

Field Sports at Home and Abroad

"THE FIELD" ON PACIFIC SALMON

There was a time and not so very long ago either when the various species of oncorhynchus that are grouped together in common parlance as Pacific salmon were a source of constant surprise to the friends of Salmo salar, the salmon of the Atlantic. Particularly used we have to marvel at their inability to survive more than a single breeding season and at the apparent fact that when once in fresh water they would not look at any form of angling lure. Recent discoveries have done a good deal to lessen our wonder, for they all tend to establish a closer similarity of habit between salar and oncorhynchus than at one time seemed at all possible. The different Pacific salmon seem to spawn but once in their lives, and most of them die of it. Well it is now pretty certain that the great majority of our own salmon also spawn but once, though they do not by any means all die after the spawning. It may well be that this last fact is due to a dispensation of geography, and that if our salmon undertook such long journeys to the spawning grounds as many quinnat salmon do very few would survive to tell the tale. Possibly too the indifference of Pacific salmon to anglers' lures after they have once got beyond the estuaries may be similarly accounted for. Our own salmon take badly enough when they are set on running. What can you expect with fish which have to run or at any rate do run six or even ten times as far, and have a lesser period in which to do it than many of their Atlantic cousins? Moreover it seems not quite an invariable rule that Pacific salmon refuse all lures in fresh water. Colonel Haggard has recorded the capture of quinnat on the fly in the waters of Vancouver Island, and Mr. F. C. Inskip has described the capture of salmon on a silver Devon in the Thompson River. The instances of these fish taking in fresh water are scanty it is true, but there are some. And it is worth pondering on the question. What proportion of the salmon in our own waters ever take an angler's lure? It would of course be difficult in the extreme to test calculations, as to this, but it is obvious that the percentage of "takers" in a year's run of fish in any given river can be but small. Altogether it is now possible to make out a much closer likeness between the two types of salmon than could be assumed before, though the physical resemblance was remarkable enough to invite comparisons.

An interesting report on the Pacific salmon fisheries has recently been issued by the United States Bureau of Fisheries (Washington-Bureau of Fisheries Document 751). It is the work of Mr. J. N. Cobb, assistant agent at the salmon fisheries of Alaska, and it contains what has not been obtainable before, an account of the fisheries of the whole coast, United States, British Columbia and Alaska in the same year, 1903. The assembling of all the data and material together should be of considerable economic value. Mr. Cobb begins with some account of the different species of Pacific salmon, whose popular names best known in England are quinnat, sockeye, coho humpback and dog. The quinnat is the biggest and most valuable fish, averaging somewhat over 20 lb., and at times reaching much greater weights. This is the fish which gives such sport to anglers on the Campbell River, sport which has several times been described by writers in the Field (most recently by J. H. W. Field, Sept. 5, 1903). To this species belonged the 70-pounder which was caught by Sir R. Musgrave in 1896. That they grow much bigger than this occasionally is evident. Mr. Cobb says: "One was caught near Klawak, Alaska, in 1900, which weighed 107 lb. without the head." In some rivers there are more than one annual run of quinnat. The Sacramento for instance has a spring run (April-June) and an autumn run (August-October). This is not unlike the habits of Salmo salar. The other four species, of which the coho and sockeye are the most important, appear more to resemble our sea trout in the time of their running, June-November being the months that cover it. Mr. Cobb also adds a note on the steelhead trout, as it has some commercial importance. It is rather surprising to find how big the steelhead grows—in different localities the average weight is placed at from 8 lb. to 15 lb., while extreme sizes reach 45 lb.

The importance of the canning industry is well known, and Mr. Cobb devotes a good deal of space to a description of the fishing grounds and the history of the fisheries. He goes on to deal with the apparatus employed, which includes various kinds of net, traps, and even bows and arrows. A good deal of the commercial fishing is also done with lines trolled from a boat, and it looks as though anglers were responsible for this.

Each year the catching of salmon by trolling becomes of increasing importance commercially. For some years sportsmen had this exciting and delightful occupation to themselves, but eventually the mild curers created such a persistent and profitable demand for king, or chinook, salmon that the fishermen who had previously restricted their operations to the use of nets during the annual spawning runs, which last but a small portion of the year began to follow up the fish both before and after the spawning run, and soon discovered that they were to be found in certain re-

gions throughout nearly every month in the year.

Salmon Hatching on a Large Scale

The value of salmon hatcheries is a disputed matter in the United Kingdom, and a good many experts are doubtful whether the turning down of artificially reared fry is of more benefit to a river than would be the natural spawning of the parent fish which were stripped to supply the hatchery. Other people are of opinion that the system has not been tried on a large enough scale in this country for results to be conclusive one way or the other. There can be no doubt on the point in the minds of those who are responsible for the welfare of Pacific salmon rivers. In the eleventh chapter of his report, Mr. Cobb gives an account of the output of different hatcheries, and shows that their work is on an infinitely larger scale than anything dreamed of over here. The fry of the Pacific salmon are said to make for the sea as soon as they are old enough to descend the rivers, whereas our salmon parr commonly spend two years in fresh water. Whether this makes much difference in the probable number of those that survive to the adult age is obscure; a priori one would say that there are less enemies for small fish in the rivers. Much depends probably on the pace at which oncorhynchus parr grow in the sea. It is perhaps of some significance that Herr Dahl's Norwegian researches have shown that the older parr are when they leave the rivers of Norway the quicker is their growth in the sea?

However these things may be it is obvious that salmon hatchery work pays in these American waters. The scale on which it is conducted would suffice to prove it, even if there were not instances on record in which Pacific salmon have been successfully introduced to rivers by planting of fry. Let us take a few of the figures given by Mr. Cobb in his tables. The number of chinook or quinnat fry distributed annually in the Sacramento and its tributaries from 1904 to 1909 has varied from over twenty millions to over a hundred millions. The figure for 1909 (26,090,000) is a good deal the smallest for the period, that for 1908, the next smallest being over fifty-nine millions. In the same series of years the River has had quantities of fry varying from over five to over eight millions. In the Columbia River basin since 1877, 484,518,600 fry (including older fish) have been planted, and the smallest year's number since 1898 has been over seventeen millions, the largest over forty-four millions. In the Fraser River, British Columbia, have been placed the following quantities of fry: Sockeye (since 1885) 474,610,400 humpback 22,550,000 (nearly all in one year, 1903); quinnat, (since 1903) 22,897,200; coho (since 1902), 29,334,700. The total, including a few dog salmon and steelhead, is over five hundred and forty-nine millions. This is indeed stocking!

SINGULAR SHOTS

Every sportsman, whether he hunts big game or small—or both—must have occasionally during his pursuit of the same have made—or seen made—a certain number of what I have termed above "Singular Shots."

By these I mean shots that do better than you expect them to do; shots that stop big or dangerous game at a critical moment; shots where you get more than you meant to or than you aimed at, or indeed wished for. Of the latter kind was one fired by a tenderfoot friend of mine, who aimed at a wily woodcock, missed him by several feet, and slightly touched up with No. 10 shot a previously unconscious farmer who had been smoking a restful pipe "beneath the maple bough." This can hardly be called a lucky shot, though the No. 10 was too small to do any harm to speak of, and my friend succeeded in adroitly eluding the farmer, though he heard him routing like a demon through the woods for a long time. Some typical "Singular Shots" of this kind occur every fall in the deer hunting season, the result of trusting fools with firearms. But there are other more harmless and even lucky kinds of singular shots, which have come under my observation, and upon a few of which I am about to dilate. I have to tell of but few shots of this kind at big game, as in deer shooting I have always practised the still hunting method, where the hunter who knows his business—if he gets a shot at all—gets it at reasonable range, and at a stationary mark. Even if the deer bolts, he either misses clean (I have made some "singular misses" in that way) or disables it so as to eventually be able to "hang it up."

I once made a singular shot at a bear. The whole circumstance is vividly imprinted on my memory since it was the only bear I ever shot in my life. Most of my friends have heard all about it too. Like Thackeray's unhappy love affair "there are times, especially when I've had a couple of glasses of anything it will come out." So I'm going to "come out" with it now though for the last reason given.

A well known guide and myself were shooting or trying to shoot deer in Northern Muskoka a good while ago, before that beautiful district was exploited and vulgarized as it is now. We were beating a queer piece of dense cover locally the "Frying Pan" which utensil it almost exactly resembled in shape. It was about ten or twelve acres in

extent, surrounded on all sides by steep rocky wall, except in one narrow pass corresponding with the handle, and having a tiny streamlet running along it. Here the guide posted me while he went around to put in the hounds, three in number, by a steep rocky path on the opposite side of the Pan, telling me to look out, for any deer would almost certainly bolt down this "handle," and as he put it "run slap over me."

I hadn't waited very long when one of the hounds opened in the very centre of the "Frying Pan," the sweet voices of the other two chiming in almost immediately. Then for some minutes such a racket as I've never heard before or since took place in that small piece of cover. I waited tense and rigid, a minute or so for the deer to bolt, but the pow-wow in the cover still continued. Now at that period of my existence I was a first class green horn about deer shooting. Still I knew enough to be aware that with all that din, anything in the shape of a deer would have been out long before. I noticed also that the racket was fierce and stationary, showing that the hounds were not running a trail, but were baying at something. I resolved to go in and investigate. I did so thinking the dogs had got hold of a porcupine, and I was not desirous of having the pleasure of spending an hour or so getting the quills out of their throats and lips.

I crawled through a belt of the thickest and "meanest" scrub cedar and black or prickly ash cover imaginable, and finally came out on the edge of a small beaver meadow, formed on the edge of a small beaver meadow, stream. Then I saw what the row was about. Standing on his hind legs in the centre of the meadow, and evidently in a sinful passion, was a black bear. Not a bear of the largest size perhaps, but a good average bear for all that. The hounds were baying him at a respectful distance, and he was employing all his energies to get hold of one of them, when I appeared on the scene. I was armed with a twelve bore gun loaded with cartridges containing one heavy rotund bullet and three and a half drachms of powder, the best weapon in my opinion to use on a run way in dense cover, where nearly all the shots you will get will be at close range. The instant I grasped the situation I fired the left barrel at bruin without delay or ceremony, but whether my hand was unsteady from my arduous crawl through the cover, or whether I was puzzled by the quick movements of the brute—or whether I was experiencing a slight touch of that ignoble feeling which school boys denominate as "flunk," I know not. In any event my shot struck far back near the loins, not even crippling him. The moment he felt the shot he dropped on his four legs, and came straight at me. He knew well who had hurt him. It is true that the black bear is a woolly coward, and would rather run than fight any day—but all wild beasts are dangerous when crippled or cornered as he was.

Luckily the hounds were animated by the shot, and ran in on him, one of them, the oldest and best, jumping on his back, and trying to seize his neck behind the ear. The bear rose on his hind legs, and literally wiped the poor dog off like a fly, killing him instantly.

As he did so, I fired, and the big bear fell dead like a shot snipe. The large round bullet made a hole you could have put three fingers into. I had sighted at his chest, but he was so near me that the bullet had gone high, and entered the base of his neck, breaking it, in fact eliminating one of the vertebrae altogether, which accounts for his sudden extinction.

This was both a singular and a fortunate shot, for I might have hit him in many other places which would have been mortal wounds in time, and yet he would have had plenty of strength left to reach me. Then it would have been his turn.

It is the wing shooting of various game birds, however, that the greater number of "singular shots" occur.

All sportsmen who know the habits of the bird will agree that it is more than a singular event to kill two woodcocks on the wing with a single shot. Yet I managed to accomplish this feat some years ago by pure accident. If a Mr. White, now classical professor at Ridley College, St. Catharines, Ont., had not been shooting with me and seen this happen, I would have some diffidence about relating this incident. We were beating in a thin strip of cover with a small open space between it and the dense wilderness of tangled bush beyond. White was a little behind me, and on the other side of the open strip. Half way up my dog flushed a woodcock, which flashed across the opening and was almost instantly followed by another. I was too late for the first, but managed to "get on" to the last one, and drop him just as he was disappearing. He of course fell quite close to me.

Just then White called out, "A good shot—and a long one, too!" "Not a very long one," I answered, "I'm afraid he's cut all to pieces!" "No, he isn't," shouted White; "he's flopping about here five yards from me."

It was just as he said. A chance scattered shot had winged the first woodcock after he had passed quite out of my sight, and I had got two woodcocks with one barrel—"killed two birds with one stone," as it were. Truly a singular shot!

I once saw an American gentleman, a Mr. Miller, visiting Prince Edward county, Ont. (

in which county this paper is written) do better than that. We had flushed a large pack of that splendid game bird, the ruffed grouse. They were young birds and rose close with a noise like a great wind rattling through the trees. In the midst of the melee Miller noticed two birds rise and fly so that their lines of flight would soon intersect.

He held on one till they crossed, then pulled and got them both. This was really a wonderful shot, for it was intentional; mine was a pure accident.

A somewhat singular shot was made by a school boy of my acquaintance only last fall. One half holiday I had lent him my gun and a small beagle of the "slow but sure" variety, and he had sallied forth with a beating heart in search of rabbits, but also with a wild uncertain hope that he might get a grouse.

The hound soon started a rabbit, or, to speak more accurately, a hare (Lepus Americanus).

He saw the hare come down the runway he was watching in quite a leisurely way, as is often the way of the hare when hunted by a slow hound. It even stopped now and then and sat up on its hind legs. The wildly excited youth brought his gun to his shoulder, when probably the good genius of the hare informed him that there was danger in the neighborhood, and he was off like a brown streak of fur.

My young friend took a short wavering aim, and of course fired a yard or two behind it.

Bitterly disappointed, he was putting a fresh cartridge in his gun, when he was aware of a tremendous commotion in a clump of bushes just in line with his shot.

He hurried to the spot, just in time to be present at the last struggles of a fine ruffed grouse, whose evil star had caused him to come in for the better part of the charge meant for the rabbit.

This "singular shot" was purely accidental again, for the boy had no idea whatever that there was a grouse in his vicinity, his whole attention being occupied with the hare. Altogether, this in its way, is one of the most extraordinary shooting incidents I can remember.

But the most singular shot of all, with which this short paper must terminate, was made by a young married lady from New York City, in the wilds of Northern Muskoka.

She had accompanied her husband and brother on a deer-hunting trip. The party consisted of her husband, her brother and herself, a young lady friend, and a servant girl. There was also a guide from the neighborhood.

They occupied a comfortable shooting lodge, not a cabin or shanty, but it was at least twenty-eight miles from the nearest village or hotel, and was situated on the edge of a great forest, in which was a fair quantity of deer and other big game.

The only way to get to the village was by canoe down a river that ran past the lodge and up a lake.

It chanced one evening that they found they were out of some requisites, which necessitated an immediate trip to the village. The lady's husband and her brother therefore set out in the canoe to get them. They were to be gone all night. The guide was off in the woods locating some deer, so the ladies and the servant were left alone in the lodge for the night. A deer had been shot the day before and its carcass was hanging up in the little outhouse. This circumstance probably accounts for what followed.

The ladies retired to rest in perfect tranquility, to be awakened about one in the morning by a strange and ominous sound. It was the peculiar snarling of the great timber wolf.

Looking in consternation from the windows, the ladies could see gaunt shadowy forms slinking about a little clearing, now and then, and gradually drawing nearer and nearer to the little outhouse where the deer was hanging up. There were fifteen or twenty of them.

The lady I am speaking of was frightened, very frightened, but she nevertheless possessed a fair share of that valuable quality which is commonly called "grit."

She took down a Winchester rifle of her brother's and opening the window, with both eyes tight shut and head thrown back as far as possible, after the "eternally feminine" manner of firing a rifle, she distributed seven or eight bullets to various points of the horizon. At every shot a chorus of screams from her friend and the "hired girl" pierced the shuddering ear of night.

Now both the courage and persistence of the timber wolf are very much overrated.

In this case at any rate, before the echoes had ceased to reverberate with the shots and screams, not a wolf was in sight. They went to return no more.

The ladies barricaded themselves in, and waited the morning and the arrival of their male relatives in fear and trembling.

When the gentlemen did come, the first thing they saw on the edge of the little clearing was a big grey wolf, stiff and dead.

A Winchester ball had hit him between the shoulders and broken his back. One of the lady's random bullets had found a billet—Rod and Gun.

AN ANTIDOTE FOR STRYCHNINE

So many valuable dogs are lost every year by strychnine poisoning that I am prompted to



give my experiences in the hope that their publication may be the means of saving some one's pet from the evil designs of that despicable person, the dog poisoner.

As soon as it is noticed that the dog is suffering from poison prompt action should be taken, as time is very valuable at this stage.

Instead of using the old-fashioned remedies such as mustard, sulphate of zinc, melted lard, flour and water, etc., to produce vomiting, use a hypodermic injection of apomorphia-tablets of one-tenth grain each—dissolving two tablets in about twenty drops of water. This I inject under the shoulder, or in any other convenient spot. For small dogs one tablet is enough. This injection will cause almost immediate vomiting. As a precaution I usually repeat the dose in about ten minutes, in the meantime drenching with warm milk and water, which tends to wash out the stomach. It is necessary to keep the dog in a warm place and to keep him as quiet as possible both during and after the injections.

I have had six cases of my own, including the Airedale, Ch. Caerphilly Marvel, and have yet to lose my first case.

To the uninitiated I would say that apomorphia cannot be procured in the ordinary way, but may be procured through your medical man or a veterinary. At the same time you should get his instructions as to the use of the hypodermic syringe.

This is a very simple method and may be performed in a very short space of time. Although this method may not appeal to the ordinary man, to the kennel man or one who owns a valuable dog it should appeal. My advice is to always carry a hypodermic and a few tablets in your hip pocket so as to be ready for an emergency.—P. Bowden in Rod and Gun.

The yarn about the indifferent country boy being able to catch more trout with his tree limb pole, bent pin and angle worm than the practical angler with his correct tackle is the subject matter of the cartoonist and joke writer. No person experienced in angling or schooled in ichthyology will tolerate any such nonsense. Of course, accidents happen in all places and pursuits, and fishes go crazy like other animals. Therefore, some fool boy dabbling a worm on bent pin for perch or sunfish may just happen to move his lure at the very moment a big trout is excited by fright, anger or play and thus attract the fish and actually hook it. And there is no doubt but that big trout have been captured thus, but practical men know this is the exception, not the rule. Inexperienced card players and race track visitors have been known to win more than the regular players in odd instances, but let these merely lucky persons try their hand against the experienced players in a series of wagers and see where they'll land in the long run. In pugilism every now and again we hear of the champion being laid low by the beginner and his chance blow. But, it was only a chance blow. Think of the other beginners who hadn't a chance blow and were whipped in the first round by the champion.

Anglers are not fond of the slaughter part of angling and never brag of the number of fishes taken. They will enthuse over the size of a single specimen, delight at the exceptional play of a certain species or poetize on this or that beautiful water they have fished, but mere quantity is left for the marketman to gloat over. However, I want to say no bent-pin boy on earth can excel any correct-tackle angler in the act of taking the greatest number of trout or any other fish if the angler could be forced to make the test, which, of course, he could not be forced to do, because no angler fishes for figures. And I'm quite certain no country boy could excel the angler in the art of angling, though I admit a clumsy man or boy with a hoe may make more points in billiards than the expert with the cue. Fishing may mean the capture of fishes by any means, fair or foul, but angling is based on more gentle conditions and may even be pursued without a single killing.

Some of the greatest anglers are the poorest fishermen, and to this class belong such angling geniuses as Izaak Walton, Frank Forester, George Washington, Daniel Webster, David Thoreau, Thaddeus Norris, Ruben Wood, Seth Green, Alexander Wilson, John James Audubon, and Robert B. Roosevelt.—Chas. Bradford in Outdoor Life.

Awful Warning

Young Man—May I have your daughter, sir?

Old Gentleman—Yes, if you can support her. Remember that my auto goes with her.—Puck.