P IMPROVEMENTS

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Agent,
day of August, A.D.

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must be commenced of such certificate of ROY C. PRICE, day of August, A.D. THE CAPEDCA H. ZIE

on Vancouver Island.



APERCAILZIE is a curious name, but its Gaelic derivation, Cabhar-coillie, meaning bird of the wood, is sufficiently explanatory. It is often called the cock of the woodthe German name translates into these words-and when

this is seen on a menu card, do not expect a

tender woodcock, or you will be disappointed, as an old "caper" will be served. This bird is particularly interesting, as it is a bird with a past, present and future. Its past, in Great Britain, can be traced back to the time of the cave-dwellers, for in their caves at Teesdale the bones of the capercailzie have been found, and bones were also discovered among some Roman remains at Settle. The bird was no doubt extremely numerous in the olden times; but things did not go well with its kind, and they gradually dwindled down and died out; the date of the last bird is generally accepted as 1769. Mr. Grey, in "Birds of West Scotland," quotes the Rev. John Grant as writing in 1794: "The last seen in Scotland was in the woods of Strathglass about 32 years ago." In Ireland, too, they fell on parlous times, and died out about 1760. Pennant says that a few were to be seen about Thomastown, in Tipperary, in 1760, and this appears to be the last mention of them in Ireland. For rather over sixty years the pine woods of Scotland were without this noble game-bird. But in 1836 the late Lord Breadalbane successfully reintroduced this bird into Scotland: his head-keeper, Guthrie, in the autumn of that year went to Sweden, and was successful in bringing to Taymouth a number of cocks and hens. Experiments in Ireland and Norfolk, also in the New Forest, have failed, but not so in the fir woods of Perthshire; the birds which the then Lord Chamberlain had from Sweden thrived and multiplied exceedingly, and their old haunts ring again in the springtime with the leads to his undoing in many call of the cock caper. From some thirty of these birds miles of forests are now populated. As long ago as 1864 a census was taken, so Yarrell tells us, and it amounted to, roughly,

'The Capercailzie in Scotland," by Mr. A. Harvie-Brown, is a book well worth reading with care, and therein are some excellent maps showing the spread of the birds. The present Marquess of Breadalbane has taken a great deal of trouble in sending eggs to Vancouver to try and establish the birds in that country, but these attempts have been attended with no success, the journey having proved far too much for them. But these birds have, I believe, a future in store for them in Vancouver. I was most interested in an experiment conducted in the autumn of 1906, and had the pleasure of making some of the arrangements for sending out a consignment of capers to the Fish and Game Club of British Columbia. Unfortunately, in my opinion, this club were most anxious to have black-game as well, and I think tried too much with limited funds. So instead of sending the whole consignment of capercailzie, it was split up and more black-game were despatched than capercailzie. Thirty capers were bought in Sweden, wild caught birds which were carefully selected by Mr. G. Lindesay, who undertook and most successfully carried out their despatch. From Sweden they were sent to Copenhagen, and from thence to New York-a long seven days by water and a further rail journey to Vancouver, twenty-four hours' rest being allowed at Montreal and Winnipeg. Twentynine arrived alive at their destination, which speaks volumes for the care and trouble taken y Mr. Lindesay, the crew of the boat and the railway officials. Very wet weather set in as soon as they arrived and a few of them succumbed before being liberated. Some few were again embarked for Vancouver Island and then had a long journey by road; but the were set free in good health. I had the satiswere untiring in taising subscriptions and and others quite in the open or in last year's

mainland and one on the island. Mr. Chaldecott was instrumental in obtaining a special Order in Council of the Government of British Columbia protecting them for a period of ten years from September, 1906. Many well-known shooting-men of this country generously contributed towards the expenses, which were very heavy. It now only remains to wish them good luck in their new home. Personally, I am very strongly of opinion that a further consignment should be sent out to replenish those already there, as the stock is too small. The start has been a good one, and I feel confident that a few more birds would en-

HEN BIRD SITTING

sure complete success. But to return to the capercailzie of the present day. They may now be considered numerous in Perthshire and Forfarshire, and there are some spots in the North of England where they are doing very well. They are extremely hardy birds, and seem able to withstand any amount of cold. The cock is a very much larger bird than the hen, reaching the weight of 12 lb. They are polygamous, and consequently the fir trees of Scotland witness many furious fights between rival male birds. In April the male birds go through the most extraordinary performance to be seen in bird life -namely, the "spel," which is a love-song of no great musical ability, but most forcible and vehement. They select a high isolated position, such as the extreme top of a fir, or bare, rocky peak, and from this exalted position the bird pours forth his song, puffing himself out, swelling his neck, spreading his tail and dropping his wings very like a turkey cock, but with a great deal more life in the performance. this method of cold-blooded murder. While ply from the ground below by a croaking sound not unlike that of a raven. The "spel" they make a practice of shooting the males at the "balz." Another method on the continent is to use trained dogs, which find the birds when feeding upon the ground and chase them into a tree, and by continually barking and making frantic efforts to leap up, they keep the birds so engrossed that the gunner may stalk from the coverts, and afford good sport, as they travel fast. I cannot speak from personal experience, as I have never had the pleasure respects to their household concerns I must mention the enormous capacity a cock bird has for stowing away food, not in quantities, but one might almost say in stores. Every book mentions this feature, and Mr. J. E. Harting says: "The crop of one shot in Perthshire during the first week in November contained a handful of oak leaves and 168 acorns," a very fair breakfast for a pig, one would have another crop contained sufficient pine needles to fill a top-hat. The food consists of berries and seeds, a little corn, numerous insects and worms, but the mainstay is the pine shoot; without these shoots the caper will not thrive. I have often seen an old cock bird clipping off a tender green shoot from a Scots feeds more from the ground than the cock, and go by external appearances; reject the magnificent male bird and buy the sombre hen; she is better on the table, not having such a strong sum total of eight cocks and fourteen hens flavor of turpentine. The nesting starts early in May, when the eggs are laid in a scrape in faction of hearing quite recently from Mr. F. the ground in various places, some close to the

spring (1908) a nest of eggs was reported, as they are heavily specked with a darker entreaty which is too much for me. How



ber from four to twelve. The greater number of nests have eight eggs. I have often found the nests lined with dead beech leaves, when the colors so harmonize that the eggs are very hard indeed to see. There is, as a rule, very little lining except a few leaves and still fewer feathers from the bird herself. Incubation lasts about twenty-eight days; some authors say twenty-four, others twenty-six or even twenty-eight. I am told by one of the keepers in the heart of caper country that it is invariably twenty-eight days; as he is a most He utters his weird notes with closed eyes, keen and close observer of Nature, I pin my and with such effect that it is impossible for faith on his estimate. Of all birds I think him to hear anything but himself, and this the caper is the best mother. She will not places, for he readily leave the nest when the eggs are bemay easily be approached and shot. In Great coming hard set, and when the chicks are Britain, fortunately, the close season prevents hatched she is most devoted; shamming illness, she will actually fall head over heels, lie he is thus calling together his wives, they re- on her side and raise one wing as though dying. Some others are far bolder and will attack the intruder. Only last spring I found a in Austria is called "balz," and in that country brood about three days old, and was very keen to photograph some of the chicks, which immediately crouched down and remained perfectly still while I stood and looked at this most interesting of family groups. The mother bird suddenly roused herself and came straight at me, leaping as high as my face and striking. at me with both feet and wings. She took and shoot them with ease. In Scotland they great care to attack at a reasonable distance, I are driven much in the same way as pheasants noticed; but I have heard of them actually striking a man in the face. A few years ago I found the traces of a most severe combat. I was attracted to a tree trunk by a number of of a shot at a caper, my acquaintance being large feathers, and on going up to them saw a limited to the springtime. Before paying our caper on her nest; the ground around was literally strewn with feathers from wings, tail and body. Who had been the opponent I cannot say. It may have been a stray cat run wild, or a stoat; at any rate, it had suffered defeat after what was evidently a protracted engagement. I have seen several broods of chicks, and find that, when they are a week old or more, the mother generally runs or flies a short distance, uttering a clucking note, wherethought. I believe it is stated by Morris that upon the whole family scatter at an incredible speed; so independent are they that not one will follow another, but every one strikes out a line for himself. I have never been able to take a satisfactory photograph of a chick; the young birds never seem to tire; it is utterly impossible to get one to sit at ease for a moment. On one occasion I caught one and fir with his hawk-like beak. The hen carefully covered him up with a cloth, under which he remained perfectly content, and, so when purchasing a caper for dinner do not meanwhile, I rigged up the camera in readiness to take a snap of him in suitable surroundings; but when I began to get him into these surroundings he stoutly declined by bolting in every direction. All the time I could hear the mother clucking, and not being able to keep her waiting any longer, I gave it up. M. Chaldecott of Vancouver, whose efforts root of a large fir, some alongside of a rock. If there is one, thing I cannot resist, it is the call of distress of a mother bird. I have spoilmaking necessary arrangements, that they had dead bracken. In color the eggs are very ed many a picture because the old bird would already nested last spring (1907), and in this much the same as the dull yellow bracken; keep calling; there is something in the tone of

first impulse is to clear out and leave her in peace. These birds are powerless to clear us out themselves, and it seems too much like an act of bullying to remain. The capercailzie hens frequently hybridize with blackcock; a few such hybrids are shot nearly ever yyear. One of the finest sights in a Scotch forest is to see an old cock fly through the thick woods; he goes straight through all small impedimenta, and the noise of his wings striking against branches is equal to the reports of a small pistol. The hen, when disturbed from the nest, gets up with a great fluster, and after a few strong strokes of her wings, glides absolutely silently down the slopes of the hillside, the impetus gained from the short start carrying her well out of sight through the big tim-

in evident distress I never can understand; my ber. In the ordinary way they are by no means noisy flyers, in fact, they are particularly silent for their large size and weight, and they have great power of swerving to avoid obstacles, which, considering their bulk, is rather exceptional. It is not unusual for old and barren hens to assume the plumage of the male bird, some having been shot in which the resemblance has been so remarkable as to make it a matter of difficulty to tell one from the other.

This article has already grown to too great a length, much as I should like to have dealt with the methods of trapping these birds in Sweden, etc. I must deny myself, and again refer the reader to Mr. J. A. Harvie-Brown's book, i.e., "The Capercailzie in Scotland." J. CYRIL CROWLEY.

The Employing of a Sultan

HE Sultan of Turkey took on his task the government, the sums due to private per-of governing Turkey without an sons being subject to ward to private per-Sultan unless he agrees on terms of employment. Europe declines to appoint him without such agreement. What a change is here! How the time spirit works!

The Westminster Gazette, discussing the proposals which France and Spain have just put forward as to the conditions under which the new Moorish regime should be recognized,

'These two Powers claim a 'special interest' in Morocco which marks them out as qualified to make proposals to the other Powers, and in view of the Act of Algeciras this can hardly be contested. Six guarantees are indicated as necessary if Mulai Hafid is to be recognized. The Act of Algeciras, and acts done under its provisions, must be confirmed -in particular, France and Spain must be confirmed in their rights as to surveillance of contraband traffic in arms by sea. This can hardly cause any difficulty on the part of the other. Powers; Mulai Hafid is merely asked to take over the sovereignty as a going concern, with all its liabilities, of which the Act of Algeciras

"The next guarantee demands also the acceptance by the new Sultan of all treaties and engagements entered into by the Moorish government with foreign governments, the Diplomatic Body, and private individuals. This, again, is entirely reasonable; there must necessarily be this continuity of responsibility for what the government does.

"We note that, here as elsewhere, the Note is careful to speak of the Moorish government, and not of Abdul Aziz; possibly there may be liabilities of a personal nature, with which Mulai Hafid could hardly fairly be saddled.

of governing Turkey without an sons being subject to verification.' The pow-agreement. Today one is being forc- ers of the Casa Blanca Indemnity Commission ed on him. So with the would-be are to be confirmed, and the new Sultan to be Sultan of Morocco. Mulai Hafid is held responsible for the payment of compennot to be allowed to have the post of sation. The Holy War is to be disavowed by means of Shereefian letters to the towns and tribes, and immediate steps are to be taken for the restoration of public order and safety. The Note adds that 'it would be becoming' for the new Sultan to guarantee honorable treatment to Abdul Aziz, and to treat Abdul's officials with equity. The Note proposes that if Mulai Hafid is willing to give these guarantees the Powers should agree to recognize

"The questions dealt with by the proposed guarantees do not exhaust, however, the outside obligations of Morocco. France and Spain have little accounts to render for military expenditure and for indemnities for murder of their subjects. These, being separate interests, are left over for the Powers concerned to make the subject of individual representations. France and Spain, in excluding their claims from the list of proposed guarantees, have certainly acted with much restraint.

"The Times today says that the outlay to which the two Powers have been put was 'the direct result of their efforts to perform duties placed upon them by Europe under the Act of Algeciras, and these efforts were made with the approval of most of the signatory Powers, and with the acquiescence of all.' It is 'a signal proof of the moderation of the two Powers, and of the conscientiousness with which they have carried out the principle which they have laid down as their rule of action.' that they are willing that Europe should first of all recognize Mulai Hafid, and that afterwards France and Spain should come upon him for

"We can only hope that Mulai Hafid will be speedily recognized, and then left to justify There is to be responsibility for the debts of by his rule the throne he has admittedly won.

The Government or the People



raised by the government action in connection with the Eucharistic procession.

"Many people would have preferred an earlier and more definite determination on the part of His Majesty's government of the question or questions raised by the announcement of the proposed procession," writes the Post. "The decision, made at the eleventh hour and avoiding the issue of principle that had been raised, is peculiarly illustrative of the character not merely of the present government, but of all governments which are the outcome of democratic institutions. The habit of statesmen who owe their power to popular election, and to parties composed of a number of groups not quite identical in their political and social ideas, is not only to attach much stress to what Burke called the 'temper' of the people, but to adopt a way of judging of that temper which would hardly have commended itself to the eighteenth century orator. Burke would have held it the statesman's function to divine the public instinct and to anticipate it in action. He would have expected the statesman to have his own instinct and his own will and to lead his followers.

"But a practice has long been growing up which is the reverse of leading. The statesmen of today are accustomed rather to scan the faces of their followers in the hope of receiving a hint as to the direction in which they are to move. Such a course may be thought to involve a renunciation of initiative and a shirking of responsibility. It does not tend to produce the strong characters who will risk themselves upon clear convictions of their own and trust to their own insight. To the hasty observer this kind of leadership may seem to imply a decay of what a century ago would have been called the art of government, and undoubtedly in some matters of great national moment, especially in dealings with foreign States in times of stress and strain, it carries with it the impossibility of rapid decision and of strenuous, or, at any rate, of sudden action. In purely domestic affairs rapidity of decision is less important than that the policy adopted should be in conformity with the general trend of public reeling and intelligence.

"The great significance of the habit, which has been adopted or has imposed itself upon British statesmen of both partres, of rather

HOULD governments have a will of actions upon their followers than of detertheir own, or should they wait for mining their course according to definite printhe voice of the nation, and act on- ciples, lies in the demands which it makes ly on that? This, according to the upon the mass of the people. When the states-Morning Post, is one of the points man waits to see what his followers think raised by the government action in he throws upon them the responsibility of government. Probably this is exactly what commends itelf to the theoretical advocates of democratic institutions. But the system implies in the people upon whom the responsibility is thus thrown qualities of character and intelligence of a very high order. The democratic theory asserts that in such cases the dedemand produces the supply."

TANTALISING TANTALUM

Ekeberg, the Swedish discoverer of tantalum, gave the name Tantalum to metal now used as filaments for electric lamps, because of the tantalising difficulties that he encountered while investigating it," says the Engineer. "It is only recently that tantalum has been obtained in a state of purity, and the rapidity with which it has been produced in response to the demands of commerce and industry is almost unprecedented. Only a little while ago the mineral from which tantalum is obtained was so rare that not enough could be found to supply, specimens to all the mineralogical museums. Now Australia alone produces more than seventy tons of tanfalite a year. This does not seem a very great quantity, but it is to be remembered that a single pound of tantalum suffices to furnish 23,000 lamps, each of twenty-five candle-power."

NEWSPAPERS WE DESERVE

"British Ass" writes to the Pall Mall Gazette stating that "attractive and useful abstracts" of Dr. F. Darwin's presidential address at the British Association meeting might very well have been published, adding:-"Yet what are the facts? On Thursday morning the great heart of the people of London was appealed to by its journalistic guides, philosophers, and friends as follows: I copied the contents bills on the bookstall at my own suburban station:- Earl and Gaiety Girl Married. Special Interviews.' 'Earl Marries a Gaiety Girl. Illustrated.' 'Wife and Boy Friend. Lady's Dramatic Suicide. Two Juries for one Inquest.' 'Striking Photos, Earl Poulett and his Bride.' 'Gaiety Girl Weds Peer.' Only two bills that I saw mentioned the B.A. meeting or the address. Verily we well as a brood of young birds, one on the shade of yellow and wary in num- some people can enjoy watching a parent bird considering the possible effect of their own have the newspapers we deserve."