

SOUTH BAY DUCK SHOOTING.

A Day in a "Battery," with Gun in Hand, Suspicious Birds.

There is a fascination to many sportsmen in shooting ducks from a South bay battery, though a more cramped and uncomfortable position cannot be found than that required by the gunner.

The battery consists of a box about eighteen inches deep and long enough to admit the outstretched body of a man. A rubber coat is the substitute for a mattress and a sandbag serves for the pillow.

To the man first trying the sport the situation is a peculiar one, and the sensation the same. All alone, surrounded by the little flock of decoys, and the waves pounding up with a swash against the guards to the box, he feels somewhat insecure.

Then the gunner stretches himself out again and waits for another flock. If the ducks are thick and not in a suspicious mood he will not have to remain so long before another set will be along and more blazing away is in order.

In the season about five batteries a day start out from Patochuge. The skipper always has a man to help him sail his catboat, and it is a race to secure the best ground. Often in making the best run across the bay the "cap'n" only gets in first to find the ground already seized by the ambitious huntsman who has gone out the night before, slept in the catboat and at sunrise is ready in his battery.

Brant and broadbills are the most abundant of the family in the Great South bay in spring. The broadbills are a plump duck, with short bills. They are swift flyers, and it is like shooting at a bundle of lead to draw on one as he comes by.

The recent experiments in employment of "cycles" of various sorts for army use in the spring military exercises in England seem to demonstrate the futility of expecting that class of machinery to be of much practical value for this service.

The extensive garnet ledges at Fort Wrangell are an inexhaustible source of beautiful and ornamental curiosities. The cropping of the ledge is about ten feet wide, standing perpendicularly and running northeast and southwest several miles in length; the depth of it no man has ever found out.

Railroad Building in New South Wales.

There was nothing else for it, so I took a pick and shovel and went to work on the railway embankment, yea, even as a sub-contractor; that is to say, the land was just being cleared and burnt off and my undertaking was to take so many claims, according to the nature of the ground, at a price varying from ten pence to fourteen pence per cubic yard;

The weather was as hot as tophet three heated, and the work for the time was abandoned. And a very lively trip we had of it down the fifty-five miles of back line. We had to carry water in our canvas water bags. Out of nine dogs we had with us, six died from the heat, and we ourselves were not too much alive at the finish.

Disadvantages of Color Blindness.

No man who has this defect should be a physician. He cannot tell whether his patient is flushed or pale. As was said of one such: "How should he know whether this is scarlet fever? He never saw scarlet in his life."

It is a cripple for the color blind to pursue any of these callings when their defect has been brought home to them, and there are other trades which it is foolish in them to follow, because they can never compete with those who have perfect vision.

How Servants Are Spoiled.

It is a well known fact that no French or English servant can find a place with her own country people after she has lived in an American family. Good servants are rare in every country, and they are so rare here that a lady, when she gets one, generally turns to spoiling her as the only means of keeping her.

Another consults the convenience of her cook always before inviting her guests. The demand to go out from one to three times a week is a claim never questioned by the most obtuse of mistresses, but the servant who asks this here would only have a holiday once a month in England and the privilege of going to church once every Sunday.

Garnet Ledges in Alaska.

The extensive garnet ledges at Fort Wrangell are an inexhaustible source of beautiful and ornamental curiosities. The cropping of the ledge is about ten feet wide, standing perpendicularly and running northeast and southwest several miles in length; the depth of it no man has ever found out.

The lapidaries, however, have failed to utilize them for any purpose whatever, except as a curio and to demonstrate the certainty of the unerring law of nature which governs every phenomenon. Every plane of the polygon is of the same form; every angle of the same degree, and every gem is the equal and like of its fellow.

The Languages of Birds.

Shall we never master the languages of beasts, as even the parrot and the stalling will in their own automatic way master portions of ours? To a certain extent this has been accomplished. A hunter tries to imitate by his "calls" the cries of the animals he is luring to their destruction, and is often successful in an exact ratio to his skill in this rough acquaintance with the speech of the lower animals.

Some songs, like some human languages, are more difficult than others. The spotted sandpiper's is much easier than that of the yellow leg, while the English snipe is a moody bird, which speaks only in its unmusical squeak when it is startled, and springs into flight. Hence a musician can readily write it down.

The Man and the Boy.

Boys are quick to learn, and you have only to get them interested in a thing to teach them how to do it. When you set them at a new piece of work, explain it to them. Tell them not only how to do this or that thing, but why you do it. Explain the reasons for it, and set them to thinking for themselves.

Too many men make their boys feel that they are of little or no account while they are boys. Lay a responsible boy on a boy, and he will meet it in a manly spirit. On no account ignore their disposition to investigate. Help them to understand things. Encourage them to know what they are about.

Anecdote of Mlle. Rachel.

When Rachel Felix, afterward the world renowned Mlle. Rachel, was a child and newly come to the Paris Conservatoire, she solicited M. Provost, a sociétaire of the Comédie Française, to give her private lessons in acting.

Long afterward the great tragedienne had her revenge. She was playing Hermione. The theatre was filled, and the genius and the thought of Paris united to do honor to their illustrious countrywoman. Hermione was called and recalled, and her Grecian tunic was filled with the flowers which enthusiastic admirers had launched at her.

The Scourge of Southern France.

The mistral is the northwest wind, which is the scourge of the south of France in winter and spring. The mountain ranges of the Cevennes being covered with snow, and the shores of the Mediterranean being many degrees warmer, the icy cold air rolls down the slopes of the mountains with terrific violence, and, invading Provence and Languedoc, destroys the vineyards, uproots trees, throws down buildings, and is so intensely dry that it withers every green thing.

The Fibers of Wool.

Why does not wool felt on the sheep's back? The answer is simple. Because all the fibers are lying one way. The serratures always point in the direction away from the root of the fiber, and thus they cannot fit into each other any more than two saw edges pointing the same way could interlock, or than two fir cones could stick together if both lay in the same direction.

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