SPORT WITH ROD AND GUN.

Interesting Tales of the Forest and of the Stream.

TEXAS IS THE SPOT FOR GOOD SHOOTING.

The Mild Weather Gives Promise of Fun Enough Later On.

Trapping Quail and Dynamiting Fish—Bringing the German Brown Trout Here—The Black Bass Season—Notes from Hunting and Fishing Grounds all Along Shore—Getting Ready to Kill the Great Silver King of the Much Sounding Sea.

To a person who for many years, both winter and summer, has resided near a hamlet whose inhabitants are principally professional gunners and fishermen, who has made a close and interested study of their prodigal misuse of the gifts of nature, of their keenness, audacity, skill, and daring, and has been an eyewitness of the rapid depletion, under their methods, of what was once a most prolific fish and game territory, the laudable effort of the Massachussetts Fish and Game Association to restock with quail certain portions of that State does not seem to promise under existing conditions to be productive of much practical value. The inhabitants thereabouts are similar in character to those alluded to above. While they may not resort to illegal means to bring to naught the attempts of the association, the fierce competition which prevails among them will naturally lead to struggles to get the better, one of the other, in securing the greatest possible personal gain from the crop sown by that organization. Before game may be liberated in exhausted territory for the popular benefit, with the hope of securing permanent results, the people generally must either be born again or educated to an understanding of its benefits through the persistent iteration of the press. Sportsmen generally will watch with interest the outcome of this experiment of the Massachusetts Fish and Game Association. The first batch of quail have been liberated in the towns of Falmouth, Bourne, Sandwich, and Taunton, and others will be freed in the scrub-oak districts of Plymouth and Barnstable. Money has been liberally subscribed to further the object in view, and its ultimate success commands the best wishes of all sportsmen who are hoping for the revival of material for the enjoyment of field sports.

An instance of the vicissitudes which attend the liberation of game in the more settled parts of the Union is that of a man of large means on Long Island, an old sportsman, who on account of advancing years, which precluded long journeys, determined if possible to secure good shooting on his own estate. This consists of a large peninsula, flanked on either side by wide stretches of water. He imported a large quantity of quail, which he freed in the autumn. Every condition was favorable for success. The winter was mild, and in the spring the young birds hatched were healthy and survived. In the autumn the flocks were large and numerous. Their owner looked forward to rare sport during the open season, but a few days previous to Nov. 1 he was taken with a severe attack of gout, which held him a prisoner beyond Jan. 1. The greatest vigilance was maintained by the men in his employ and it was certain that not a single bird on the property had been shot. Yet the quail surely and slowly decreased in number, and at the close of the season but few remained. They had almost all been trapped or snared. On the estate were considerable tracts of woods with thick underbrush, which abutted on the open fields. In the intricacies of the thickets the pot hunters, with a thorough knowledge of the nightly retreats of the quail, had carefully baited them, with the results recorded above. As has before been remarked in THE SUN, it will hardly be worth while to restock exhausted territory until a law uniform in all the States, is passed, absolutely prohibiting the sale of all trapped and snared game.

Mr. A. N. Cheney of Glens Falls gives information that the consignment of eggs of the brown trout, a gift from the *Fishing Gazette* to *Shooting and Fishing*, is expected to arrive on the Saale. These eggs have been consigned to Mr. Cheney and will be hatched at the Cold Springs harbor station, where the fry will remain until they are of a size to take the fly.

The brown and Loch Leven trout must not be confounded with the English sea trout—*Salmo trutta*—which is the king of them all. So far none of the eggs of this fish has been brought to the United States. The English sea trout are not at all the same as our brook trout, which have access to and from salt water. The former enter the rivers of Great Britain in great numbers and attain a weight of six or seven pounds, and single specimens have been taken up to twenty pounds. The habits of this trout are similar to those of the sea salmon. Mr. Pennell says of it that there is no fish that swims which will rise so boldly to the fly, or which, when hooked, shows for its size such indomitable pluck and determined courage. In fact, the *Salmo trutta* is the most game, if not, on the whole, the most beautiful fish known to Europe. A recent article in the *Fishing Gazette* in relation to this trout says it is not at all surprising that sea trout angling should be so swiftly growing in popular favor. All who have engaged in this delightful pursuit must admit that the sea trout is a fitting and most delightful opponent. When fresh run from the sea, in his primest condition, he is so silvered over with his bright armor that his spots are barely visible. Rejoicing in his strength, he broasts with determined energy rapids and falls, until he reaches the pools in the mountain streams. When he enters the streams if the conditions are favorable, he takes the fly most readily and works most gamely, rushing hither and thither, leaping and dashing about, now above, now under the surface of the water, with a startling vehemence that taxes the best skill of the angler.

In answer to an inquiry, one of the foremost anglers and most experienced observers in this State writes in relation to the prospect for trout and black bass fishing during the coming season: The remarkably open winter is conducive to excellent fishing throughout the State when the season opens. While trout do not hibernate like the black bass during cold weather, they do not feed to any extent when the temperature of the water falls below a certain point—an English authority puts it at 39° F.—and too often it is the case that the season opens with the trout in poor condition from the exhaustion of spawning and lack of time to recuperate upon food brought out by the warming of the water by the spring sun. Trout spawned in good season last autumn—severe cold even checks the act of spawning—and the fry are hatching out much earlier this spring. The open winter has kept fish food on the wing, so to speak, and the adult trout are even now in good condition. The fry, so soon as the umbilical sac is absorbed, will also find an abundance of feed upon which to thrive. Last week I examined a trout stream in Vermont for a good distance of its length, including its source, and found trout darting about as if it was June instead of February. The effect of the present open winter will be more apparent a few years hence than now. The waters have been high, there has been no snow to cause severe freshets to bring down mud to cover the spawning beds and to sweep the fry to destruction; consequently next year they will be spawning fish. Food is abundant for the old fish, and in May they will be lusty and strong and eager to take the fly. Black bass will be influenced by the open winter in like manner with trout, although to a less degree; therefore the coming season is one of unusual promise to the angler.

Mr. F. M. Dawson, a correspondent of THE SUN at Lynchburg, Va., writes in rather a pessimistic mood of the prospects for early fishing in the James River. The run of black bass usually begins there about March 15, but this year, on account of the mild weather, an earlier date is possible. On account of the continuous rains of May and June of last year and the vast quantity of land which covered the bottoms of the river, the prospects of an increased supply for this season are poor. The stock of black bass in the upper James is steadily diminishing. The State furnishes no protection whatever. All State laws on the subject have gone out of force or effect by limitation. Under these circumstances the fishing cannot be other than very indifferent.

The city of Montreal may be considered a central point from which to diverge for trout fishing in the province of Quebec. Canadians are inclined to boast of the opportunities which are offered by the Canadian Pacific Railroad as a pathway to superior angling; but such as care for a sure thing look rather to streams on the north shore of the St. Lawrence between Mont-eal and Quebec, and northward to the Laurentian Hills. In this region the angler may find lots of use for the best rod and tackle. Although the fish do not run very large, there are any number of half-pound and pound trout, with an occasional two-pounder. What they lack in size they make up in sterling fighting qualities. Eighty miles from Montreal is the chain of Mastigouche lakes, of which Lake Seymour is the usual headquarters for anglers. After leaving Lake Seymour the Mastigouche river descends about 1,600 feet in the first three miles. The expert angler may in this vicinity take as many trout as he can conveniently carry. Then, again, between Montreal and Quebec are the St. Maurice River and its tributaries, the Shawenegan and the Portneuf. All these are admirable trout waters, particularly in July, when the fish congregate near every cold spring which flows into the warmer water. From Quebec one may now by railway reach Lake St. John, the headwater of the Saguenay River, the home of the famed winanishe or land-locked salmon, high and lofty leapers which can do more fighting than any other Canadian fish. The country between Quebec and St. John Lake is all good fishing territory; it is even better than good, for the angler need never fear disappointment in casting the fly in any of its streams.

As an example of the growing vigilance of corporations in protecting for anglers waters from which they derive a revenue, that of the Lake Minnetonka Improvement Association of Minnesota is a notable instance. Heretofore fishing through the ice has played havoc with the fish in the lake. This year the association has engaged the services of a competent man, who, with the aid of his assistants, has entirely put an end to winter fishing.

Some five years since several private citizens placed in the Wissahicken Creek a quantity of California rainbow trout. To protect these the Park Commission of Philadelphia prohibited the taking of them for three years, which limit was afterward extended two years more. The fish have grown finely and multiplied, and now anglers have petitioned the Commission to allow the fishing of the stream for two days in the week.

There have been shipped from the Caledonia Fish Hatchery since Nov. 14 1,050,000 salmon trout eggs, 670,000 German or brown trout eggs, 10,000 brook trout eggs, 10,000 hybrids, half brook and half salmon trout eggs; 182,000 salmon trout, brown trout, and brook trout fry. All of these were distributed in various waters of the State. There still remain at the hatchery ready for distribution 4,500,000 salmon trout fry, 830,000 German or brown trout fry and eggs, 1,250,000 brook trout fry and eggs, and 1,340,000 eggs have been shipped to other hatcheries.

The *Courier-Journal* of Louisville, in a paragraph entitled "A hunter's paradise," draws an optimistic picture of the variety and abundance of game in Texas. The SUN, which is printed in a less florid latitude, gives below, from its correspondent in Texas, some reports covering a large extent of country, which only partly sustain the assertions of the writer in the *Courier-Journal*.

Glidden, Tex.—Game of all kinds is scarce in this part of the country.

Marion, Tex.—With the exception of a few quail, there is no game about here.

Luling, Tex.—Hunting is poor in this county.

Flatonia, Tex.—This section has ceased to be a sporting ground, unless you desire to have a game of poker, euchre, or seven-up.

High Hill, Tex.—There is hardly any game in this section.

Valley, Tex.—No game nearer than 80 or 100 miles. West or south of San Antonio there are less local hunters, and you may find plenty of deer, ducks, and geese.

Booden, Tex.—There is no game except a few birds here. Deer may be found at some distance, but they are wild and scarce.

Cebolo, Tex.—No game at all in this section.

Columbia, Tex.—We have plenty of ducks, deer, bear, prairie chickens, and quail. I killed three deer last week.

Colorado, Tex.—You can find any variety of game in this section in abundance, such as deer, antelope, turkeys, wildcats, panthers, bears, wolves, and birds of all kinds.

Big Springs, Tex.—Plenty antelope, prairie chickens, some deer and turkeys.

Boerne