In August last, a boy about twelve years of age, living within seven miles from this place, started for the woods one morning in search of his father's cows. He had with him a shot-gun, and was accompanied by a dog; having entered the woods a short distance, the dog, which had hitherto kept close to his heels, bounded suddenly away and was soon lost to view. Thinking there was game ahead, he followed as fast as his short legs and the bushes would permit in the direction the dog had taken. On reaching a place where the undergrowth was thick and tangled, an animal rushed past him at a speed too great to enable him to see what it was; he then became alarmed and began to beat a retreat, and well he did so, for at this moment the ugly visage of a bear approached. Between fright, and a desire to get home, (just then,) the boy succeeded in reaching a more open space before Bruin caught up to him. He then turned around and as her ladyship raised to give him a fond embrace, the little fellow dashed the gun into her face, having forgotten in the excitement of the moment that it was loaded. This seemed to disconcert the bear a little, and the youth started to run in another direction, but was almost immediately pursued. Having to scramble over a large hemlock log, the bark gave way and he rolled over, being partly