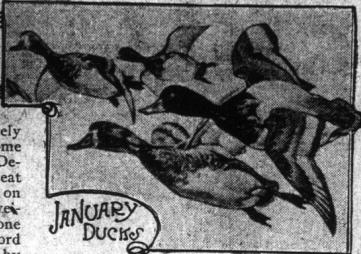


Field Sports at Home and Abroad



SPORT OR SLAUGHTER.

(Richard L. Pocock).

Many a time and oft has the question been raised, what is the correct definition of sport, and it is a question which it is extremely difficult to answer satisfactorily. It is a term which has been used and abused in such a variety of ways, that it has come to have different shades of meaning, according to the individual ideas of those who use it. One man comes along and tells us of what he considers a magnificent bag which he has made, and proceeds to dilate on the magnificent sport he enjoyed, when up comes another and calls him a game-hog. Our ancestors enjoyed rare sport, as they would call it, witnessing bull-baiting, cock-fighting, and kindred "sports." Were they to come to life again and carry on their sport in the good old way, as of yore, they would speedily find themselves in a police court on a charge of cruelty to animals.

Thousands of men and some women paid large sums for admission to witness a championship prize-fight, and called it good sport. Other thousands would consider themselves degraded by doing such a thing, and would call the others' sport brutal and demoralizing. From which it would appear that sport is a word for which we can give no hard and fast definition for general use, but that, though every one who uses it knows what he intends

allowing the wanton destruction of these birds to go on to afford sport to those, whose conception of the meaning of the word is so low as to make it cover the shooting merely for the sake of killing of what they never think of being able to use. How many of the ducks which feed at the mouth of the main sewer at the foot of Cook street would these gunners who "pot" them every Sunday care to eat? Or who would consider they were paying a compliment by sending a friend a bunch of Siwash ducks as at present. They and the sea-gulls help to enhance the natural beauty of our shores, they add life to the picture and are good to see—alive. They do no harm and possibly some good. Is a man a sportsman who shoots them and throws their dead bodies on the beach or back into the water? Should not the word sport have grown to have a higher significance than this in this age, and should not all sportsmen of refinement do their best by example and precept to discourage and bring into contempt such wanton waste of wild life for the passing amusement of the thoughtless to give them no harder name?

THE BLACK-TAILED DEER OF VANCOUVER.

Under the above-heading D. D. has treated the readers of the London Field to the following delightfully interesting and amusing account of sport in the districts adjacent to Victoria in the early days—so early that there was then no close season for blacktail. The blue grouse seem to have been mighty fat in those days, though even then sportsmen apparently got "skunked" occasionally.

"Still-hunting" has been called the most scientific of all sports pertaining to the chase. It is the American mode of deer stalking throughout their dense mountain forests, their broad tablelands, and oak-grown parks or plains. The art of tracking and scouting reaches a high standard of perfection over such varied country, a level, seldom, if ever, attained on our own restricted deer forests even in snowtime. To men born and reared amongst the odors of the forest it implies their form of daily training from boyhood up. The laws of the jungle are as necessary to backwoodsmen as their daily bread, the provision of which mainly depends on their acute cunning, good marksmanship, and deep knowledge of woodcraft in all its fascinating branches. Often single-handed for days together in the gloomy forest miles away from civilization, the sport of hunting these shy deer over mountain and swamp, through forest, gulch, or glade, promotes a rare state of health and condition, backed perforce by a cool head, quick action, and self-reliance, all welded together by lifelong lessons in the lore of woodcraft.

its significance to be, his application of it may be absolutely and entirely antagonistic to the true significance of the word in another man's mind; and from which it would also appear that the plane of true sport has, speaking generally, been considerably elevated since the days of our bull-baiting ancestors and the days when my Lord Tomnoddy was bored to death, and so found sport in the suggestion of his valet: "If it please my lord, there's a man to be hanged," and so spent the night in carousal waiting to see a poor wretch launched into eternity for what would nowadays be considered a paltry offence for which to forfeit a human life.

It would seem that, as men have grown more civilized, their notion of what is sport has grown more refined. It is usually admitted that a certain amount of cruelty is inseparable from sports of the field. As the human race has passed through the successive ages, succeeding savagery, when prisoners of war were tortured to death to make sport for their captors, to the present pitch of civilization, when perhaps the tendency with many of us is to be over-squeamish, so passes the born sportsman from the age of early boyhood, when it was good sport to catapult the song bird, through the stage when the chief pleasure was to kill, to the ultimate stage, which I notice is reached nowadays by so many doughty hunters, who leave their rifles in the rack when they answer the call of the wild and take the camera instead.

I think it should be possible to take it for granted that we have reached that stage when it should be a misnomer to call wanton taking of life, wild or otherwise, sport. Among the large body of those who I think, without dogmatizing, I may call the best sportsmen, there has long been an unwritten law against killing what cannot afterwards be used for human food, except of course noxious and dangerous animals and vermin.

Every year sees the migration to this coast of countless thousands of waterfowl, and the sport of duck shooting is one which is indulged in and enjoyed, and to my mind at least rightfully so, by large numbers of sportsmen. There are many varieties of these ducks and some are good to shoot and also good to eat, and others are easier to shoot, but, alas, much more difficult to eat. The kind of wild ducks—the mallard—is sometimes a useless bird on the table, when he has been able to feed on the rotting dog-salmon, which for a season defile our river banks and tide-flats. There are others, however, which never offend in this way, well-known to shooters, but probably the commonest and the easiest to shoot of the salt-water ducks which come here are the scoters of various species classed colloquially under the common name of "Siwash ducks." I have eaten Siwash ducks, when I was very hungry and there was nothing else, but I am honestly of the opinion that they do not make a dish which any white man would enjoy unless he were, as I was, very hungry indeed, and the larder otherwise empty. I am also honestly of the opinion that a very small proportion of these ducks killed are used in any way.

Therefore I make bold to ask is it sport to shoot them, or is it slaughter? And, if it is not anything but slaughter, are we justified in

out all our colonies in the great northwest. Gun, rod, and rifle add variety to the kettle as occasion provides. A modest camp outfit and a few tinned stores can be easily packed on a horse, on one's own back, or, better still, in a canoe, and no tenderfoot neglect them. Short commons and empty stomachs put a stop to all sport; blank days resulting from bad luck, foul weather, or want of savoirfaire have always to be catered for.

Up-country trips in Vancouver seldom took me more than four days out of reach of



A Colwood Trout Stream

supplies, and during nine years of Pacific cruising I devoted much spare time to still-hunting with a single companion. Thanks to good leadership, a quickly acquired knowledge of the country, and plenty of hard work, we never once returned to our base empty handed. Our expeditions, always from the coastline, covered the country from Sooke Inlet to Saanich; from Comox, Cowichan, Drew Harbor, Qualicum River, Horn Lake and Alberni, Oyster Bay, Albert Bay, to Beaver Harbor and Fort Rupert; also on Admiralty, Denman, Lasqueti, and Deer islands; besides numerous odd excursions on the mainland from Fraser River to Metlakatla, close to Alaska.

The best sport we obtained from Esquimalt, round the familiar hunting grounds of Green Mountain, Lone Tree Hill, Colwood, Goldstream, the Happy Valley, and Metchosin, all within an easy day's reach in a buckboard from Esquimalt itself, or some part of its lovely land-locked harbor. Extended cultivation, the island railway facilities, and better roads have, with an increasing population, partially cleared the primeval forest and driven the blacktail, like the Redskin, further west—perhaps, like that wily savage, also, to suffer extinction in the relentless course of time. The canoe loaded up overnight, we always got under way by daylight, paddling up to the head of the harbor and disembarking at Parson's Bridge, near the mouth of the Mill stream; thence on foot to Pike or Prospect Lakes, or by buckboard to seek the shelter of some lonely shanty. Roads were scarce ten miles in, so we packed our kit along the narrow woodland trails leading "through interminable forest, over river, hill, and hollow," as the son of Hiawatha so poetically describes the health-giving hunting grounds of this captivating island. A lean-to of hemlock boughs, a bed of cedar branches, soft and sweet scented; a fire of dry fir cones and bark, the savory smoke stealing in blue wreaths up to the matted pine-tops; a dish of trout from the lake or a frying-pan steak mellowed with sliced onions, a flask of rye whisky and a quiet smoke; early to bed and early to rise.

The snort, stamp, and whistle of many a startled blacktail failed to disturb our rural slumbers in these wild, secluded spots. Curiosity is as fatal to all deer as to duck on a decoy pond. A fire by night or a pine torch at a salt lick lures many an antlered head to its destruction. Toiling for duck with a red dog—better still with a tame fox—attracts inquisitive wildfowl within gunshot. Both tricks would fail to draw either fur or feather if one whiff of human scent was wafted from the stalker to the stalked.

Out at dawn, cocoa and biscuit, then still-hunting all day on favored feeding and resting grounds, our little party often separating to work both sides of a hill or a ravine or drive a swamp. Each district possessed common points of rendezvous in case we strayed apart too long or the finding and following of deer had led us in opposite directions. Small huts erected here and there by local sportsmen were very handy in wet weather; the brotherhood of the forest made us honorary members of these storehouses, sleeping huts, and common shelters. Aided by a fawn-colored setter with blue eyes, famous for deer or grouse, also by a crossbred bull mastiff who never forsook a



The Blacktail of Vancouver Island

well-stocked salmon rivers, swift-running trout streams, and deep-cut estuaries of salt water. Except at its southern and eastern end, the hand of the destroyer has so far done little to obliterate this sporting paradise. Railways and lumber mills, salmon canneries, and sheep ranches follow each other in increasing progression; but deer, panther, and black bear still remain. A herd of wapiti still exists in the north, migrating according to season; beavers, raccoons, otters, marten, mink, and squirrel still rejoice in the life-giving woodlands and streams. Gamebirds are represented by blue grouse and willow, the former up to 4½ lb. in weight (similar to our blackgame), imported pheasant, and California quail. All manner of wildfowl (I have myself shot ten different varieties in one day at Colwood Lagoon) add their varied charm to the pleasures of a mixed bag anywhere from Fort Rupert in the far north to Esquimalt.

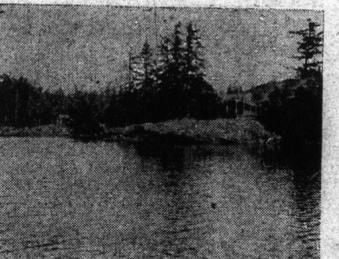
Vancouver Island without the presence of its ferocious nature to enliven those still, silent forests would be devoid of what at present constitutes its greatest charm. The exhilarating sport of still-hunting can still be enjoyed by all, camping out for choice on the banks of a rippling trout stream or by the shores of some lonely tarn or mirrored lake, and it is by far the most effective method of securing blacktail. A packhorse may be used on the trail, or the local Siwash and his "hyas kloosch canim" offer a ready means of transport in this rugged, roadless country. The less impedimenta the better goes without saying; beans, bacon, flour, sugar, and tea form the working commissariat of prospecting miners through-

wounded deer until it was pulled down, rarely a day passed without exciting sport of some kind. The season lasted from August to December; bucks then shed their horns, and meat was black and poor. We shot a buck on Christmas Eve without horns near the Traveller's Rest at Colwood, another with only one horn on January 3 at Metchosin. At Langford Lake three deer were driven to water by hounds; one buck was seized on landing, and lost its horns while struggling on the ground. As no close time existed for blacktail, the damage they did to farmers' crops brought speedy retribution all the year round. The sanctuary of those vast, unlimited natural preserves proved their chief salvation, and alone saved them from gradual extinction.

All over Vancouver Island the cultivated clearings, mostly reclaimed from the rich, alluvial swamps, are fenced off from the forest by snake fences of split pine. Without uprights, these fences are stiff enough to inclose cattle, and often stand 6 feet high. A panther leapt into a corral at the Traveller's Rest, Colwood, killed all the sheep inclosed, and went out with the fattest over his back without displacing a single rail. Tread by a Scotch terrier, his skin was tanned and made into a handsome rug as a reminder of the wild sport obtainable at Colwood. Blacktail will walk right round a fence at night and always come in over its lowest rails to ransack the corn patch or clean out the potatoes, precisely as their congeners, the red deer, do on Exmoor.

After a hard day's still-hunting round Colwood we slept the night at the log hut of one "Gentleman Brown" in the Happy Valley, seven miles further in. While broaching a bottle of navy rum a white-headed nigger looked in to tell us a big buck had come in every night over his fence and "clean cleared his potato patch; would we help to hunt him? Swearing strange oaths of vengeance over the loss of his crop by this apparently well-known warty buck, our bottle soon disappeared, likewise a prick of ship's tobacco. Plans were soon made; we were to post ourselves behind two friendly stumps that night, any time after tea p.m., and so obtain a close shot by moonlight. "We were welcome to the doe as well as the yearling calf if we could shoot them, and save the potatoes." Sundown then it was no earthly use lying out until the moon was well up the yearling calf if we could shoot them, surrounding forest. We fired our steak and lay out in the straw barn, hoping the rain would clear off, but it did not. Snowball had lit out at supper time.

Soon after ten p.m. we crept through the soaking swamp, in pouring rain, and after several severe falls over stumps in the forest, arrived at our hiding place in Snowball's garden. The drifting rain showed the wind in the right quarter, but the phantom buck was long in coming. Without waterproofs, we were wet to the skin; anxiety to secure a 12-point kept us rooted to our dripping tree stumps till 1 a.m. Nothing was heard or seen, and we floundered back across the swamp and through the sha-



Prospect Lake of Today

dowy trails, to find our second rum bottle empty, Gentleman Brown in his bunk, and almost insensible.

By daylight the weather cleared, and we started out to find Snowball, but his stable was open, horse and buckboard both gone. He had proffered help in case he heard shots in the garden, and his dog was to work with our host's Gordon setters driving deer next day; we could in no way account for his extraordinary disappearance. With Gentleman Brown horsed combat and Snowball non est, we hunted alone all day; found and moved a doe with her calf at heel in the swamp handy to the garden, but no signs, scent, or tracks of the Happy Valley buck were there. We spent hours drawing his favorite haunts without success. A few willow grouse treed by the setters, a marten, and a coon made up the mixed bag, and by sundown we worked back to the shanty, minus horns and without venison.

Gentleman Brown had recovered sufficiently to tell us an amusing story. Rather than see the big buck shot by passing strangers, old Snowball had regretted his proffered advice and hurried back to lay traps for it himself. Sharpening some stout stakes to take the deer on the drop, he let them into the ground at an angle of 45 degrees towards the fence exactly at the spot the buck always came over. The buck had come in at the usual time, soon after dark—a clear two hours before we were invited. Leaping high at the tall fence without touching a rail, he had fallen with his white chest full butt on those cruel stakes. Driven home by the drop and thus impaled, his throat

The Sportsman's Calendar

JANUARY

Sport of the Month—Wildfowl shooting.
In Season—Ducks, geese, brant, snipe.
January 1st the last day for shooting pheasants, grouse and quail.

was cut by Snowball as he lay kicking on the ground. The buck was in the cart halfway to the Travellers Rest, and en route to Victoria market, a clear hour before we arrived on the scene. Snowball had taken no risks.

Piloted by Gentleman Brown, we walked over and inspected the potato patch, quickly



The Goldstream of Today

found the hidden stakes, much blood on the muddy ground, all the signs of a severe struggle, and buried in the brush close by the fresh paunch of a deer; finally, the tracks of man, horse, and wheels in and out of the inclosure. This, then, accounted for our long watch the previous night and the blank day which ensued. Retribution was to follow, however, and that swiftly.

Arriving outside the Traveller's Rest, Snowball had hitched his wagon up and shouted for drinks to celebrate his victory. Horse, buckboard, and fat buck were left outside in the rain to look after themselves. A few passers-by pulled up and joined in the corrobbery, and consumed much rye whisky at Snowball's expense. Gentleman Brown, his rum-drinking guests, and the failure of their sport, brought about by his own sagacity, afforded an amusing topic, which lasted long into the night. The long-coveted head and horns of the Happy Valley buck would fetch ten dollars at Victoria, the skin would be tanned, and there was a clean hundredweight of prime potato-fed venison to be disposed of. The old nigger was filled with hilarity and good spirits.

Meanwhile other carts had passed by in the rain of the night, unheard and unseen. The buck lay in the light of a full moon, with its white chest and stomach lit up, and had attracted quicker eyes than Snowball's. Seeing him inside drunk and sleepy, it was easy to lift the deer lightly out of his wagon and on to theirs, and so on quickly to dispose of it. Snowball's senses recovered at dawn; he rolled out of the bar to find his wagon still there, but empty. A lengthened search around the premises to discover the nocturnal jester let in no extra daylight to his fuddled brain. The landlord soon wearied of his noisy imputations, and sent him swearing on his road, to hunt in his turn for the phantom buck. The story meanwhile soon spread to the Happy Valley; it reached Gentleman Brown at the Coach and Horses, whither he had leant after absorbing a full quart of our old navy rum, and Snowball's downfall caused uproarious laughter. The spoiler had been spoiled, our midnight vigil avenged. Snowball remained hidden in the slums of the settlement, searching for his deer's meat maybe, long after the chaff had subsided; but he never traced the carcass or the crafty joker who stole it. The symmetrical antlers, easily recognizable by their age and size, filtered through to the store of a sporting naturalist in Fort street, and were bought soon after to decorate the tiny cabin of a British man-of-war. They can still be seen with others mounted on oaken shields in Hampshire, commemorating that disastrous naval campaign and recalling the tragic, low-down fate which befell the black-tail buck of Happy Valley.

Adele Verne has a sister who promises to vie with her for the honors of her chosen art. She has given several recitals and displayed evidence of distinct talent and remarkable execution. However, there cannot be too many good musicians, and any and all additions to the ranks must be welcome.

The London censor has forbidden the production of Strauss's Salome.

DE RESZKES

was born in Warsaw, Poland, his brother, in the their father was a hotelier. Their mother was passionate. Their mother had received one of their sisters, as a distinguished soprano, her brother, who has a rare voice, although he has age. Jean was intended for had more attractions than in the study of music, makaritone at Venice in 1874. very tiring, and on the adacher abandoned baritone actice, appeared as a tenor instant and complete suc-

at an agricultural college, he charms of music too Paris with his sister, and certs for a time, until his tion, when he was given peratic stage, where he nd pleasant.

Deszkes have found their inancially. Their estates is. A few years ago they e potato field. The homes ake a village. The broth- undoubtedly much more en, who have ever ap- or drama. Mr. Jean De is brother is a bachelor.

AL NOTES

seems more popular than n to the stage after her she sings she adds to her is said to be more lovely personality has lost none arm. Nordica is past fifty, sss a youthfulness that ecently the prima donna by Madam Carreno, the e enthusiasm displayed remarkable, the applause was the crush at the ornamance had to be post- enable the audience al America, commenting on that occasion, says—

without saying that the ed by the singer were in Schumann and the Wag- because musically they est of her songs, but be- others, they afford her ies wherein she particu- no singer today who can am Spinnard" with such ncy, or who can declaim ch a variety of thrilling n this manner, these fre- tions can never become a rarely beautiful flow as that with which she Nusbaum!" Not only e and verbal emphasis endeavor to bring out e text, but gestures and sion lend eloquent as- sists may, of course, ob- which does not constant- inger in the "dignified" age on the stage, but no e ever complain."

an amphitheatre with a yenty-five thousand. It will be used principally es.

low, who is rapidly e foremost violinists n born, though she has n Europe.

regard to Caruso is one ve affair. It is said to that the great tenor's ry and settle down on alian estates, and, were way, he would choose little Sicilian girl-whom whom he is in love, and urns his affection. But doing all they can to and are trying to per- en-hearted young lady Caruso's future will be y is not to consider his er the pleasure he can er world by remaining a time only to his pro- a true one the young y tried.

noted song interpreter, nance in San Francisco or appreciated, has rt, become so popular hold his admirers. He ork, and when he once ience he carries it with

n's new opera "Fallen with great enthusiasm g. Critics do not agree g it, but most of them y distinctive a type of ey had hoped to hear, sing.