

DAVENPORT PLEADS FOR ANIMALS TORTURED TO MAKE MAN'S PLEASURE

II. NOT HARD TO SHOOT TAME BIRDS.

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At least once a year we read in the papers cabled news of some member of royalty enjoying the slaughter of the beautiful pheasants which their game-keepers have so tenderly reared during the previous spring. I remember once, when some offshoot of a certain king's family came to see him, he celebrated the occasion by a big hunt among the young pheasants that had just gotten their fine plumage. The dispatch read something like this:

"The king and his guest, Prince So-and-So, killed 700 pheasants to-day, and were so tired that they remained for the night at the king's country estate, at So-and-So. The king enjoyed the day and outshot his guest. It was the first shoot of the season and, considering the time of the year, the birds flew very well. The king and his guest will shoot grouse to-morrow."

When you read a dispatch like that, you wonder if the fact that several hundred wounded birds crawl away to suffer for several days and finally die ever bothers the royal sports.

The cartoon above doesn't show royalty killing pheasants; it shows our home folks indulging in the slaughter. A king may be excused for killing pheas-

ants, for he has nothing else to do to keep him from stumbling into all sorts of ruts. But with any one else it's different. This man in the picture doesn't want birds for eating. He is suffering from indigestion, and possibly gout. Still, he is immensely pleased at the shot he has just made.

Is it his desire merely to kill? No, he has a curiosity to see a beautiful creature suddenly fall from the air.

A man in Oregon, whom I knew, was going on one occasion for a ten-mile drive, and some one remarked that he had better take a shotgun, as the young China pheasants were getting to be quite big. So he borrowed a gun. I went with him. We hadn't gone more than three miles when we saw, just over the fence, a fine covey of pheasants—father, mother and nine half-grown young ones.

The man climbed out of the carriage quietly and tiptoed alongside the fence to where the blackberry bushes were thicker. Then, resting his gun on the fence, he took good aim. But he didn't fire, and I asked him why not. He replied in a whisper that he was waiting till he could get more of the pheasants together. While he was waiting the male pheasant, as beautiful a specimen as you

ever saw, picked a grub from the ground and, with a low note, called some of his young near, and as they bunched around the proud and glittering pheasant cock the man with the gun prepared to pull the trigger. The next moment his dyspepsia gave him a twinge of pain, he paused, let the hammers down on his gun and walked back to the buggy, some of the pheasants meanwhile flying away and the rest running off across the field.

When I asked him why he didn't shoot, he said: "Why should I have killed and crippled that beautiful family? I saw they were enjoying life even more than we, as they were not bothered with dyspepsia, and I didn't believe I had any right to inflict wanton pain on such beautiful, harmless creatures."

Think of royalty, of others who can afford the expense, wanting to rear pheasants, and then, when the birds are just getting their full plumage, ordering the men that have fed them from their hands to scare them up so that the owners can shoot them. And the hunters often in poor health from overfeeding. Just what sport there is in that sort of outing and "farming" is something I cannot fathom.

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