

Field Sports at Home and Abroad

TRAPPING COYOTES.

The best time to trap coyotes is in winter when snow is on the ground or when the ground is frozen hard, as the animals are hungry and a shade less suspicious of human signs where traps are set. But the wise trapper will not leave any signs of scent. He will leave things looking exactly as he found them, for the prairie wolf is about the wildest and wildest creature that he has to deal with. In trapping coyotes make a bed four feet each way or nearly round. Use a sharp piece of board or a flat stone for digging down and leveling the earth, in preference to a knife or anything metallic. Do not put your hands in the dirt. Set the traps and place them about ten inches from the outside of the bed. Cover them with a trifle less than an inch of soil. Cover the pan with a piece of gunnysack, so that the sack will be inside the jaws. Be sure the sack does not interfere with the jaws coming together. Fasten the end of the chain to a stake and drive the stake down level with the ground and cover it with dirt. Smooth the bed over carefully; then cut bacon into very small pieces and scatter all over it about four inches apart. Coyotes like bacon. They begin to pick up the small pieces, and the first thing they know there is a foot in the trap. Or kill a rabbit and clean it, scattering bits of the hide, entrails and other parts around the bed, putting it thickest around and over the traps. Make your beds in wheat fields; also near cow trails and rabbit trails through the woods, near the edge of prairies and up and down canons. You can also set your traps near the carcass of a horse, cow or calf which you find in the woods. Wait until the coyotes begin gnawing on the carcass; then set your traps nearby. Dig out a circle a little larger than the spread of the trap's jaws when set and bury the trap so that it will be just level with the top of the ground. Rake leaves, straw, or snow over the trap, but do not let anything interfere with the jaws coming close together and gripping a leg or foot. If the dead animal is lying on its side, coyotes will likely begin gnawing on the flank or belly. Set two traps between the fore and hind legs, about two feet from the body. Also set several traps 20 or 30 feet from the carcass, and you have a good chance to catch another wolf as it circles around the carcass, watching a wolf in the trap as it tugs at the chain. Wear gloves while handling your traps.

You will sometimes catch a wolf by setting your traps in little trails which you yourself have made, as coyotes will often follow you and thus get into the traps. A good idea is to burn a little hay or leaves over the trap after it is set. Coyotes are given to digging into camp fires. Also if you find a place where campers have freshly camped and thrown out pieces of bacon, bread and the like, set two traps nearby, baiting them with bacon, fresh pork, cracklings, and the like. Set your traps immediately after the campers leave, and you will stand a good chance to get a wolf, for you may be sure the sly creatures have been watching the camp from the surrounding heights. Burning hay or leaves over the traps destroys the scent of meat.

Set your traps along ridges, the higher the better. Plow a furrow along the ridge in the early autumn making a kind of path. If the ridge be brushy, clear the brush away first. Make brush fences up to the path on each side in several places along the ridge. Early in the fall scatter fine buckwheat chaff at each place where the fences come up to the path; when the leaves fall, scatter them along the path. In this way the game gets used to the surroundings before you are ready to trap. Set your traps in a bed in this trail and just where the brush fences join the trail, one on each side. Another good place is in snow paths made by riding horseback. Put a stone in a sack and ride out to where you intend trapping. Have a rope to the sack, drop it down and let the horse drag it, thus making a fine path. Go along all ridges and through brush which rabbits use. Stop where you want to make a set, pull the drag up close to the horse and make a sharp turn. This will cause the wolf to come to a walk and he will not step over your trap. Extend your snow path across the prairie from stream to stream. You thus have a path for them to follow as well as the rabbits. To set your trap pick out your place and dig out the snow, so trap will set level with surface. Lay a piece of white paper in bed to keep trap from freezing down. Use bark or willow buds to cover with. Cover over carefully with thin cotton, putting it in around pan and spring of the trap stiff enough so rabbits will not spring it. Set at all places where rabbits make roads into the path. Now you are ready for every wolf that comes this way, as they will use the path you have made in search of rabbits.

Another good set is to bury a chicken in an old straw pile. Place two traps below the fowl on a gradual slope of straw. Let the chicken be near enough to the top so the coyotes can smell it. They are much given to digging after their food, perhaps because from time out of mind they have been accustomed to digging for rabbits, mice and dead bodies. Another method is to bury several traps in the level ground about an old straw pile. Kill a rabbit and clean it near the traps—scattering the head and bits

of skin for 30 feet around. Another good way is to take a barrel knock out both ends and drive a staple on the inside, midway from end to end. Place the barrel some distance from the barn, near where you have seen coyote tracks. Take a live chicken and tie it to the staple. Then sink two traps near each end of the barrel; cover the jaws and plate with feathers. The coyote will be attracted to the place by the chicken, which will be fluttering at sight of it, and Mr. Wolf will be so excited that he will lose his usual caution and will put a foot into one of the traps before he gets near enough to seize and kill the decoy inside. A thin wire may be tacked over the ends of the barrel, to avoid the possibility of the decoy's getting killed. A long box, open at both ends, will do as well as a barrel. This is also a good set for the big timber wolf or for wildcats, if you live in the timber or on the edge of timber near a prairie. These animals are all partial to live bait. To attract wild cats place the barrel near a barn in the edge of timber and leave lighted lantern burning all night in the house, so that the light can be seen from the woods. This will attract the wild cats, and they will come out of the timber to investigate.

A good way to poison wolves is to saw off a number of pieces of round poles 12 in. long; bore a hole three inches deep in one end, fill it with tallow (with poison in one inch at top) and set at intervals along the path, about a foot to one side. Push down to level of the snow. Lay some dried pork cracklings on top of the poles. This attracts the wolves. They will eat the meat and gnaw at the hard tallow until they become sick and you do not have to go many yards to find your game. Another good way to poison them is to mix strychnine with warm blood, placing a sufficient quantity in the blood so that when it has clotted and been cut into small pieces there will be sufficient in each piece to kill a wolf. In poisoning wolves for the bounty and fur, it is necessary that the poison be mixed with something that will become warm in the stomach quickly, in order that the drug will do its work before the animals get far from the place where they got it. Poison in blood acts promptly. —Isaac in Sports Affair.

A CHOICE OF SHOTS

It is at the end of October, perhaps, that there comes the best opportunity of the year for comparing the variety of shots which come to an ordinary gun in the course of a season—if anyone could hope to settle to his own satisfaction which of all possible shots is the hardest. To get a valuable comparison you must be within measurable distance of making each kind of shot, and at the end of October and beginning of November there are a week or two in which all possible kinds of shots may come together. Days with pheasants can be contrasted with days with partridges and grouse. Two or three days' driving on a Scottish moor, perhaps, have offered various chances of shots at grouse at different paces, different angles, different heights over the butt. One line of butts has been set across the flank of a hill, and the gun has been able to watch the black specks of the covey streaming towards him over the dark heather from half a mile away. Another line lies along the bottom of a long corrie or ravine, and the grouse fly from the tops facing the shooter to the tops behind him, offering the most exhilarating chances at birds flying really fast and high. Another line has been placed immediately under the brow of a hill, so that the birds are not seen until with a flash there are a number of speckled bodies dark against the sky, and the covey is behind the butts almost before the shooter has had time to choose his first bird, much less his second. Some men shoot best at these coveys seen and gone in a flash; others hate the tension of the long watching of the skyline, and shoot badly because they are irritated or tired. And in each line of butts there may be a separate, different point to estimate, apart from questions of height and angle and pace in a still day; for if there is a wind blowing the birds may come down or up or across the wind, and the pace of their flight varies in every case. The odd thing is that many men miss grouse coming up wind and hit them however fast they may be flying, down wind. They will very likely tell you that, owing to the change of pace they have shot in front of the up-wind birds, but they are almost invariably wrong. We miss very few birds in a season by shooting in front of them. Much more probably what happens is that the sense of slowness which the shooter gets from the sight of the birds' laboring wings travels from his brain to his hand, and unconsciously he dwells a little on his aim, or checks his swing, and, as is usually the case when he misses, he shoots low and behind.

Driven Grouse

There is probably no bird at which the beginner shoots with a smaller measure of success than a driven grouse. If he is wise, he says nothing, but goes on shooting until some fine day, much sooner than he thinks, he suddenly finds himself hitting them, and discovers that a driven grouse on a Scottish moor need be no more difficult than a dozen other kinds of shots which he can manage fairly well elsewhere. But if before he has discovered the knack of it he confides his sorrows to a friend more experienced than he, his lament is always the same. "They look so infernally easy. The

bird is coming straight to me, and I cover him and pull, and nothing happens. I expect him to fall and he doesn't, and that puts me off; then I try to get on to him again and can't, or I pick another bird coming towards me in the way, and the same thing happens. I cover him, and he goes on. What is the matter? What is it that really happens? I believe I'm shooting in front of him." Whereas, without doubt, he is shooting underneath him. He does not realize that the bird which looks as if it were coming straight at him is rising to clear the butt, and it is not until he discovers the trick of that deceptive flight that he comes to the satisfaction of seeing the collapse which he expects as he pulls the trigger. Then he finds the bird coming straight to him the easiest of all.

The Most Difficult Angle

But, of course, different men find different shots difficult. To some there is no harder grouse than the bird flying low over the heather and coming straight between two butts, taken just as he comes within killing distance. Such a bird forces the shooter to do a thing which goes against the grain; he cannot swing freely because he knows he must not bring his gun beyond a certain angle—the angle of safety for the next butt—and his swing becomes the more cramped, because to keep in front of the bird he feels as if he were pulling the gun into his shoulder. He gets an uncomfortable sense of shrinking back into himself, and if he tries to compare it with other shots, he may very likely find that the shot most like it is the rabbit running towards the gun. Rabbit shooting in open ground is probably the easiest shooting of all, but the rabbit which many men miss most often is the little beast coming straight at the gun. In the same way, as with the grouse driven low and at an angle, the gun feels that he must bring the muzzle back and back, and that leads to an increasing tendency to dwell on the aim and check the swing.

Second Barrels

One difficulty the driven grouse does not provide. A covey of grouse may sweep past or over the butt at a terrific pace, and may be swerving round the side of a hill at a horribly puzzling angle, but the birds do at least continue doing what they were doing when they first came within shot. Driven partridges are not so obliging. Having stopped your first bird out of the covey breaking over the hedge-row, you cannot calculate on getting the same kind of shot for your second. Very likely the covey, on catching sight of the guns, will swerve and scatter in half a dozen directions, or the whole lot may suddenly change their line of flight and rise higher into the air at the same time, which is the most trying thing, and calls for fresh calculation of angle, pace, and direction, combined with the necessity of only shooting within a certain radius in front or behind—unless the gun happens to be on the extreme left or right of the line, and can shoot on one side at any angle he pleases. These second barrels at driven partridges, particularly in a wind or late in the season, bring as keen a sense of satisfaction as any in the shooter's calendar. Though, to be sure, most men who have shot in different parts of the country could select harder shooting for a second barrel even than partridges twisting in a November wind. A bunch of teal, for instance, offers a fairly easy chance for the first bird, but at the sound of the gun—whiff! The bunch explodes to all quarters of the compass. Some go up, some to the side, some straight up into the sky like a rocket, and for whatever reason, it is these birds whizzing up into the sky which seem to attract the second barrel most often. And no birds, surely, can be more often missed.

The Slanting Pheasant

Some years ago there was a discussion in one of the monthly magazines as to which was the most difficult shot—or, rather, which shot a certain number of selected shooters considered the most difficult. It was decided by the majority that the most awkward bird to get on terms with was a pheasant flying high and fast, which has ceased to move his wings, and is slanting down on flat pinions to the covert where he intends to alight. He is supposed to be curling all the way and he gives the shooter three calculations to make and a disinclination to get over; there must be calculation of pace, direction, and angle of curling flight, and, in addition, the shooter must force himself to swing his gun down, which most men find a very difficult thing to do. It is, indeed, the difficulty of the grouse driven between the butts, or the rabbit running straight towards the shooter, in another form. The gun in this case, instead of being pointed low or level to begin with, is pointed up and then swung down, which goes against the grain.

Duck on the Wing

Next to driven grouse, beginners perhaps find as great a difficulty as any with wild duck—that is to say, with wild duck which fly properly. In these days, when wild duck are reared on almost every pheasant shoot of any size, they may mean one of two things. They may be lumbering, heavy, unhappy creatures, chased up from the ground and flapping dismally down again, in which case the wise man takes his cartridges out of his gun and leaves those who shoot them, who would be equally pleased to shoot Dorking fowl or peacocks. Or they may be duck which fly as duck ought to fly—high enough to be often clean out of shot. Duck flying under the ideal conditions are birds which are flushed from a pond on

high ground, and take a natural line of flight to water in the valley below. If they cannot settle on either piece of water and circle round the two, they give the guns in the valley below the best shooting at high birds to be imagined. The inexperienced shot will probably make nothing of them whatever. He will get off his gun, or a pair of guns, over and over again without producing any more effect than his cartridges were loaded with sawdust. He will almost certainly decide that his guns or cartridges, perhaps both, are to blame, and he will observe to his loader that nothing smaller than an eight bore loaded with swan shot would fetch down birds of that kind. But he would be wrong in supposing that wild duck flying high are, in reality, very difficult shooting. There is only one difficulty about them, and that is to shoot far enough forward to get them in the head and neck; and the reason why so many shots are wasted before that secret is discovered is that it is difficult to believe they are flying as fast as they really are. Let the shooter wait till a duck flies past him within a yard or two, and he will realize at what a tremendous rate the birds flying high above him are moving. Then, if he will only deliberately "waste" a shot by firing what seems to him impossibly far in front of them, he may succeed in planting his killing circle round the head of some fine old mallard, and see it come tumbling out of the blue sky stone dead in the water below him. But that difficulty of getting far enough in front of duck remains with some shooters all their lives. The size of the bird and his slow wing beat deceives them, and every time they are behind his short tail, or uselessly peppering the cushions of down on his body. The gun next to them, who knows his business, misses clean or kills dead. The bird which he finds more difficult than the merely high fliers is the bird slanting down to the water. And that is, once more, the problem with which we began. It is the pulling the gun in and down, added to the necessity of making three or four other calculations as to pace and distance, which multiplies difficulties into despair. But no shooter will consent to ending a day in despair. He will discover the trick of it with the next bird tomorrow.—Cheviot in The Field.

AUSTRALIAN FAUNA AND FLORA

Official advices from South Australia report that last month a deputation, representative of twenty-seven Australian societies and institutions and twelve corporations and district councils, waited on the Commissioner of Crown Lands with a request that the area of 140 square miles set apart on Kangaroo Island as a reserve for Australian fauna and flora should be increased to 300 square miles. The question has aroused considerable interest, as Kangaroo Island is regarded as an ideal region in which permanently to preserve valuable collections of the various animal and botanical species distinctive of Australia. The island is only some six hours' steaming from Adelaide, and has lately come into prominence as a tourist and health resort; the climate is mild, and much of the scenery is very beautiful and rugged, being typical of the Australian bush. The deputation were favorably received, and the Minister, in reply, said that the Government had every sympathy with the request. He did not consider that the area asked for was too big, but believed it would have been desirable to reserve the whole island if it had not been populated. He would personally inspect the country, and would recommend that a large area be reserved and a sum placed on the estimates to cover the cost of fencing and other necessary improvements. The Government recognized the matter as one of national importance, and recently, when it was reported that Pearson's Island supported a number of rare wallaby, they had preserved the whole island. It is also the intention of the Government to reserve the lower Corong as a sanctuary for birds.

A PORPOISE ON A LINE.

On Saturday, September 9, at Hyen, Nord-ford, after fishing being off, I went down to the ford to set haddock lines. There, near the bryggen, I found two small friends, sons of Admiral Stoford, setting a line I had lent them. As the end of their line was dropped into the water some porpoises passed near their boat, which was nothing unusual, and we rowed away. On returning an hour later we found the boys in distress, as their float and line had disappeared. We could see it nowhere. Then Gunnar remembered that he had noticed a float very like one of mine two kilometres down the ford. We concluded that a halibut had got on, and went in pursuit, telling the boys to keep near our big boat, as there was a bit of wind. When we reached the spot indicated we found the float, and a somewhat exhausted young porpoise lying on the surface of the water, gripping the line some ten yards from the end. He must have butted into it, as it began to sink after being cast; and, finding it across his jaws, like a bit in a horse's mouth, he gripped it and bolted. Two full grown porpoises were swimming near him. We gently edged the big boat towards him, keeping a finger on the line. Mons gaffed one end, I the other, and we lifted him in. He still gripped the line. He was not hooked. He was a male, and weighed 50 lb. by the Handelsmand's scale. The boys wheeled him off in delight, topping their father's best salmon by 5 lb. His skin is at Brandt's. We got six



Sportsman's Calendar

NOVEMBER

In Season—Cock Pheasants, Quail, Grouse, Deer, Ducks, Geese, Snipe.
Trout Fishing Closes November 15th.

bottles of oil from his fat, and I tried a poise steak for dinner, which was—well, possibly was not very hungry that evening. A. H. Raikes (Windermere).

HE WAS IN A HURRY

A hunter who was chasing a wounded goose, stepped into a hole and fell in the sand, accidentally discharging his gun as he fell, and plunging the weapon into the sand. When he arose, he continued to run after the escaping goose, broke open his gun, inserted fresh shells and attempted to close the gun. It would not close, on account of the sand that got into it. He stopped for just an instant, opened the gun, blew some of the sand away and tried to close it again. But the gun would not close. Meantime, the goose was getting away. After three attempts to close the gun, without success, the hunter stopped, deliberately took the gun apart, got out his handkerchief, wiped away every last grain of sand from the action, snapped the gun shut—and the goose was gone. That is to say, it took a half-hour's hunting to find it where it was hidden in the buckbrush. The moral is, do it right the first time.

REINDEER FOR THE NORTH LANDS

The Dominion Government has purchased fifty reindeer from Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, who, in consequence of the success that has attended the introduction of reindeer into Alaska for transport purposes, is experimenting with them in Labrador. The animals of Dr. Grenfell's herd which have now been purchased by the Government will be sent to Fort Smith, which is situated on the sixtieth parallel of north latitude between Lake Athabasca and Great Slave Lake. It is hoped that they will greatly facilitate the maintenance of communications between the stations along the Mackenzie Valley during the winter months.

WHITE AND SCARLET

Hark! The merry hoof-beats pass
Through the misty winter morn,
Churning up the roadside grass
Underneath the leafless thorn!
Mark the bobbing velvet caps,
Hidden now, then seen anon
As they pass the hedgerow gaps,
Telling us that "Hounds are on!"

Where the battered signboards swing,
Where the muddy main roads meet,
There's a tryst where snaffles ring
To the stamp of restless feet.
There we'll watch the gathered pack,
Dark and dappled, patched and pied,
While our hearts go harking back
To the runs they've made us ride.

As from road to moor we rise
There are folks we gladly greet,
Gallant men with laughing eyes,
Kindly comrades good to meet—
So, at last, with hounds thrown in,
To the covert on the heath,
We shall watch the troubled whin
Rippling to the guest beneath.

Where the Field stands grouped without
On the air is scarce a sound
Save of snaffle mottled about,
Or of hoof that paws the ground,
Till a low uncertain note
Wakes the challenge all obey,
And the echoes round us float
Of a gladsome "Gone away!"

Now the thud of racing hoofs!
Now the tug of stretching rein!
He who wills may stand aloof;
Give us back our joys again!
Revering in pride of pace,
With that music on the wind,
Bold hearts now may hold their place,
Faint hearts now must fall behind!

Let the dodging rabbit run!
Let the painted pheasant tower!
He who loves the lazy gun
Thus may spend his idle hour!
Squire! arrange your gilded shoot!
Set your beaters brave in line!
We've a grander game afoot
Where they're white and scarlet shine!
—Will H. Ogilvie in Baily's.