

HUNTING AND FISHING, HERE AND ELSEWHERE

CAMP CHATTER

By Richard L. Pocock.



THE salmon trolling near Victoria has so far been rather disappointing this year; either the run is late or the fish are keeping further out, as, although the catches here have been poor, reports from other districts are to the effect that there are plenty of good fish about. One man last week got at Cowichan Bay, as reported by Mr. Brownjohn, fourteen salmon in one day, weighing 340 pounds, or, on an average, nearly twenty-five pounds a fish; several large salmon of over fifty pounds weight are reported to have been landed at Campbell River, while the run of King or Tyee salmon in the Alberni Canal is good as usual. The trolling in Saanich Arm is also good.

The deer season has started, and the woods are full of sportsmen and others with guns. As usual there is no scarcity of deer, and as usual they are reported as being thicker than ever. There is not much difficulty in getting venison on this coast, and few intelligent and careful hunters should be disappointed. There is certainly a great satisfaction in getting a good buck on the opening day, though it seems to some of us more like hard work than enjoyable sport to pack out as many as three deer to a man in a day. The man who boasted of having shot six in one day, if strictly truthful, must have forgotten the limit for a season fixed by law, but perhaps he had not really got any and was "only jossing."

Nice little extra special dinners with roast "chicken," nee pheasant, as the piece de resistance ought not to be possible in Victoria before the month of October. It should also be remembered that the sale of venison is prohibited on Vancouver Island. Murder will out, and in the eyes of sportsmen shooting pheasants before the season for the sake of providing such nice little dinners is murder, and the receivers of the corpses are accessories after the fact.

The Poacher Foiled, or, The Trout, The Dog and the Dynamite

The tale is told of a prominent mining man of the Kootenays. Wild horses would not draw his name from me, but, as the event carried its own punishment with it, the authorities will please overlook it. Most anglers of this country know the deep pools of the mountain creeks where the big trout can be seen in the clear depths but are almost impossible to catch by any fair means.

In this case the mining magnate had fished and fished in vain, and, at last, in desperation vowed that he would get even with those beastly fish that smiled at all his best flies and most tempting lures no matter how carefully brought to their notice. Knowing the powers of dynamite, he brought out one day a stick of sixty per cent and a cap and fuse, and with savage glee prepared the charge, lit the fuse, and heaved the thing into the pool where lurked the biggest and most truculent of his enemies. There was just one little miscalculation, however, which marred his villainy. Accompanying him was a valuable and much-prized retriever, who looked upon the proceedings as a piece of play for his own special benefit. No sooner had the torpedo touched the water, than there was a rush and a splash and the faithful Fido had the powder in his mouth and was making with all speed to shore to deliver it to his master. The latter, however, had pressing business elsewhere, and a mad race ensued through the woods. The dog, having to land and stopping to shake himself before racing after his master, gave the latter a much needed start, and he says that he easily beat all records for obstacle races as he careered madly through the bush over logs and through thickets, cursing himself for having been so careful to cut a good long fuse. However, everything has to have an end, and at last the charge exploded, fragments of dog hurtled through the air, and he was bespattered with the blood of the faithful hound who had foiled him in his career of crime, and by the sacrifice of his life had saved his master from being a poacher in deed as well as in intention. After that he gave the trout the best, and has been a strict observer of the game laws ever since.

fooling With Firearms

The carelessness of some people with firearms is astounding. Last Sunday some gentlemen were taking a stroll in the fields just beyond Victoria West when a bullet cut through the bushes within a few feet of them, the report of the rifle reaching them immediately after. A few seconds later another wet singing over their heads from a ricochet, and they decided to make a hasty and circuitous retreat from the vicinity. After a considerable detour they came upon a party of young fools practising with a high power rifle at the trunk of an oak tree, which they missed as often as they hit, the bullets then ranging across the railway track, and passing a pasture, on their way to whatever billet they might eventually find, which might easily have been the body of a human being. How anybody could be guilty of such criminal negligence seems hard to understand, but this is by no means an isolated instance of the sort of thing that happens and always will happen as long as boys are allowed to handle dangerous weapons.

Some very pertinent remarks on this subject are contributed by D. C. Nowlin to Outdoor Life. He says:

The newspapers have compiled a list of seventy-one fatalities in the hunting fields of the United States for the year 1907. Such appalling statistics suggest some drastic remedy. Nearly all of this killing was done by careless or nervous hunters. Many states have already enacted carefully drawn statutes which provide severe penalties for the inexcusable carelessness of hunters.

I am of the opinion that we should "take time by the forelock" and serve notice upon too eager sportsmen that they will have to face a felony charge if they maim or kill a human being while in pursuit of wild game. A man killed accidentally is just as dead as if he were purposely shot, and the loss and grief to family and friends is not mitigated by the plea of "accidental shooting."

No hunter in this country is too poor to own one of the numerous kinds of long-range high-power rifles. Amateurs invariably expect to overcome inexperience by supplying themselves with a powerful war weapon and by rapidity of fire compensate for lack of careful aim. The silly ambition to hunt ordinary game with a rifle that sends a bullet through four feet of solid oak is sedulously stimulated by manufacturers of firearms. If the "high-power" fad continues to flourish it will soon be considered bad form to hunt big game with any weapon less destructive than modern field artillery.

Hunting is a highly commendable form of recreation, and, under sensible restrictions, ought to be encouraged; but notice must be taken of reckless shooting and means employed to minimize the consequent danger to human life.

If a notice was printed upon each hunter's license that the accidental wounding or killing of any person by the holder thereof while hunting would be punished as manslaughter, it would serve as a very effective warning to careless shooters and go a long way towards preventing hunting accidents.

SHEEP-HUNTING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA

Outdoor Life for this month contains an interesting account of a trip taken by a party of American sportsmen after sheep in the Cassiar district. It is significant that the writer, Mr. J. E. Moore says "British Columbia and Alaska were the only places we could figure on for such a trip, and as one has to have a special permit from the Secretary of the Interior to bring game out of Alaska, the territory was narrowed down to British Columbia." After describing the journey and paying a tribute to the courtesy of the Canadian officials' his narrative proceeds as follows:

We arrived at Telegraph Creek at 4:35 p. m. August 27, having been almost four days making the trip from Wrangell, a distance of 160 miles. The entire population was out to meet us, about twenty-five white people and seventy-five Indians, men, women, children and dogs. I never saw so many dogs to the square inch before in my life. These dogs, however, are all used during the winter season on the sleds. Telegraph Creek, the head of navigation, is a small village on the left bank of the Stikine; it contains two general stores, two restaurants and one saloon. This is the home of our genial outfitter, Frank Callbreath, who does quite an extensive outfitting business for the government. A telegraph line running from Vancouver up into the Yukon country passes through here. This is also an outfitting station for the various posts and mining camps in the interior, all their supplies being brought up the river from Wrangell by the Hudson Bay Company's boats, who charge \$40 per ton freight. That evening was spent in buying supplies, provisions, etc., and arranging for an early start in the morning. By 10 o'clock next morning our horses were packed, everything ready and with our four Indians, two guides, a packer and a cook, we bade good-bye to civilization and hit the trail. The first night we camped at what is called the Summit, near the headwaters of Telegraph Creek, ten miles distant. It began raining soon after we had made camp, raining all night, giving us a good opportunity for testing the waterproof qualities of our new tent. Standing the test of an all night's rain we felt no more uneasiness from that source. The rain ceased about 6 o'clock the next morning, so we were off early, stopping near Hyland's ranch on Second Tahltan River. The third night we camped on a small stream near the Shesley River. In the evening we all went down to the Shesley to try our luck fishing, catching four fine silver trout which weighed two and one-half pounds each. Jimmy, with a gaff hook, succeeded in landing four nice salmon, the four weighing thirty-seven pounds.

The next night we camped near the old cabin on the banks of what is called Dodedony Creek or River. So far we had followed the old Klondike trail, and still in many places we saw, in the way of broken wagon wheels, parts of sleds, pieces of harness, etc., etc., evidence of the mad rush into the Klondike in '98.

Here we left the old trail and headed for Sheep Mountain, reaching McDonald's Portage early in the afternoon. We had no more than got our tent stretched than Charlie, our Indian packer, came running into camp very much excited, exclaiming, "Moose! moose!" With our field glasses we could see across the river bottom, probably a half-mile away, a cow moose and two calves enjoying themselves in a small lake. For six miles down the river the trail is very rough and not well marked, so Jimmy had made arrangements with Larry Martin for his boat, which was kept at the Portage, to use it in taking our

duffle down the river, driving the horses down the rough trail and swimming them across. After eating lunch we re-packed our horses and started up the mountain, reaching what is called Summit Camp, on the first bench if Sheep Mountain. Jimmy said our permanent camp would be at the foot of Sheep Mountain, near what is known as Forty-Mile lake. We made a short drive next day along the side of the mountain over a very rough trail, camping in a gulch, just below timber line. When we awoke next morning we found everything covered with about four inches of snow, but the weather not cold. As we were now in the sheep country and had no fresh meat in camp we concluded to spend all day looking for game, before going to our permanent camping place. Jones and I, together with Jimmy and Willie, the two guides, climbed the top of the mountain and found plenty of tracks but no game. Going on until we came to the bluffs overlooking Forty-Mile lake, in looking down in one of the gulches we saw a band of probably forty sheep, about a mile below, but how to get them was a difficult problem. After manoeuvring for some time we crawled down the head of the gulch to a rocky point, from the top of which we had a good view. Telling Willie to go around, get below, and start them up the gulch, we watched them through our field glasses and found there were no good heads in the band. But as we had no fresh meat in camp and eight hungry men to feed, it was, as the saying goes, "a ground hog case." Realizing that self-preservation was one of Nature's first laws, I told Jimmy it was absolutely necessary that we get enough for camp meat. What followed may be easily surmised. That night we had a meal fit for a king, as there is no meat that I have ever eaten equal to this species of mountain sheep.

The following days we moved the outfit to the foot of Sheep Mountain near the lake, to what was to be our permanent camp while remaining in the sheep country. Crossing the mountains in a blinding snowstorm, while descending into the valley, just before reaching our camping place, we came across fresh sheep tracks. Campbell and Jimmy concluded to follow the sheep, while the balance of the party went on down into the valley and made camp. After following the sheep for about two miles Campbell came up with a band of eight, with one small ram, which he succeeded in getting. This being the first trophy, Campbell naturally felt much elated. Our camp was very pleasantly situated in a sheltered spot at the edge of a very beautiful little valley near the lake, with plenty of wood and water and an abundance of good feed for our horses. Forty-Mile lake is very picturesque, elbow-shaped, each arm extending three or four miles and from one-half to three-quarters of a mile wide. The water is very deep, in which is found the king salmon. The lake is pretty much surrounded on all sides by bluffs; just why it is called Forty-Mile lake I did not learn. Across the lake to the southwest is Goat Mountain.

With a comfortable camp, an abundance of fresh meat and favorable weather, everyone was happy. Our Indians, after a very hearty supper, sitting around a bright campfire, chattered in Tohtlan language. If there was anything that would produce absolute satisfaction and contentment with our Indian friends it was a comfortable camp, plenty of fresh meat with an occasional porcupine, which they consider a great delicacy.

Having had a good night's rest, we were up early and after a hearty breakfast started out to look for sheep. About a mile from camp we came across fresh moose tracks. Jones concluded to follow the moose, which were headed toward the lake. At 9:30 Jimmy discovered a fine ram quietly grazing on the side of the mountain. Leaving our horses in a small gulch we made a detour and got up to within about 200 yards of him. Murdock was given the shot, and at the crack of his Savage the ram humped up his back and staggered, but did not try to run away. To make doubly sure, Murdock fired again, when the ram went down and out. He proved to be a fine specimen and Murdock was a very happy man. After Jimmy had the animal all skinned out, Murdock tied the head, scalp and hide on his horse and returned to camp, entirely satisfied with his day's work. Campbell, Jimmy and I went out looking for more sheep. We soon located a couple of rams near the base of a cliff. We backed off down a draw, making another detour, as Jimmy's idea of hunting sheep, when possible, is to always get above them, for, as a rule, when fired at, if they do not see you they invariably start up hill, and it gives a better opportunity for more shots. In making this detour we jumped up a fox, as black as a crow except for the tip of his tail, which was white. Jimmy called him a silver grey. It was the first live one that I had ever seen and he certainly was a beauty. He played along within range of us for some time and I wanted to take a shot at him, but Jimmy said not to shoot, as it would frighten the sheep. We might as well have shot the fox, for after spending a couple of hours working our way up to where the sheep had been seen, they had disappeared. We spent the balance of the day climbing up and climbing down over the mountain, seeing a number of sheep, but nothing that we wanted, returning to camp in the evening pretty well tired out. Jimmy, the cook, had a good supper for us which revived us wonderfully. Murdock, after reaching camp, had spent the balance of the day in fleshing, salting and drying his scalp and hide. The measurements of his head were as follows: Circumference of base of horns, 14 inches; length, 31 inches; spread at tips, 22 inches. These are the black, or Stone sheep, Ovis stonoi, discovered a few years

ago by Andrew Stone, who went into this country with the idea of finding a new species of caribou. After spending quite a good deal of time and nearly all his money he returned with a few sheep he had killed, entirely out of heart and not at all satisfied with his adventure. It developed later that these sheep which he had brought back were an entirely new species, never having been heard of before. They were named after him, Ovis stonoi, which gave Mr. Stone a great deal of prominence.

According to the explorations of Charles Sheldon, "These sheep range in between the Stikine and Macmillan rivers. The black mountain sheep is the darkest color, or one may say, the most nearly black, of all the American wild sheep. North of the Stikine river it is not so black as it is south, where the blackness of its head, neck and body is very pronounced." In the majority of cases its horns are so characteristic that any studious person should be able to recognize the species by them alone. The front angle of the horn is very sharp and near its base it actually overhangs the face. This feature is constant. In about nine cases out of every ten the horns of the black sheep are distinguished by their widely spreading spirals and the great distance between the tips. Occasionally, however, a head develops horns with a more narrow spiral, like those of the typical white sheep, but all such are exceptional. Just where the black sheep and the bighorn come together, no one, as yet, is able to say."

Just recently I was shown two fine mountain sheep heads, the first one a typical Ovis canadensis, the measurements of which I did not take. The measurements of the second one were as follows: Circumference of base of horns, 15 1-4 inches; length of horns, 33 inches, and spread at tips 25 inches. This one presented these distinctive features characteristic of the Ovis stonoi, namely, the sharp angle of horns overhanging the face, the wide-spreading spiral and the great distance between the tips. These sheep were both killed last fall, but a few miles apart, in northern Montana near the Alberta line—the one a typical bighorn, the other presenting all the characteristics of a stonei sheep.

The following day Frank Jones killed a goat just above camp, but it was so stormy and foggy on the mountains that hunting was out of the question. The next day, September 8th, was also a stormy and disagreeable day, raining in the valleys, while the mountains were covered by a blanket of snow, the fog being so thick it was impossible to see any distance ahead, consequently we returned to camp early. Toward evening the fog began clearing away, giving a little better view of the opposite mountain. Jimmy, who was ever on the lookout came into our tent asking for my field glasses, saying he had seen what seemed to him to be a trail through the snow, coming down from the top of the mountain opposite our camp. With the aid of the glasses we could see three fine rams. Being too late to get to them that night, we started early next morning, Jones and I, with Jimmy and Willie, the two guides.

We went up the valley about a mile, then, in order to keep under cover, we turned into a gulch coming down between the mountains which we followed for fully a mile. Emerging from the gulch we found fresh tracks in the snow, but could not see any sheep. Jones and Willie following their tracks, Jimmy and I going around the side of the mountain, we suddenly came onto a large ram enjoying his morning meal. Before I had time to shoot he was going at full speed. My first shot checked but failed to stop him; the second broke one of his hind legs, and at the third shot he rolled down the mountain for fully a hundred yards. On reaching him we found that my first ball had passed through the stomach, inflicting a wound that would eventually have proved fatal. The last shot was made at fully 150 yards. Jimmy skinned him out and carried his head and scalp into camp. His measurements were as follows: Circumference of base of horns, 13 inches; length, 35 inches, and spread, 21 inches. I was now the possessor of a very fine specimen of the Ovis stonoi. The law allows each hunter three heads and no doubt had this, my first, been a small one, I would have been anxious to try for another, and possibly a larger one, but I was perfectly satisfied with my trophy and content to remain in camp until the other boys had secured their heads.

Jimmy Hawkins, our faithful cook, who had always remained in camp, keeping vigilant eyes on everything, and always having a good, hot dinner ready on our return to camp, was now given an opportunity to get away, as Mr. Murdock and I were in camp for the remainder of the day, he and Charley going up on the mountain to try their luck for sheep. They returned in about three hours with a fine head. Campbell and Willie returned early and reported having seen plenty of sheep but no good heads. They also reported seeing an old grizzly and two cubs, which they watched through their glasses for some time. They were so far away and over such an almost inaccessible route that they could not get to them. Jones and his guide returned late that night, bringing in a good head, making three fine heads for the day.

The following day Mr. Campbell, with guide Jimmy, saw another large silver-tip feeding far down in the gulch. They quietly worked their way down to where he had last seen, but evidently Old Eph had winded them for he was nowhere to be found. Campbell, however, succeeded in getting his second sheep and was now the proud possessor of a fine pair of horns. Jones and Willie also reported seeing an old silver-tip with two cubs, but after

two hours' hard work and failing to get close enough for a shot gave up the chase.

The next day Jones killed his second sheep, securing a very good head which measured as follows: Base, 13 inches; length, 27 inches; and spread at tips, 18 1/2 inches. We now had killed eleven sheep in all, securing six good heads. Our stay in the sheep country had been very pleasant and successful, and will always remain a bright spot in our memories.

CAMPING

I recall a man who earns his bread in a small eastern state. His avocation is not a lucrative one, and he has very little money to throw away. Some of what he has, however, he once invested in three or four acres of worthless land up in Connecticut, the land growing a few trees and having on it a good spring. A few more dollars he put into lumber, nails and a few odds and ends, and on his land he built himself a board shanty, to which now for many years he has resorted during his vacation time, and where he lives as happy as a king, and vastly more independent.

Something like this is within the power of almost each one of us. If we cannot buy a little piece of land, and build on it a home of our own, we can at least get from some landowner permission to camp on his land, though of course he must be convinced that the one who asks this permission will not set the woods afire, cut down valuable trees or in any way make a nuisance of himself. Having received permission to camp, few things more are needed, except bedding. It is an easy matter to build a shelter that will keep off the summer weather. A few rough boards, one of the ends lying on the ground, the other resting on a cross piece either stretching between two trees or between two crooked sticks driven in the ground, will in summer weather at any low altitude be ample protection. If such a shelter is built against a hillside, the front part of it will be high enough for an ordinary man to stand up in.

If your shelter is in the woods, leaves enough can very likely be brought together to make a comfortable mattress on which to spread your blankets. If leaves cannot be found, it may be that the owner of the land where you camp will let you have a couple of armfuls of hay, or if not, you can buy enough hay to make a good bed for a few cents. You now have your house and furniture, and all that you need besides is food and something to cook it in. If you are alone, a frying pan, a good sized tin plate, a quart cup, a tin cup and a two-quart bucket, a knife, fork and spoon will be all-sufficient for your needs. In the frying pan you can cook food and bake your bread; in the camp kettle you can make stews and heat the water to wash your dishes; in the quart cup you can boil your coffee, and with your tin plate and your frying pan you can make a useful oven. If this assortment does not satisfy you, you must be hard to please.

Camping is good fun, but only if one has an object in view. Personally I should be as comfortable in camp as in prison, unless I were there for some specific purpose—to hunt, to fish, to climb mountains, to collect plants, to study some form of life, or to do some other particular thing which at the time seemed important. Most of us must have some occupation to get any good out of life.—Forest and Stream.

FISH AND MOSQUITOES

The little fish of the cyprinodont genus Girardinus, from tropical America and the West Indian islands, are credited with indirectly checking the spread of malaria by feeding on the larvae of mosquitoes, and so keeping down the number of disease-carriers. Malaria is said to be much less common in Barbados than in the neighboring islands, and this is said to be due to the vast numbers of one species (G. poecilioides), locally called "millions," in the fresh-water pools in which the mosquito passes its larval and pupal stages. Of this form, which seems to be the best known, Mr. C. K. Gibbons has just presented a large number to the Zoological Society, and they are now on view in a tank in the tortoise house. The males, about half an inch long, are brilliantly iridescent, with black spots on the sides; the females are much larger and less highly colored. It is said that, on the initiative of King Victor Emmanuel, an attempt is to be made to naturalize the "millions" in the marshy pools of the malarial districts of Italy. Whether they will take to their new habitat is not so certain as that they will find plenty of food there in the shape of mosquito larvae and pupae. Another species (C. guppyi), with similar characteristics, has been described by Dr. Gunter from Trinidad. Recently Mr. L. Guppy, jun., made a collection of the fresh-water fishes of that island, and sent them to the Natural History Museum. They formed the subject of a paper presented to the Zoological Society on April 10, 1906, by Mr. Tate Regan, who quoted from the donor's notes to the effect that the local name of the species was "belly-fish," from the fact that the females usually had the abdomen distended with young. These little fish are very plentiful, especially at Belmont, a suburb of Port of Spain, where they swarm in the filthy soapy water that drains from the yards of the dwellings along the river. They save a great deal of trouble by consuming the mosquito larvae. Good colored figures of the male and female are given in the Proceedings (1906, I, pl. xxii).—Hy, S., in Field.

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