

NOTE ON A WOUNDED DEER.

On December 1st, 1914, the writer shot a male deer, the condition of which, owing to strange circumstances, seems worthy of record.

The animal, a Mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) had been wounded, the wound being inflicted almost surely the previous year. The bullet had entered from the right side and penetrated the flesh of both hind legs, just missing the bones, and in passing through had destroyed the genital glands. Owing to the injury to the muscles both legs were slightly drawn up behind and appeared somewhat stiff, otherwise the deer was as active and healthy as any other.

While this animal had in every respect, but one, made a perfect recovery, it presented, nevertheless, several abnormal conditions. For instance, the deer was unusually large, weighing when "dressed" 184 pounds; it also appeared far more like a doe than a buck. This was particularly noticeable in the neck which had lost all that strong muscular appearance, so characteristic of a stag, the neck, instead, being slender and doe-like. Lastly, the horns are much aborted. Close to the head is a club-like excrescence from which several points protrude. The main points, one on each side, are about ten inches long without branches, the remaining ones, consisting of two on one side of the head and five on the other, vary from mere knobs to points of five inches in length. One of the most interesting features connected with these horns is their immature condition, for while it was December, when all normal horns had long since become hard, these were still soft and in the "velvet," that is to say, still covered with short, more or less wiry, gray hairs. The horns appeared, also, to be still growing, this being evident from the fact that in falling the animal had broken one of the points, from which blood trickled.

From the general appearance of the deer, taking into consideration its size and the condition of its teeth, I am convinced that it was at least five years old, probably older. The immature conditions of the horns were doubtless due, in part, to the wounds having taken many weeks to heal; while their crumpled abnormal shape and the unusual condition of the animal generally would be directly due to the nature of the wound.

This deer was extremely fat and the venison unusually sweet and juicy.

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