

FLETCHER HORACE

A.B.C. OF SNAP
SHOOTING

Horace Fletcher
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Содержание

PREFACE	5
SNAP SHOOTING DEFINED	6
RULES OF SAFETY	7
THE OUTFIT	8
RULES FOR PRACTICE	9
EXPLANATION	10
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	12

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Sporting, Exhibition, and Military

PREFACE

My object in publishing this little book is to explain a method of teaching Snap Shooting, by using the rifle in practice, which, by its economy, ease, quickness, and fascination, will recommend itself to any who are desirous of becoming skillful in the use of firearms.

It is true that by this method almost any one can make himself a good snap shot in a few weeks or months, according to the amount of practice indulged in, and that too at very small cost.

I make no claim for it, except that having received the original idea from Dr. Carver, I have demonstrated for myself and seen several friends demonstrate its practicability beyond a doubt.

I submit it for what it may be worth.

Horace Fletcher.

SNAP SHOOTING DEFINED

Snap shooting is the throwing of both the rear and front sights of a gun into line between the eye and the target and pulling the trigger, all in one motion, and is distinguished by that name from any shooting where the aim is leisurely taken, by bringing the piece to the shoulder, getting the sights in line, hunting the target and pulling the trigger when the aim is most steady.

ANOTHER DEFINITION

In snap shooting, the eye catches the target, and the attention is riveted on it, while the piece comes into line instinctively.

In other shooting, the attention is turned from the target to the gun and sights, and after getting them in line, is returned to the target.

The practice of snap shooting does not interfere with aiming at leisure, but aiming at leisure unfits one for snap shooting.

When the face is in danger, the hand comes before it instinctively to protect it; and in the same manner when a target appears the gun should as instinctively and quickly find its place in line between it and the eyes.

This is necessary to the perfect *snap shot*.

RULES OF SAFETY

The following rules of safety should *never* be disregarded:

1. On taking a firearm in your hands, see for yourself if it be loaded or not, and *never* take any one's word for it.
2. Keep the muzzle of a loaded gun above the level of the eye, and hold a pistol at a corresponding angle.
3. Handle *all* firearms as if loaded.

Note. —*The Numbers scattered through "The Outfit," and "Rules of Practice," refer to paragraphs further on, correspondingly numbered, which are explanatory of terms used, and give the reasons for the suggestions offered.*

This plan relieves the pith of the book from any confusing element.

THE OUTFIT

Three[1] persons purchase a .22[3] calibre rifle,[2] having a shot-gun[4] stock, and buck-horn[5] or clover-leaf rear sight, a supply of short cartridges,[6] and a Fletcher bell-ball.[7]

The place for practice should be open[8] ground, or in front of a bulkhead,[9] at least twenty-five feet in height, and three soft pine boards in thickness.

RULES FOR PRACTICE

1. Each should take his turn in the positions of Firer, Tosser, and Scorer.[10]
 2. The Tosser should stand ten[11] feet distant from the Firer, with his side[12] to him, and toss the bell-ball about fifteen[13] feet high, and so that it will fall on soft ground,[15] two or three[14] feet in front of where he (the Tosser) is standing.
 3. The Firer should disencumber his shoulders of anything that in any way interferes with their free action, by removing his coat, vest and suspenders, and stand firmly[16] on his feet, holding the rifle with the stock below his right[17] elbow, the muzzle above the level of the eye,[18] and his left hand clasping the barrel as far out[19] as it can reach with ease when the rifle is brought to the shoulder in aiming.
 4. The instant[20] the ball is tossed, the rifle should be brought to the shoulder with as quick a motion as possible, regardless of the speed the ball seems to have.
 5. When the ball has reached its greatest[21] elevation, just see it full[22] over the line of both[23] sights and pull the trigger.[24]
 6. The rifle should not be allowed to get[25] foul, but cleaned before any burned powder has accumulated in the grooves.[26]
 7. Practice at balls thrown straight[27] up to a uniform height should continue till tolerable proficiency, say the average hitting of 80 per cent., has been attained, when the direction should be changed gradually to that of a curve, which lengthened out sufficiently constitutes the Cross-shot.[28]
 8. The Drop-shot is the following of a ball, from its summit down to within one or two[29] feet of the ground and hitting it there.
 9. The Incoming-shot[30] is at a ball thrown at the firer from a distance of say 50 feet, and is the easiest of all; but unless thrown so as to go above his head, and caught by him in passing over, is not recommended, owing to the danger to the tosser. If a trap be used it is safe and good practice.
 10. The Trap-shot is the most difficult, requires the quickest[31] action, and is consequently the very best practice, and is the hitting of balls thrown straight away from the firer by a spring-trap, or by hand, so that they fall not more than twenty-five feet distant.
 11. The above are the cardinal directions, but any variety of shots can be made at will after these have been mastered.
 12. Shooting at a bell-ball, suspended by a wire or cord, which can be done indoors, is excellent practice. The ball is made to swing, and as each hit gives it a new motion a variety of shots can be tried.
 13. Balls *only*[32] should be used as flying targets, for the reason that a bullet may pass very near the center of an irregularly-shaped object, and not hit it, the miss conveying an erroneous impression of the aim.
 14. Quickness[31] of action is *most* important in snap shooting, not only in firing but in loading.
 15. Reload your piece immediately after discharging it, and be ready to fire again. That you may accustom yourself to be quick in all your movements, try how many[33] times you can fire, reload, and hit a bell-ball thrown up perpendicularly in a given time, say one or two minutes.
- Note. —*100 consecutive misses at first will not indicate an inability to learn to hit. Perseverance and attention to the suggestions here given will make one a good snap shot in less time than may at first seem possible.*

EXPLANATION

1. Economy facilitates practice by removing the dread of expense which takes the keen edge off of any sport and discourages it.

The expense of an outfit, consisting of a rifle, one thousand cartridges, and a bell-ball is less than twenty-five dollars, which divided between three persons is very light.

Three persons can work together to advantage by taking the positions of firer, tosser and scorer, and benefit by friendly competition.

2. The rifle should be the elementary arm used in practice, and be handled with success on all the shots before the shot-gun is taken up.

True impressions only should be given the learner, which the rifle does, and the shot-gun does not, give.

Occasionally, the scattering of shot may allow an object to drop without being hit, when the gun has been held right on it, and again, a stray shot may hit, when the aim has been high, low, or to one side, in both of which cases the impressions given the firer are erroneous.

With the rifle this cannot occur, and every time one makes a hit he has received a true impression of the position the sights should hold relative to the bell.

3. Rifles of .22 calibre are the best to use in practice, for several reasons:

1. The expense of shooting them is very light, owing to the low cost of the cartridges.

2. Because there is no perceptible recoil, which is an important consideration, inasmuch as the *flinching* which a beginner does involuntarily, if he stand behind a kicking rifle at first, is very hard to overcome; but which he avoids when he has learned to hold his gun firm against his shoulder and to brace against it.

3. The rifle does not heat quickly, and in cool weather can be fired one hundred times without becoming hot. The reasons for this are the thickness of the barrel, and the small quantity of powder burned in each cartridge.

4. It has a light report, scarcely louder than the cracking of a whip, and can be used anywhere without being a nuisance on that account. In hunting birds or squirrels in a wood, this advantage is considerable, because the report does not frighten the game any more than the breaking of a twig, and one can move about within a limited space, shooting many times at the same game, if not successful in hitting it at first, whereas a noisy gun would clear the neighborhood after each discharge.

5. These rifles are a desirable weight, being not lighter than about seven pounds, and shoot accurately at ranges of two hundred and three hundred yards. It is true that light bullets are more easily affected by the wind than heavy, but the ranges are generally less than one hundred yards, and in any case it is easy to make allowance.

4. It used to be the fashion to make rifle stocks with projecting points to fit around the shoulder, which was all right for target practice, but in snap shooting there should be nothing to catch the sleeve, and consequently the shot-gun stock is recommended.

In case your rifle has the points, have the upper one, at least, cut off.

The lower one is no objection, if the stock has sufficient drop for your length of neck, but if it has not, the catching at the shoulder will necessitate your ducking your head, which is awkward and detrimental to rapid work.

5. The Buckhorn and Clover Leaf rear sights are shaped as their names would indicate, and the front sight can be brought down into them quicker and easier than into others, and there is less

danger of canting the rifle to one side. The buckhorn is preferable to the clover leaf, and both are infinitely better than the flat sight, which has only a niche in it. Any gunsmith can change the sights to suit, or you can put them in yourself if you have them.

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

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