

told he was in bed. He showed Baron Nothomb's letter and insisted on seeing him. The letter was sent to the director-general's house, he was woke up, and a quarter of an hour later he wrote at the foot of the Baron's letter the order of transmission.

At the very hour on the 13th of July when the treaty of 1878 was signed at Berlin, a London telegram announced that the *Times* had published the preamble and sixty-four articles, with an English translation appended. "How could it have got the preamble yesterday morning, seeing that it was not drawn up?" asked Prince Bismarck of the Comte de St. Vallier. "Was it not you, Count, who gave it the treaty?"

By this time M. de St. Vallier had no reason for keeping the secret further, and he was bound to reply without hesitation. He therefore frankly related what had happened.

"And what did he say when you told him?" I asked M. de St. Vallier.

"Excuse me," replied the Count, smiling, "but he did not tell me to repeat it to you."

At Berlin the news of the publication of the treaty made a great stir, and an irritation not even yet allayed. People immediately set to work to discover from whom I got the treaty. I will relate some day how, five years afterward, the Chancellor tried to make me reveal it, but meanwhile the account I have just given is the first authentic narrative of how the treaty fell into my hands. Nothing more will ever be known, and if I have written thus much, it is that the public may know by what efforts, sacrifices, and difficulties, and at the cost of what anxiety, one sometimes succeeds in satisfying their thirst for knowing and forestalling events.

THE WESTERN OUTLOOK FOR SPORTSMEN.

BY FRANKLIN SATTERTHWAITE.

TO all who delight in the manly and invigorating recreations of the shooting field it must be a matter of great regret that among the framers of our Constitution there was no one so far-seeing as to incorporate a general law for the protection of the big game of this country. Had such provision existed—even during the past twenty years—we would not have witnessed the wanton extermination of the buffalo, and the threatened annihilation of the giant of the North American *Cervidæ*—the elk. It is only the observant and practical sportsman who for the past twenty-five years has spent months at a time in the haunts of the game of this country who can claim a right to discuss the Western game outlook intelligently. For the most part, the fashionable hunter's chief aim is to simply kill for the sake of killing, resorting to all manner of unworthy artifices to accomplish this end; to slaughter, even when his game cannot be utilized, that he may boast of numbers slain, and to wantonly destroy, that he may show on his return the trophies torn from his victims. At the present time the West is overrun yearly by trophy-hunters from all parts of the world. Unable, in the majority of cases,

from lack of endurance and skill and a knowledge of wood-craft, to procure their own antlers and pelts, they employ native hunters at high wages to lead them to the game, and, if they fail to hit the game, to do the killing for them. These men are induced, therefore, to slaughter vast quantities of game when it is not in season, when otherwise they would have reserved it for their own maintenance, and permitted the noble animals to perpetuate their kind. In this way thousands of heads of game are annually destroyed, but their number is comparatively small when compared with that killed by skin-hunters, ranchmen, and by reckless stockmen, who, just for the fun of it, never miss an opportunity to employ their repeating rifles at all kinds of game.

This unnecessary destruction of game could have been prevented, or at least checked, had adequate laws existed, and their enforcement been made a matter of national consideration. But on looking Westward we find that the great decrease of game other than the buffaloes and the elk is mainly consequent on the settlement of what but a short time ago were the natural homes of the animals. Within a few years the country between the Missis-

sippi and the Pacific coast has become traversed by railroads, and the grassy plains and fertile valleys on which countless herds of buffalo, elk, and antelope used to roam without molestation have become cattle ranges and stock farms. In fact the whole Western country may now be described as one huge stock ranch covered with cattle-men and settlers, before which the different varieties of big game are retiring.

Sixteen years back no man could go amiss in searching for game in the West. He had only to strike into the mountains, ten to one hundred miles from the railroad, to get all the hunting he wanted. The mountains were covered with elk and white and black tail deer, and the plains with antelope. At that time mountain-sheep were very numerous in the Bad Lands of the Missouri, Little Missouri, and Yellowstone. Bear, both grizzlies and black, were common in the mountain ranges, while buffaloes were plentiful in Montana, very abundant in Texas, and fairly numerous in northern Nebraska, Kansas, and the Indian Territory.

Even then the Union Pacific Railroad had cut the great buffalo herd in two. The skin-hunters had already begun, and in the course of two or three years they had exterminated the buffaloes in Kansas and Nebraska. The destruction was not completed in Texas and the Indian Territory until 1880, while the last important killing in Montana and Dakota was in 1883.

At the present time, outside of the National Park, where about two hundred and sixty buffaloes are now harbored, there are not over three hundred, probably not as many, left in the whole United States. The survivors of this magnificent race of animals are scattered in little bunches in several localities. There are about one hundred in Montana, or at least there were a year ago, some at the head of Dry Creek and the remainder at the head of Porcupine Creek. In Wyoming there are a few stragglers from the National Park, which, when chased, run back there for protection. In the mountains of Colorado last summer there were two bunches of mountain bison, one of twenty-five head and the other of eleven. These have probably been killed. There are none in Dakota, though eighteen months ago thirty were known to be there. It was estimated in 1887 that there were twenty-

seven in Nebraska, and about fifty more scattered in the western part of the Indian Territory and Kansas. Those in Nebraska have since been killed by the Sioux. Of the thousands that once inhabited Texas, only two small bunches remain. Thirty-two head are near the Ratons, in the northwestern part of the Panhandle, and eight in the sand-hills on the Staked Plains north of the Pecos River. These were seen and counted on the 1st of April of last year. This estimate of the remnant of a great race is believed to be essentially correct. It was obtained from reliable and well-informed persons throughout the West, and in part from personal observation during the past years.

It is often asked why an attempt has not been made to save the buffalo by domesticating it, and questioning whether the profits derived from its flesh, horns, and hide would not be much greater than from raising common cattle. The experiment has been tried by Mr. Charles Goodnight on his Paladura Cañon Range, in Armstrong County, Texas. Ten calves were roped by Mr. Goodnight in the spring of 1879, and raised. It was found that they were very troublesome and hard to handle. They bred more slowly than common cattle. Mr. Goodnight has ten domesticated buffaloes now on his ranch. He has endeavored to cross them with Hereford cattle, with but poor results. Out of hundreds of trials he succeeded in procuring but one hybrid. This, a cow-calf, was bred to a buffalo bull, and the result was a bull-calf which in appearance closely resembled a pure buffalo, thus proving the strength of the buffalo blood. Several of the domesticated herd, however, had issue. They were found to defend their young with great ferocity, and at no time has it been safe for strangers or women to go afoot among them. Mr. Goodnight is at present trying a series of experiments in buffalo breeding, but with poor success. Unless the domestic cow is reared with the buffalo they will not cross. The experiment has best succeeded with dun colored cows. I understand that Goodnight has sold his band, and that they finally passed to Mr. W. F. Cody.

While Mr. Goodnight's trials at breeding the buffalo were no doubt original with him, he is by no means the first to experiment in breeding the buffalo in a domesticated state. We are told by Mr. Audubon that as early as 1813 Mr. Robert

Wickliffe, of Kentucky, commenced some interesting experiments. He began breeding from two buffalo cows, from which he raised a small herd. The cows came from the upper Missouri River. At first they were confined in a separate park with some buffalo bulls, but later on they were all allowed to herd and feed with the common cattle; nor did their owner find his buffaloes more furious or wild than common cattle of the same age that grazed with them.

On getting possession of the tame buffalo bulls, Mr. Wickliffe endeavored to cross them as much as he could with common cows, which met with some success, but he found the common bulls always shy of buffalo cows, and unwilling to accede to the same experiment of crossing. From the domestic cow he had several half-breeds, one of which was a heifer. This he put with a domestic bull, and it produced a bull-calf. This when killed as a steer produced very fine beef. He bred from the same heifer several calves, and then, that the experiment might be perfect, he put one of them to a buffalo bull, and she produced a bull-calf, which was raised to be a very fine large animal, a three-quarter, half-quarter, and half-quarter of the common blood. After making these experiments he left them to propagate their breed themselves, so that he only had a few half-breeds, and they always proved the same, even by a buffalo bull. The full-blood was found not to be as large as the improved stock of common cattle, but as large as the ordinary cattle of the country.

The udder, or bag, of the buffalo is smaller than that of the common cow, and while the calves of both were allowed to run with their dams upon the same pasture, those of the buffalo were always the fattest. It was the experience of old hunters of that time that when a young buffalo calf was taken it required the milk of two common cows to raise it.

Unfortunately Mr. Wickliffe had no opportunity of testing the longevity of the buffalo, as all his died, either being killed by accident or because they were aged. He, however, raised some cows that at twenty years old were healthy and vigorous and capable of suckling their calves. It was his experience that a half-bred buffalo bull would not produce again, while a half-bred heifer was productive from either race, beyond the possibility of a doubt.

It is certainly interesting to compare the widely differing experience of Mr. Goodnight with a remnant of a most persecuted race, and that of Mr. Wickliffe's, fifty years ago, when the buffalo had few other enemies in the land than the Indian and the wolf.

In Mexico, it is said that a large band still exists on the big plains some seven hundred miles south of the northern frontier, and west of the Mexican Central Railroad. While hunting in the winter of 1887 in the Sierra Tierra Nate I learned from some Yaqui Indians that the herd was not a myth; that it was a very large one; and, owing to the almost inaccessible country in which it was located, that its numbers had not been depleted. How accurate these reports may be I do not know. In other respects the information given by the Yaquis regarding the country in which I was hunting, and the best game localities there, was found to be accurate. As it is well known that formerly there were large bands of buffaloes in Sonora and Chihuahua, they may have migrated southward. For some years past those who have been best informed have refrained from making known the exact localities where the few remaining bands of buffaloes could be found. They did this trusting that Congress would take steps to check their absolute extermination. This has not been done. The sportsman, therefore, who desires to belong to the party that "kills the last buffalo" should betake himself at once to the east side of the National Park, where, by skirting its edge, he may chance to get a shot. This is the best locality left in the United States to kill a buffalo.

Turning to the now doomed elk, we find that twenty years ago they were almost the most abundant game animal in the Western country, perhaps not even excepting the buffalo. In former times their range existed all over North America. Their horns have been discovered in the Adirondack region and in Lower Canada, while in northern California the elk in small numbers still are found. In 1870 it was very abundant in the valley of the Missouri River, and almost everywhere to the west of that stream. It is an easy animal to kill, and in consequence has been hunted to death. The sportsman in those days could work up to a band of elk, and fire, if he chose, a hundred shots at them. There are occasions when, being

shot at, the elk, instead of running away, merely jump about, while the repeaters are mowing their fellows down.

Their decrease in the last eight to ten years has been enormous; yet while the skin-hunters are partly to blame for this, the elk have of late years been killed mainly for their meat. As soon as the cold weather sets in, the settlers go out, each party with several wagons, to get their stock of winter meat. Three years ago one hundred and twenty wagon-loads of elk meat were brought out of Bate's Hole, south of the North Platte River. In the autumn of 1887 there was not one elk left in this district. What, however, has made the elk more scarce than anything else is the spread of the cattle ranches. The cattle go where the elk live, tramp down the grass and brush, and usurp their beds. Formerly it was not an uncommon sight to see five thousand elk in one scattering band. At that time they were very abundant in the Uinta, Wasatch, and Big Horn mountains in Wyoming, all through the mountains of Montana, and along the Missouri and Loup Fork River in Nebraska. Now the sportsman will find no elk to kill in the last-mentioned State, and will have to hunt hard to get a shot in either Montana or Wyoming.

The best and surest find for elk at this time is along the boundary between Idaho and Wyoming, south of the National Park, and in the Salmon River country in Idaho. There is probably no country in the world as rough to hunt in as that last mentioned. The mountains are very steep, rising from five to six thousand feet out of the valleys. The hunter has to be continually climbing up over the jagged rocks, or descending into the broken cañons. Even to the native hunter the travelling at best is very slow. It requires youth, stout legs, and good wind to follow the trails of the elk in this section. Yet when the hunter goes into these mountains in the morning there is a fair chance that he will find plenty of tracks, and come across game within a few hours. The sportsman, however, who travels in the West is continually meeting small parties of hunters who report elk plentiful at different places. Pinning these men down to particulars, he finds they were told so by "some one." The "some one," if discovered, usually simplifies matters by saying that he saw a small band there several months before.

While elk are not nearly as numerous as they used to be, there are thousands of them left in scattered bands throughout the West. One day in the summer of 1887 an old hunter, a friend of mine, riding south of the National Park, came across six bands of elk. To the visiting sportsman this would indicate that the country was full of game; but let him stop and think of the immense tract of country where the wapiti used to be abundant, and where to-day there is not one left.

In western America there are two bears that claim the sportsman's attention—the grizzly and the black. The former, hunters have endowed with many aliases, such as "silver-tip," "brown," "cinnamon," "bald-face," and "range" bear. These names do not mean anything, for the grizzly, like the dog, is of many colors. These two varieties of bears can, among other things, be distinguished by the formation of their claws. Those of the grizzly are longer on the fore than on the hind feet. The claws of the black bear are short, and are of the same length on all four feet. It is difficult to persuade the hunters of different sections that the "silver-tip," "cinnamon," "brown," "bald-face," and "range" bears are all from the same ancestry, and that the same animal is called by different names in different localities. But while hunters may vary in their nomenclature, they one and all agree that the full-grown grizzly is the gamest animal in the world, and the one to be most dreaded.

Never do these bears stand on their hind legs and pursue the hunter with terrible howls and roars, as is the orthodox way of describing their conflicts with human beings in the ghastly literature of the country. When not hit in the brain or spine, they put their head down, and with a swinging gallop rush upon the hunter. They usually receive their death wound without demonstration, sinking down and dying mute. The majority of grizzlies shot by our famous Eastern sportsmen are those that have first been trapped. They are killed when in this crippled condition, after dragging often for miles a large steel-trap with a huge trailing log attached.

The grizzly is found west of the Missouri River, and very rarely, if ever, east of it. They inhabit both the plains and mountains. A dozen years ago they could be seen almost anywhere in the mountain ranges, but since their destruction has been compassed by baiting and traps they

have become shy, and difficult to approach near enough for a certain killing shot. Bears are the most wary animals of all the big game in America. They go singly, and usually see the hunter before he catches a glimpse of them. They then cunningly slip away, and are difficult to trail. At this time they are fairly abundant in the mountains of Montana, a sure find being in Crazy Women's Mountain, north of the Northern Pacific Railroad. There is also a goodly number of bears distributed over the mountains of Idaho and Wyoming, some in southern California, scattered in the Sierra Madres and on the junction waters of the Santa Maria River in San Luis Obispo County. They are also numerous in the Rocky Mountains and Sierra Nevadas.

The black bear has a far wider range than the grizzly, but in the West it is confined mostly to the mountains, and rarely comes out on the prairies. It is well distributed, however, and is especially abundant in the timbered country, moving about to where the mast and berries are most plentiful. Black bears are very numerous in northern Montana. On the Pacific coast they outnumber the grizzlies, where both species feed on the salmon. The destruction of the grizzlies has been much greater than that of the black. Bears, though still abundant, are very difficult animals to hunt and kill in a sportsman-like way.

In these days the hardest game to hunt in America is the big-horn, or mountain-sheep. Twelve years ago they used to be wonderfully abundant in the Bad Lands of the Missouri and Yellowstone. When the first white men went there the sheep used to be so tame that they would stand and look at the intruders on their domain, and show no distrust at their approach. It was then a familiar sight, while drifting down the Missouri River in a skiff, to see these gallant-looking animals grouped on all points of the bluffs. Since then their decrease has been very great; not so much from being killed by hunters as from the settlement of the country. In rapid succession they have been forced to migrate from one place to another, and this has caused a majority of the sheep to retire into the high mountains of the remote Northwest, no one knows where. From the regions where they were but a short time ago so abundant they have gone forever. To-day they can be found

in small companies on the high rough peaks of the unsettled country bordering the National Park. The Salmon River country of Idaho is an excellent place to find them—and to see them get away. They are scattered throughout western Colorado on the rough peaks and in the almost inaccessible mountain regions. Their range extends into British Columbia and the North. The big-horn is now as vigilant and shy as it was once gentle. Its successful pursuit requires experience, untiring patience, and good marksmanship, and a steady head for heights. The flesh of the mountain-sheep is considered in delicacy of flavor the best that the game of the West affords.

The glory of killing a mountain-goat consists in having courage and endurance sufficient to climb to its home on the loftiest peaks in the almost inaccessible mountains. As for the animal itself, it is the most stupid animal that came out of the ark, while its meat is poor and its skin worthless. They have decreased in Washington and Oregon, where but a few years ago they were abundant. Their range extends to Alaska, while a few have been known to straggle as far south as Colorado. Like the mountain-sheep, their decrease is not from shooting, but from the settlement of the country. There are a few goats left in the Deer Lodge country in southern Montana, and in the Salmon River country in Idaho. Only a very few are killed every year, and the sportsman might "climb the mountains o'er" for a week and then not find this variety of game or get a shot.

Although the slaughter of antelopes for their hides has been enormous, there are places where they can be found in great abundance. In the summer season they are numerous in the North Park, Colorado, and along the Arkansas River, and back on the plains in the Indian Territory. In the winter they also collect along the line of the Union Pacific Railroad, being very abundant on the Laramie Plains in Wyoming. Despite the fact that the antelope is a very wary animal, and, owing to the character of the grounds which it inhabits, is very difficult to approach, they are daily diminishing very rapidly. The sportsman, therefore, who desires to kill this variety of game should as soon as possible anticipate its certain extermination.

The decrease of the three varieties of

deer—the “white-tail,” “black-tail,” and mule-deer—has been much less than the other varieties of Western big game. As yet the people have not made it a business to hunt them for either skins or meat. The meat-hunters are still devoting their attention to the killing of larger game; but as it decreases, the deers' turn will surely come. There are yet plenty of deer in the mountains of the West. The “white-tails” haunt the willowy stream bottoms, while the mule-deer, almost universally known as the “black-tail,” resorts to the high mountain lands in summer, and comes down to the rough foothills in the winter. The true black-tail deer is only found on the northern Pacific coast. Mule-deer are abundant enough along the upper Missouri River, but their centre of abundance is on the high dry plateau between the Rocky Mountains and the Sierra Nevada. The sportsman who wishes to shoot “white-tails” cannot go far wrong by hunting in any of the river-bottom countries of the West. Both the “white-tails” and mule-deer were very plentiful several years ago in the Black Hills of Dakota. In this section the first-named variety was more abundant than in any other part of the country. They have been shot off along the Platte River. Good shooting, however, can still be had along the Loup Fork.

Stragglers moose are to be met with in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, and northern California. Their range is limited, however, and they are becoming exterminated. Even in the British Possessions, this, the grandest of our native ruminants, is becoming more scarce as the conditions of its old homes are changed and its old feeding-grounds destroyed by the settlements of the white man.

Thus we see on all sides, and even in the most remote and inaccessible sections of our country, our “big game” diminishing with terrible rapidity. Our only hope therefore in preventing the thorough extermination of the game lies in the maintenance of the National Park and the protection of the animals that now harbor there. Until July, 1885, there was no pretence made to protect the game in the Park, but even with inadequate protection the animals that make their home there have increased in number, and now there are more buffaloes within the reservation than there were two or three years ago. Left undisturbed, the game in

the Park will breed and multiply, showing the necessity for its thorough protection, which can only be enforced by vigorous measures regulated by Congress.

It has long been known that the Indians are the only real preservers of big game. On their ranges, where the white man did not dare to go, game of all kinds was most abundant. For this reason the Sierra Madres in Mexico are still virgin of sportsmen and skin-hunters. The ranchmen as yet have not driven their cattle and sheep into the grassy cañons, and at this writing there is a wide section that has been but little shot over. There deer, bears, mountain-lions, antelope, and turkeys are in abundance; and the sportsman in search of novelty may pass several months in a country of which little is known. On one of the spurs of these mountains I found admirable sport in January last.

No idea can be formed of the annual destruction of big game from the skins that are brought into the trading post, for their number is very small compared to that of animals killed. Nor can any estimate be deduced from the statements of the sporting ammunition manufacturers, as it is impossible for them to decide what part of their production is actually employed in killing game. The rough figuring of the Winchester Repeating Arms Company, the largest manufacturers of cartridges in this country, is interesting, however. It is largely made up of guess-work, and must be accepted as such. This firm made last year 250,000,000 of all kinds of cartridges. Of this number it is thought two-thirds were sold in the West. Mr. T. G. Bennett, vice-president of the company, says: “From my own experience in an ordinary summer's shooting, about one-tenth of one per cent. of cartridges fired may be said to be used on game. The rest are expended in target practice.” On this very modest basis of figuring, about 167,000 cartridges of only one manufactory are shot annually at game, without taking into account that a great many hunters reload their empty shells once to ten times. Mr. M. Hartley, president of the Union Metallic Cartridge Company, from an experience of twenty years, expresses his opinion that a smaller quantity of large-sized cartridges for shooting large game is sold now than in former years, which he attributes to the decrease of the number of large game in this country. The United States Cartridge

Company, one of the three large cartridge manufacturers in this country, is unable to estimate what part of its production is used in the West.

More interesting, perhaps, to the majority of Eastern sportsmen is the small-game outlook in the Western country. We find that during the past fifteen years the two most popular birds of the gallinaceous order, the prairie-chicken and the quail, have increased their domain very materially. As settlements began to crop up, and Indian-corn and grain fields took the place of wild prairie lands, the sport-providing birds were found to follow in the wake of civilization. Where only the coyote and jack-rabbit had heretofore been found, the grouse and quail began to appear. As long as the sequence of mild winters followed their emigration to their new homes they increased in astonishing numbers. This was especially the case in Kansas. For some years after their appearance in this State all went well. Then came the terrible snows and blizzards of the winter of 1885 and 1886, and at one fell swoop the quail were buried in their winding-sheets. The snow melted, and the frozen birds were found by hundreds of thousands along the Osage-orange hedge-rows where they had sought shelter from the storms. The grouse fared somewhat better, for they appear to have anticipated the approach of the "northers," and to have invaded the Indian Territory, and to have passed across it into Texas. So extended was their southern migration that they infested the southern Rio Grande section, where hitherto they had never been seen, and where they have since remained to populate that portion of Texas. All this indicates that the best shooting of the future will be in the Southwest, especially on those lands which will be irrigated and cultivated for the production of grain. While a succession of mild winters will again occasion the restocking of Kansas, and propitious breeding seasons replenish the crop in Missouri and Iowa, the absolute certainty of good shooting in these States is anything but assured. The sportsman would do well, therefore, to look for his sport in the Indian Territory, Arkansas, and northern and northeastern Texas. The shooting in the Indian country for the next dozen years will be the cream of all the sport in this country.

Within the remembrance of many East-

ern sportsmen the prairie-chicken did not inhabit Nebraska, while now, owing to the cultivation of the cereals, the State has been fairly stocked. In those times the sharp-tailed grouse had its eastern limit in Michigan. As this State became settled it returned westward, the prairie-chicken following it into Minnesota and Nebraska. The range of the sharp-tailed grouse at this time is from the western limit of the range of the prairie-chicken on to the Pacific coast. It is very abundant in the Sierra Nevadas and other mountain ranges. It lies well to a dog, is bold on the wing, and is one of the most delicious of all the grouse family. The sage-hen, which is a very large bird, is found on the sage plains of the Rocky Mountain region. It is not often seen east of Sherman, on the line of the Union Pacific Railroad, and follows down the Missouri River as far as Wolf Point. While large bags of sage-hens are made every year, for the sport of shooting them over dogs, they are still very abundant.

Wild turkeys are still very numerous in the Indian Territory and Texas. Their decrease is marked in Arkansas, New Mexico, and Arizona, owing to the practice of killing the birds whenever an opportunity offers. There is no pretence made in the West to observe the breeding season of these magnificent birds; indeed, the native hunters avail themselves of the known habits of the birds at such time to compass their destruction.

In California and Oregon the greatest abundance of game of many varieties still exists. The ruffed grouse shooting in the last-named State is excellent, while the valley quail in southern California are on the increase. They are well distributed in the foot-hills of the Sierra Nevadas and Coast Range, where the sportsmen will see thousands of them in one day. The same may be said of the mountain quail of California, the Arizona quail, and the scaled quail of Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, and Mexico. All these varieties are very abundant, and increasing in their several localities, as is the gentle and talkative Massena quail of Mexico, which is found on the parched deserts and in the rocky cañons of all the mountain ranges.

The shooting in the West is so much controlled by the weather conditions, by early and late seasons, by droughts and floods, that it is impossible to anticipate the season's crop of game in any one sec-

tion. Wild-fowl and the waders, of all varieties, continue to swarm along the great rivers and their tributaries; yet, while geese and ducks are abundant early in the autumn in Dakota, and migrate in myriads to Texas, where they remain all winter, they are nowhere found as numerous as on the Pacific coast. In California, along the Sacramento River, in the San Joaquin Valley, and at Lake Tulare, the finest wild-fowl shooting is to be had, though it is not what it was some years ago.

UNTO THE LEAST OF THESE LITTLE ONES.

BY AMÉLIE RIVES.

I.

O CHILDREN'S eyes unchildlike! Children's eyes
That make pure, hallowed age seem young indeed—
Wan eyes that on drear horrors daily feed;
Learned deep in all that leaves us most unwise!
Poor wells, beneath whose troubled depths Truth lies,
Drowned, drowned, alas! So does my sad heart bleed
When I remember you; so does it plead
And strive within my breast—as one who cries
The torture of her first-born—that the day,
The long, bright day, seems thicker sown for me
With eyes of children than the heavens at night
With stars on stars. To watch you is to pray
That you may some day see as children see
When man, like God, hath said, "Let there be light."

II.

Dear Christ, Thou hadst Thy childhood ere Thy cross:
These, bearing first their cross, no childhood know,
But, aged with toil, through countless horrors grow
To age more horrible. Rough locks atoss
Above drink-reddened eyes, like Southern moss
That drops its tangles to the marsh below;
No standard dreamed or real by which to show
The piteous completeness of their loss;
No rest, no hope, no Christ; the cross alone
Borne on their backs by day, their bed by night,
Their ghastly plaything when they pause to weep,
Their threat of torture do they dare to moan:
A darkness ever dark across their light,
A weight that makes a waking of their sleep.

III.

Father, who countest such poor birds as fall,
Count Thou these children fallen from their place;
Lift and console them of Thy pity's grace,
And teach them that to suffer is not all;
Hedge them about with love as with a wall,
Give them in dreams the knowledge of Thy face,
And wipe away such stains as sin doth trace,
Sending deliverance when brave souls call.
Deliver them, O Lord, deliver them!—
These children—as Thy Son was once a child!
Make them even purer than before they fell,
Radiant in raiment clean from throat to hem;
For, Lord, till Thou hast cleansed these sin-defiled,
Of such the kingdom, not of heaven, but hell.