

## THE BOER AND HIS RIFLE.

Differences Between the Weapon Used Now and That of Twenty Years Ago.

In the war of 1879-80 the Boers displayed deadly accuracy with the rifle, but their weapon then was very different from the arm used lately at Dundee. The rifle of 20 years ago was built on the lines of the British Martini. It was a hammerless arm of about nine pounds weight, with a 30-inch half-octagon barrel, and a shotgun butt stock. The caliber was .45, with a bullet weighing from 405 to 450 grains. The powder charge was 90 grains in a brass drawn cartridge case. The rifle was sighted up to 2,000 yards. Besides the usual stationary sight it had a reversible front—that is, a sight capable of being used as an ordinary front sight, and by a single motion, it was changed into a fine pinhead sight covered with a ring to keep it from being knocked off. On an occasion where particularly fine shooting was demanded this front globe was further covered with a thimble-shaped hood, shading it perfectly. The usual standing rear or fixed sights were on the barrel, while on the gun's grip was a turn-down peep that was regulated by a side screw to an elevation of 2,000 yards. The peep and globe were never used under 700 or 800 yards.

"I was very much interested in the Boer riflemen and their weapons," said Archibald Forbes, who was with Sir Evelyn Wood's column in South Africa in 1879-80. "They are marvelous rifle shots. They shoot their rifles and other game from the saddle, not apparently caring to get nearer to their quarry than 600 or 700 yards. Then they understand the currents of air, their effect upon the drift of a bullet, and can judge distance as accurately as it could be measured by a skilled engineer. They can hit an officer as far as they can discern his insignia of rank. Sir George W. Colley, the commander-in-chief, was killed at a distance of 1,400 yards at Majuba hill. We lost terribly in officers at the fight mentioned, and also at Laings nek and Bork's drift, from the deadly rifles of the sharpshooting Boers."

It is easy enough to see how the Boer became so expert with the rifle. History of one hundred and more years ago in the southwest and the west of this country is repeating itself on the South African veldts. Every old state of the American union except Louisiana was won from its red owners by the pioneer and his deadly rifle. For 240 years the Hollander who went to far-off South Africa and his descendants have fought wild beasts and wild men for the country they wanted. The Boer nation of South Africa, producing fine wheat and corn crops, is very fertile. It has a native grass that live stock thrives on, with a climate very much like that of the country from southwestern Kansas to New Mexico. But to obtain this country the Boer had first to conquer it. This made him a sharpshooter. One hundred and fifty years ago the Dutch farmer with his five-foot barrel roer, a smooth-bore gun, was a dead shot within the limitations of his weapon. Every Boer is a hunter. He has to be. His farm is large, anywhere from 15,000 to 25,000 acres. The country is sparsely settled. The lion and other smaller cats and the hyena were the natural enemies of his flocks and herds. They had to be kept down by the roer and later by the rifle. Kruger is himself said to have killed 250 lions, not to speak of panthers and hyenas. Then the ever-present danger of a native outbreak caused the solitary farmer or Boer to see to it that he had the best arms available for defense and offense.

The Boer weapon that did such execution the other day is the sporting model of the Mannlicher, a German arm, perhaps the most powerful weapon of its caliber and weight in the world. The military Mannlicher is used in the armies of Austria, Holland, Greece, Brazil, Chili, Peru and Roumania. The ideal Mannlicher is a sporting rifle known as the Haenel model. It is a beautiful finished arm, weighing about eight pounds, and costing in South Africa 200 German marks. The rifle barrel is 30 inches long, the carbine 24. It has a pistol grip and sling straps, and is hair-triggered. Its caliber is .30. This rifle has an extreme range of 4,500 yards, and a killing range of 4,000. At that distance, the bullet will go through two inches of solid ash, and nearly three of pine, quite enough force to kill, if the bullet struck vital part. At 20 yards it will shoot through 50 inches of pine. The bullet for war is full-mantled, with a fine outer skin of copper or nickel. That for game shooting is only half mantled, leaving the lead point exposed so that it opens back or mushrooms when it strikes. For deer, elk and bears there can be no better arm. Though the bullet makes but a small orifice where it enters, the expansion causes it to tear a hole as large as a man's finger when it makes its exit. Traveling at the rate of 2,000 feet a second the force of this bullet's blow is tremendous. There has been much discussion over the dum-dum bullet. It is a soft-pointed missile, but by no means so deadly or destructive as is the Haenel-Mannlicher bullet which the Boers are using. If it strikes at close range, or 1,000 yards or under, and does not flatten, the Mannlicher bullet bores a hole right through a bone without splintering. But when it upsets the shock is terrible. The bullet literally smashes the flesh and bone into fragments. It has been charged that the Boers are using the soft-pointed bullet in their deadly Haenel-Mannlichers.—N.Y. Sun.

## CORNISH MINERS.

Men Who Work Far Below the Depths of the Sea Encounter Many Dangers.

One of the most memorable sights in Cornwall is an ascent of miners witnessed from one of the platforms of the man engine. To the rhythmic beat of that strange machine, one by one the ocherous figures rise from the abyss, step off and on, singing as they file past. One is sure to find that it is a hymn these rough miners sing, and the chorus rises from below, and descends from above, blending with the beat of the shifting platform into an awe-inspiring melody.

That men who work far below the depths of the sea, in hourly danger from flood and fire-damp and dynamite, should have highly developed religious feeling is not to be wondered at. In each escape from death they distinctly see the finger of God.

The story of Verran is known all over Cornwall. He and his mate were working far below the surface, putting in blasts. Suddenly it was noticed that a "hole" was about to explode prematurely.

In that narrow drift, only one of the two men could be saved. Verran, without a moment's hesitation, sent his comrade to the surface and flung him self upon his knees in prayer, expecting death.

The explosion wrecked the drift. Huge rocks were flung up and down, entirely around the kneeling miner. They made an arch over his figure, protecting him from the flying and falling debris. He was found upon his knees, unable to move—but safe! To the mind of every Cornishman this was an interposition of providence. None of us can dispute their sublime belief.

In September, 1893, a "run" took place in one of the mines, and entombed eight men more than half a mile beneath the surface. When such an accident occurs rescue is almost hopeless, for the "run" is so sudden that there is rarely any escape. In this case a relief party, after 48 hours of terrible effort, heard a voice. It was that of a young man named Osborne.

"Who is with you?" the rescuers asked, eagerly.

In solemn, muffled tones the answer came back: "Nobody here but God and myself."

At intervals Osborne was heard to say this, and nothing more: "Praise the Lord!" Gradually his voice became fainter, and when the rescuers reached him, they found his body crushed almost to shapelessness.

It is worth going to the depths of the earth to find such beautiful acceptance of death. But the moment will come to every mortal when he must realize the young miner's words: "Nobody here but God and myself." Well for him if he has tested beforehand the worth of an Almighty companion, whom he can revere as patron and leaned upon as a friend.—Youth's Companion.

## ARIZONA SQUIRES' COURTS.

Pay Little Attention to Law or Justice—Some Illustrative Instances.

The most wonderful and fearful jurisprudence in the world, perhaps, is that of the squires' courts in Arizona. These courts are not generally presided over by men who have made a close study of the law, and some of their decisions would cause the blind goddess of justice to weep in very shame.

A justice who was new to the business of law proved himself equal to the emergency recently in Williams, Ariz. It was a case where a prisoner was brought before him charged with insanity. Several witness were examined, and it was conclusively proved that he was insane, having refused to drink when invited, and by other similar actions having convinced those who knew him that he had gone entirely wrong.

After a brief examination of the witness the justice leaned back in his chair, and with a look of profound wisdom on his face delivered himself of a decision as follows:

"Young man, it has been proved that you have done sundry things, which said things have led me and the rest of us to believe that you are wrong in the garret; therefore, I, with all the judicial power vested in me, do hereby fine you \$25 and costs. You may go now, but don't let this happen again."

Another instance that fittingly illustrates the fellow feeling of the average jury occurred not long ago.

A tough citizen, who had been absorbing a decoction of liquid that would corrode the armor plate of the Oregon, concluded that the town was getting too tame. He picked up a rifle that was standing behind one of the bars he had been patronizing freely and went out into the street. A colored woman chanced to be passing that way, and he proceeded to empty the contents of the rifle into her body; then calmly returned the rifle to the barkeeper and went to sleep.

He was arrested and tried before a jury in the district court. The jury discovered that the man was troubled with "alcoholic insanity" and he was promptly acquitted and turned loose.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

## ONE GIRL'S TALE OF WOE.

Plainly the fates were against her. "Alas!" she sighed, "it is impossible for me to be up to date."

"How so?" they asked.

"I cannot spell my name with a 'y,'" she answered. "There is Maybelle and Ethyl and Ellyn and Mayme and Haryette and Kayte and all the rest of them right in style, while I alone must remain old-fashioned. Why, oh, why was I named Maude?"

Doubtful Compliment.

Hostess—Oh, Mr. Borum, I'm so glad you have come!

Borum (flattered)—Are you, really? "Indeed I am. If you hadn't, there would have been 13 at table."—Chicago Evening News.

## PITH AND POINT.

A man can accomplish things at 20 that he would be ashamed to attempt at 40.—Chicago Daily News.

"My laundress must ride a wheel." "What do you mean?" "She's such a scrover."—Harvard Lampoon.

It really doesn't matter whether a woman thinks we are handsome if she can only feel assured we think her so.—Elliott's Magazine.

"Oh, George, elephants have dropped in price from \$10,000 each to \$1,500." "Now, Clara, I warn you, if you buy one you needn't expect me to board it."—Indianapolis Journal.

Servant—"A gentleman at the door wants to know if Mr. Brown lives here." Mr. Brown—"Tell him no; that Mr. Brown boards here. Mrs. Brown is probably the person he wishes to see."

—Boston Transcript.

Snobson (to inhabitant of out-of-way seaside resort)—"What sort of people do you get down here in the summer?"

Inhabitant—"Oh, all sorts, sur. There be fine people—an' common people, an' some just half and half like yourself, sur."

—Punch.

Mrs. Youngpop—"Dear, we must get one of those burglar alarms." Mr. Youngpop—"What for?" Mrs. Youngpop—"What do you suppose? You know if anyone tries to break into the house, it will go off." Mr. Youngpop—"Yes, and wake the baby. Not much!"—Philadelphia Press.

An Atchison woman whose ambition in life is to hold her tongue, locks herself up alone in her room whenever she is troubled about anything. In this way she cheats the sympathetic friend who coaxes her to "tell all your troubles to me, dear child," and saves herself the humiliation of telling too much.—Atchison Globe.

## ROMANS AND THEIR FISH.

Aristocratic Ponds That Cost Fortune to Build and Keep in Good Order.

Fish was in great demand at Rome, and incredible sums might be made by fish ponds or wasted on them. The humble fish pond of the people, supplied with rain water and replenished by fish taken out of rivers or lakes, brought in large returns. The aristocratic fish pond, furnished by Neptune and constructed with elaborate art, was more apt to empty pockets than to fill them. It cost a fortune to build it, to stock it and to feed the fish. One possessor of such a fish nursery made nearly \$200 a year by it, but it cost the whole profit to keep it up. They were expensive toys rather than serious investments. Varro once saw a sacred tank in Lydia containing fish which came to the edge at the sound of a flute, and which no one was allowed to touch; the fish of the Roman noble are, he says, nearly as sacred. Hortensius, who had spent a mint of money on his salt water fish tanks at Baia, was found out in buying all the fish for his table at Pozzuoli. He fed his fishes himself and was much more anxious lest they should be hungry than "I am about my asses, which bring me in a good profit." Varro scornfully remarks. Half the fishermen of the place were employed in catching small fish to give to the big ones, and salted fish was provided when the sea was too rough for the boats to go out. Hortensius would make you a present of a team of mules sooner than of a single one of his mullets. Lucullus gave carte blanche to his architect to ruin him if he could manage, by means of subterranean passages, to contrive a sort of tide in his tanks at Baiae, so as to keep the water cool in summer, when fishes in confinement suffer much from the heat at the Naples aquarium, a beautiful and wonderful place, surpassing the dreams even of a Roman fish maniac.

Varro speaks of some one who was more anxious about his sick fishes than about his sick slaves, but the story of the Roman "who fattened his lampreys on his slaves" belongs to after times. Like other stories which are told for the benefit of youth, it lacks exactitude. This seems to have been the truth: A millionaire freedman of the name of Pollio Vedius was entertaining Augustus at supper when a slave broke a crystal goblet; Pollio, enraged, ordered him to be thrown to the fishes; the slave appealed to the emperor, who asked his host to pardon him, but Pollio refused. Augustus then pardoned the man himself, and had all Pollio's crystal goblets broken and the fish pond filled up.—Contemporary Review.

Russia's Imperial Library.

Russia's imperial library dates back to the year 1700, and has to-day about 1,155,000 works in it, as well as over 26,000 manuscripts. This cannot be considered bad for a "brightened country."

And it is noteworthy that every facility is given for the use of these by the people of St. Petersburg, who use the library in no small measure. The czar and czarina take much interest in its increase and progress, and often give their advice and help in connection with it.—Albany Argus.

## DESTROYING Railroads.

A small contingent of Boers has realized the uselessness of merely tearing up a section of railway and throwing the rails into a stream—the usual Boer method of destroying a line. What they now do is to heat the center of a section to a white heat and carry the rail by its two cool ends to the nearest tree or telegraph pole, round which they twist it in such a way that it is absolutely impossible to use it again for railway purposes.—N.Y. Sun.

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