320 acres

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Field Sports at Home and Abroad

IN SEARCH OF WOODCOCK IN CHINA

Looking west from the town of Dalny, should the dust of September not shut out the view, you will descry, some four miles away, a hare hill standing apart from many other bare hills that flank the port. The Chinese call it Ta-shan (the great hill); but to the exiled Japnese, who see in its outline a resemblance to great and sacred mountain of their own naland, it is known as the Dairen Fuji. Noly climbs it, for a reason presently to be exained. Below it, in the valley, is a long and vide river-bed, stones only at the upper end, out near the sea mud. A miserable watercourse eanders down its length, having for its tribuawries one or two muddy rivulets fringed ith bent grass, and in one corner of the valey is a tiny marsh. Here, in their season, you ay find a new snipe, and perhaps, an oc-sional duck or teal. This inviting spot I anged to visit with a companion, L., taking us our guns and cartridges. In the street ard by stood a "droshky," one of the many at had in palmier days belonged to Russians t which have since, by ways devious and obure, come into the hands of the original mers of the soil. To describe these conveyces is difficult, but their qualities may be nmed up in the one adjective, "negative." nce they had springs, but springs are painlly lacking now. Once they were clean; that "lang syne," for hordes of Shantung coolhave driven and roosted in them since. nce they were drawn by well-fed, welloomed horses; now sorry jades fed on"kaoing" stalks and bed straw, drag them wearily

There, then, the carriage stood, and, prering the evils we knew not to those we ew, in other words a doubtful drive to a rtainty dusty tramp into it we jumped withdelay and by its aid eventually we reachour destination. The drive was long and ne-breaking. The road, if, indeed, it was a ad, ran up hill and down like a switchback ilway a switchback punctuated at irregular arming depth. This was where the lumbers ng country carts had worn the thin upper stratum of soil down to the bed rock. The shock of the drops was broken somewhat owing to the fact that invariably there lay below a deep pocket of dust. Into this we fell, and immediately, as though a shell had burst, a ense cloud rose, engulfing carriage, horses Along the level stretches of the road were little better, for the dust lay indeep everywhere; and our sorry nags, too d and ill-fed to lift their feet, simply ughed through it. Through the veil we ght occasional glimpses of the landscape hinese mud hovels, mangy dogs, unwashed naked children, and gaunt black pigs lowing in mud, or scampering with the ed of deer across the brown stubbles. It indeed, a long ride to Ta-shan, and joy relief were ours when at last we emerged the river bed itself, stony, but at least free

With a shout our driver reined up. We hted and picked up our guns, then bidding await our return, walked in the direction little marsh, which lay invitingly a few dred yards further on. Very pleasant it ked in the still afternoon, with the sun shinon the pools and the lush green grass. h feelings of pleasurable anticipation, we ight of the toil levied from it on previous sions; we reckoned on finding among its icks from eight to a dozen snipe, with perhaps even more. Alas for the vanity man hopes! Only four birds were there, in ten minutes all four were hanging from ame carrier. Not merely was it a poor ming, it was likewise an evil omen for our ects elsewhere, since experience had it us that this was the only snipe ground district, and that from the tiny streams ling through the mud and the bent grass. ould hope, even with good luck, to glean fore than three or four birds. With disintment, therefore, we turned our backs at had been our chief hope, and ploughslowly through the mud. Our fears not vain. An hour's toil brought for reward two snipe. There were no more. irds to two guns for an afternoon's shoot-It was disgusting. And the pity of it hat no other place offered in which we retrieve our fortunes. Lao-hotan, antavorite resort, was at least five miles the upper part of the Ta-shan river bed ned only stones. It was hopeless; there othing for it but to go home. Thus, we led as we cast our eyes around. Sudand simultaneously they fell on the hill shan opposite. Its top was bare as a ball; nothing was to be gained by g up there. But about the base were al deep gullies thickly covered with tres y semblance of a wood for miles around. were pigeons in the neighborhood we decertainly find them there. We might up a stray woodcock, though this

tful, because Dainy, with its myriad , were too close at hand. In any vood was worth exploring, and forthstarted to explore it. Entering the gully, we passed immediately out of sunlight into the dark cool shadow rove of small firs, and simultaneously was a wild flutter of wings, and away the gloom scurried a bird. Bang! went in, and down came a small brown object. both rushed forward to pick it up. It was ttle brown owl. We looked sheepishly at as really some excuse in the half-light for

mistaking an owl for a woodcock. On we went again, owl after owl fluttering ahead of us, but never a woodcock. The gully was rapidily becoming steeper; it was hot work toiling through the undergrowth. At last, perspiring and breathless, we reached the top and open ground. A hundred and fifty yards higher up the hillside stood five or six tall firs; above them the bare rock soared into the sky. We sat on the grass to bemoan our evil fortune, and three pigeons at the same 'moment floated into sight and settled among those trees. My companion looked at them and sighed. "A stern chase is a long chase, particularly after a pigeon," quoth he, as I snatched up my gun and hurried off. He was right. The pigeon is a bird gifted with disagreeably acute powers of vision; it is likewise of an eminently suspicious disposition. These were no exception to the rule. They rose before I had gone 30 yards, and drifted higher up the hill, alighting finally on a bare rock, where they could easily be seen by their enemy, and, unfortunately, could equally easily see him. Nevertheless, a mean bag being an excellent incentive to effort, I panted after them, hoping against the hopeless that they might be foolish enough to allow me to come within range. With eyes glued on the birds, I pressed forward, when b-r-r-t, right under my feet, rose a brown bird. "Another owl!" thought I, and would not be drawn. But in the neck of time I discovered my mistake. This was no owl, but a woodcock very much alive. He was lifting to drop over a dip in the hill when I discovered my mistake. Hurriedly raising the gun to my shoulder, I fired, and as the faint puff of smoke drifted away, an instantaneous impression was photographed on my brain of a bird disappearing at an extraordinary acute angle. I could not say he was hit, yet the final angle of his drop was so different from the initial that I felt certain I had not missed. In the meanwhile L. came hurrying up; he too, had noticed the strange way in which the bird had dropped out of sight, and agreed with me that it must certainly be hit. Away we ran to the spot where it had vanished. Nothing was to be seen, though we searched high and low among the grass and bushes. A quarter of an hour passed in a fruitless hunt. Then, a few yards ahead of us, a cock rose without warning sound, and with a dip of a wing was out of sight behind a tree. "That," exclaimed L. "must be your bird!" Hardly had he said this when we stooped down and picked out of a tuft of grass my woodcock. Our drooping spirits thus raised, we pressed on after the second bird, hoping to put him up again; but that afternoon we were not fated to succeed, for, shout and beat the bushes as we would, be refused to be dislodged. Reluctantly we at last abandoned the quest, and, returning to the river bed, worked the banks of a little pool we had left untouched earlier in the afternoon. Here fortune again smiled, and a snipe and a teal were added to the bag. It was not one to boast of, but at all events we had worked hard for it, and it was better than nothing at all. The sun was now setting: it was time to think of home, so, returning to our "droshky," we jogged back in the twilight to Dalny, promising each other that ere long we would without fail look again for that second woodcock.

On the following Saturday afternoon we once again found ourselves in the Ta-shan bed. The little marsh and the streams were this time an utter failure. Only one snipe was found, but as we approached the first gully of the hill a fat woodcock flapped out into the sunlight, drifted in leisurely manner round a bend, and vanished in the covert. This was a promising augury, and in the best of spirits we set to work the same time, the area covered by the five gullies was not great, though their slopes were long and steep enough to make the quest for the birds an arduous undertaking. Among the short firs the little owls of the previous week were still present in numbers; but, taught by experience, we left them alone. Just outside their sanctuary a woodcock rose hurriedly from some long grass and in spite of four barrels, sailed away unhurt. We marked his line, and followed hard after him. The way led over the ridge of a gully and into a little shallow cup-like inclosure on the further side. Thick grass grew everywhere, dotted at intervals with dwarf firs or oaks, and bright sunlight filled the quiet place, making it an ideal refuge for the longbilled birds. As we looked down into it from the ridge we felt certain something would be found there. Nor were we mistaken. A big woodcock, roused from his musings by the sound of our footsteps as we brushed through the undergrowth, rose lazily in front of us, and fell an easy victim to a single barrel. Lower down were some thin, straggling bushes fringing a tiny rivulet, and there another bird was put up, and in due course shot; but a fourth, flushed among some big fir trees in the next gully, and was badly missed. So we went on, toiling up and down those gullies, backwards and forwards across them. We were breathless and bathed in perspiration, but the birds were there, and all the ills of the flesh were in consequence forgotten. Of the cartridges expended we carefully kent no count. but I know that one bird, which we chased from end to end of the covert, and eventually shot far away on the open hillside, must have been saluted with a dozen barrels at least. By four in the afternoon we had five birds to our credit, and were high up in the steepest gully chasing the sixth, when I heard a faint shout far below. Tall trees were around us,

and we could see nothing; moreover, we were too busy with our own affairs to heed extraneous matters. The shouting went on; it seemed to move from place to place; it gradually increased in volume; finally it concentrated in the very gully in which we ourselves were. At this moment we emerged from the trees, and simultaneously far down I caught the flash of steel. That could only mean one of three things-soldiers, gendarmes, or police -all three equally unwelcome. In some trepidation I wondered what it might forbode. The explanation was soon forthcoming. A figured appeared in the open; it was a policeman. He was shouting frantically and waving his arms at us. What he said could not at that distance be heard, but its purport was unmistakable. He wished us to come down at once, and, being not without experience, we thought it advisable to comply with his request. So down we scrambled. Like ourselves, he was hot and panting, but courteous and bland, under the circumstances, I afterceremonious formality he proceeded to explain that he was the police officer in charge of a large Chinese village hard by, he had come to see what it all meant. The following colloquy then took place:

'Shooting!" replied we. "Shooting what?" he asked. "Woodcock." And we held up, somewhat

rashly, our victims. "Do you know that this is a strategic zone and that not only is shooting forbidden here, but you are even prohibited from putting toot on this hill?"

"No, certainly not!" I replied. "But," said he, "there is a notice yonder to that effect. And he pointed to a small white stone mark some distance away. "There is nothing on that stone but paint,"

I answered. "That is true," he retorted, "but on the other side is a small wooden post, and it is

on that the notice is written."

We have not seen it." I protested. The policeman smiled sceptically. "Are you quite sure?" he asked. Of course we were and indeed, it was not till afterwards that we found the post in question, a small block of square-hewn wood scarcely 18in. high covered with Chinese characters.

"Where do you come from?" he went on. The answer was obvious. We gave him our names, nationality, and addresses. He pricked up his ears when he heard them, re-

flected for a few moments, and then said. "I am glad you are not-" and he mentioned a nationality not at that moment very amicably disposed towards his own, "for then I should have been under the painful necessity of referring your case to a higher authority. But since you are and, therefore, good friends, I will take upon myself the responsibility of letting you go without further ques-

tion. But, please, don't come here again.' "Strategic zones" are not things to be lightly tampered with, and glad, therefore, were we to get off thus easily. With mutual expressions of esteem we parted, and then I understood why no one ever climbs the Dairen Fuji, and also why it holds woodcock when a town bristling with sporting guns is so near at hand.-Karigane in Field.

"PUTTING MONEY IN" A CHEAP SHOT-GUN.

A certain man had need of a duck gun on short notice, so he sent to the nearest dealer for a cheap hammerless 12-gauge, weighing 7% pounds, both barrels full choked. The cost of the arm was \$25, with \$1 express, a total of \$26. Later he had occasion to turn the weapon on quail, therefore returned it to the factory and had one barrel modified to sixty per cent. The cost of boring was \$1.50 and express \$1.25 each way, which brought the cost of the gun up to \$30. Now the owner concluded to have a single trigger put on the gun in place of the two triggers. The cost of this, including express two ways, was \$27.50, thus bringing the entire cost of the gun, up to that time, to \$57.50.

The following season while shooting in Mississippi the gunner had the misfortune to burst one barrel, probably from some obstruction in it and no blame was attached to the makers. But he had to return the weapon to the factory, and did not see it again that win-

In the spring, the owner having meantime gone to South Dakota, the gun was returned to Mississippi, thus necessitating three express charges for this trip-total \$15 for the barrels and \$3.50 express, or \$18.50. The gun had now cost \$76.

Again the hunter went south for quail, and while shooting in Alabama concluded to have one tome' the new tubes rebored to an improved cylinder-both had been choked sixty per cent. This time the gun was sent to a gunsmith in Birmingham, Ala. The cost, including express, was \$3.50-total amount in the arm at this time, 79.50.

Now the single trigger went wrong, whereupon, not wishing to lose the use of the gun for a great length of time, the owner sent it to a gunsmith in Memphis, Tenn. The repairs and express charges amounted to \$5. Gun expense \$84.50. The trigger worked all right for about two weeks, and then had to be sent east to the factory, where it remained about three months. Nothing to pay except express -\$2.50. Total expense, \$87.

While chicken shooting in Nebraska the following fall, a firing-pin broke in two, and one of the pieces dropping back into the lock, broke

the hammer. Taking the weapon to a local gunsmith he found out what was the matter at a cost of fifty cents, and sent back to the factory for a new striker and firing pin. The firing pin was all right when it came, but unfortunately the wrong hammer was sent. To save further time the gun was boxed and returned to the factory. The entire expense of this breakage was \$4 and the weapon was out of use for two months. The arm now had cost the owner \$91.

A short while after, in the midst of the spring duck shooting, the unfortunate proprietor of this gun decided to have a pair of fullchoked barrels for the special purpose of wildfowl work. They came presently, costing \$17.50 with express. Now the sportsman had spent \$108.50 on the weapon, and it should be a good-'round arm, adapted either to the trap, duck shooting, or the uplands.

However in the course of events the shooter had bought a quail gun that he liked better, and a duck gun that was more to his taste, so the piece that is the subject of this sketch has been laid upon the shelf, perhaps for good.—Recreation.

BIG GAME HUNTING IN THE CASSIAR DISTRICT

Seven years ago I came to the town of Telegraph creek, at the head of navigation on the Stikine river, 150 miles from Wrangell. It is annually the starting point for many prospectors, trappers and big game hunters and I don't think America, or the world, for that matter can show a better big game country than Cassiar. It is quite possible to kill on the one trip moose, caribou, sheep-three species: stnei, dalli and fannini-goat, grizzily and black bear. Parties who go out from Telegraph creek seldom fail to get legal number of heads. Hunters usually arrive by the Hudson's Bay Company's last steamer about the last week in August and arrange with the company or other outfitters for guides, cooks, horses and equipment. As a rule the wages of the men are \$3.00 a day, and they are all Tahltan Indians. Horses hire at \$2.50 a day each, and everything in the way of an outfit can be obtained in Telegraph creek. Four good trails lead out to the game districts: the Government telegraph trail north and south of Telegraph creek. the H. B. C. trail to Dease lake, and the old Ashcroft trail. Returning, the hunters each "town" about the middle of October, before much snow falls in the mountains, and when several parties are there at the same time, there is feasting and rejoicing among the Indians, and occasionally among the whites as well. Once, when all was ready for the "kiyou time," it was discovered there was no fiddler; he was already in the "skookum house" for partaking too freely of H. B. C. rum-or Perry Davis' Pain Killer. A deputation visited the constable and asked the musician's liberation for the occasion, promising his safe return to the jail at midnight. After this he was led back to captivity.

The return trip to Wrangell is made by small craft. Some parties have canoes come from Wrangell to meet them; others build rough scows, costing about \$20.00 each. As one of the best grizzly countries on the coast is along the lower river, they usually do a little hunting on the way down.

A Ride in a Snow Slide

In December, 1908, I was out after sheep, and in a couple of days got two fair rams (Ovos stonei). The best horns measured 15 inches around the base and 39 inches long; the others 14 and 30. The big ram had been shot before, as one eye was out, and there were several bits of lead sticking in the bone back of the empty socket. Hunting sheep in the winter when there is four or five feet of snow is hard and dangerous work, and I very nearly lost my life when I returned next day after the dead sheep. I snowshoed to the foot of a steep slope where the wind had packed the snow very hard, and here I left the shoes. It was a difficult climb, carrying my rifle and axe, though not over a half-mile to the crest. When two-thirds of the way up heard a loud roar-and apparently the whole top of the mountain was coming down on me. was upset, buried, rolled, squeezed and whirled down the hill at a fearful rate. It luckily chanced that a little knoll near the foot of the hill formed an eddy in the snow, and I was literally "boiled" up to the surface while the drift was still moving. Rifle, axe, cap, mitts and overshoes were missing, but I was glad to find all my bones whole. My partner would not believe the story I told him until the next day he saw where I came out of the slide. The rifle was recovered the first week of the following July, not a bit the worse for lying six months in the snow.

In the fall of 1909 I was in the mountains again-just myself and my dogs. After about three days' hunting I found a bunch of ten sheep, which saw me and ran. A big ram and two ewes separated from the main bunch and started around the mountain, and to head them off I ran three good miles in time that would make Longboat jealous-only to find they had not gone that way. As there was only one other possible course for them to pursue. I started again, straight over a mountain and reached its summit so badly blown that I couldn't have hit a flock of barns. After resting I went cautiously downward and soon saw the sheep. They were watching for me to follow them around the hill and never thought to look upward. I had approached in plain sight to within 200 yards when the ram saw me,



Sportsman's Calendar

NOVEMBER

In Season-Cock Pheasants, Quail, Grouse, Deer, Ducks, Geese, Snipe.

Trout Fishing Closes November 15th.

and before he could run I shot him through the shoulders. His horns measured 17 1-4 inches at the base and 38 around the curve, but they have shrunken from hanging all summer in the hot cabin. I know sheep horns will shrink, because I once made a knife handle of a piece of green horn, and it shrunk so much I had to file the steel down to the handle and tighten all the rivets. This is considered the best head for the district, and I am told it has the record for Ovos fanini.

A Great Country for Game

This is a great country for moose and bears. One '-- I saw seven moose in a bunch and got the biggest bull of the lot, but his horns were poor-only 49-inch spread. On my way home a grizzily was sighted coming toward the trail and I dropped my pack and ran to meet him. We met in a little meadow and as he sat up to look at me, I shot at his brisket and he went down with a howl, but was up again in a second. I knocked him over again, and again he was up and prancing around among the willows like a cat with a fit, until I had given him five out of an available six shots-all at distances under 100 feet. Though a big fellow, he made no attempt to show fight.

The country is full of wolves and they more than "raise hell" with the game, killing moose whenever they feel so inclined. On the hunt just referred to I saw several places where they had killed moose the last winter. Some people seem to think a wolf cannot kill a moose, but he can. I personally know of an ordinary Siwash sleigh dog that killed a big bull moose all by himself. This happened near my camp, two winters ago. There was about five of snow on the ground, which naturally put the moose at a disadvantage; but if a dog a moose under any circumstances, how about a couple of big wolves, weighing perhaps 200 pounds each? I was told last February by some Indians who had been hunting sheep, that their three sleigh dogs killed a three-yearold ram. They said: "Sorry for poor sheepwe don't want kill 'em-got lots of meat that time-too bad!" Speaking of wolves, there is only a \$15.00 bounty on them; not enough to induce anyone to make a business of wolf hunting. They destroy a lot of game, and something should be done. Down on the Liard river they run in bands of forty or fifty, but are so well fed that I never heard of their attacking a man. The Indians say that a billy goat is the only thing the wolves can't kill, and that a goat can kill a grizzly. I have seen goats in bands of from 20 to 50 on the mountains along the Iskoot river, 75 miles by government trail south of Telegraph creek. The billies come down below timber line in the fall and are very easy to hunt, though sometimes hard to kill. My partner once shot seven 30-30 bullets into an old billy before he got him down to stay. - F. Bullock Webster, in

GOLD RIFLE SIGHTS AGAIN

In the days of the muzzle loading rifle gold and silver front sights were in common use. They were believed to be the most quickly caught, and the most easily defined against a black background or game. Later military and sharpshooters decided that such sights reflected too much light, they glittered, and were not adapted to fine work at the target. For game shooting ivory quite replaced gold and silver, and was said to be superior to either for really

fine shooting. Now the gold sight is coming back again. a gold bead in a setting of iron being a most popular sight with hunters. It seems that fashion merely swings round in a circle, bringing all things back to us again sooner or later. Perhaps we will again sometime see the old bar sights, fixed flat on the barrel after the style of Cooper's Leather Stocking rifles. -Outing.

Answered

General Phil Sheridan was at one time asked at what little incident did he laugh.

the most. "Well," he said, "I do not know, but I always laugh when I think of the Irishman and the army mule. I was riding down the the line one day when I saw an Irishman mounted on a mule which was kicking its legs rather freely. The mule finally got its hoof caught in the stirrup, when, in the excitement the Irishman remarked: 'Well, begorra, if you're goin' to git on I'll git off.'"