

# TEACHING AMERICAN SCHOOLBOYS TO SHOOT STRAIGHT



ST. JOHN'S RIFLE CLUB, AFFILIATED ORGANIZATION OF THE NATIONAL RIFLE ASSOCIATION, ST. JOHN'S SCHOOL, MANLIUS, N.Y.

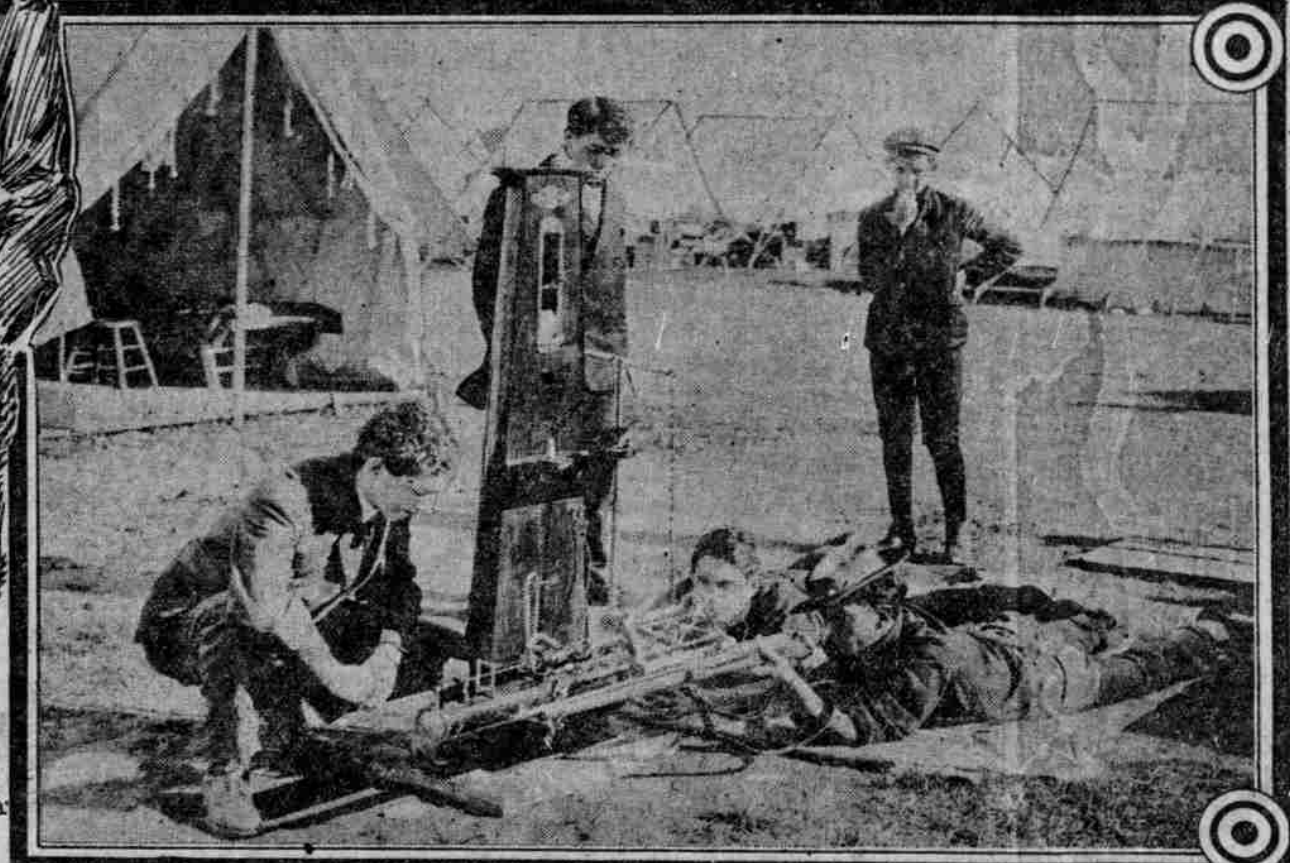
### Big Start Made at Creating a Nation of Skilled Marksmen for Future Volunteer Armies



A NEW YORK SCHOOLBOY COMPETITION WITH THE SUB-TARGET GUN



CULVER IND. MILITARY ACADEMY RIFLE CLUB, PRACTICING ON THE RANGE



TEACHING BOYS HOW TO SHOOT MATHEMATICALLY, AT SEAGIRT N.J.

BY REGINALD FOSTER.

WE should establish shooting galleries in all the large public and military schools; we should maintain national target ranges in different parts of the country; and we should in every way encourage the formation of rifle clubs everywhere in the land.

So wrote President Roosevelt in his message to Congress a year ago. Today his recommendations are bearing fruit. The schoolboys of the country are really learning how to use a military rifle—some 100,000 of them are daily practicing how to shoot—to shoot to kill.

It is no air rifle or shotgun practice, either. The boys are being taught to use the Krag-Jorgensen and the new Springfield, the arm of the regular soldier in battle. Experienced shots are their instructors and all the theory and practice of marksmanship is taught, not only at the targets in the field, but with books and machines which teach the novice his errors in wind, elevation and holding.

Schoolboys all over the country have been shooting in New York City throughout the holidays in all sorts of contests for bronze trophies, cups, revolvers, rifles and other things dear to the youthful heart. Young men from Yale, Harvard, Columbia, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and George Washington University have been shooting for a shield of bronze and oak, following the President's recommendations.

They came from many of the big cities, from public schools and private schools and military academies everywhere. A representative of the War Department opened the match with officers of the regular Army and the National Guard as scorers and referees.

It is a very business-like proposition—this teaching the American boy to shoot straight.

Others who have joined and contributed to the movement are Judge Gary, Vice-President of the United States Steel Corporation; Seth Low, ex-Mayor of New York; Gen. Charles F. Roe, commanding the National Guard of the Empire State; Clarence H. Mackay, president of the Postal Telegraph Company; Mortimer L. Schiff, the Wall Street banker, and many other men of prominence.

The boys who came to shoot were from pretty much all the Atlantic section of the country.

Now President Roosevelt has accepted the honorary vice-presidency of the Association. He has announced his intention of writing a letter to the boy who attains the greatest skill in the matches during the year. What American boy wouldn't like at such a ball—a letter from the President?

Ambrose Scharenberg, of the Manual Training High School, Brooklyn, won the President's first letter. He made a perfect score with the sub-target gun machine; 65 out of a possible 70 in the individual match on the Creedmoor Range; and 45 points out of 50 in the team match. His aggregate score was 115 for the three competitions.

And this is the letter the lucky boy received from President Roosevelt:

"My Dear Young Friend—I heartily congratulate you upon being declared by the Public Schools Athletic League to stand first in rifle shooting among all the boys of the High School of New York City who have tried during the last year.

"Any grown man who regards himself as a crack rifle shot would be proud of such a score. Your skill is a credit to you, and also to your principal, your teachers and all connected with the Manual Training School which you attend, and I congratulate them all.

"I am especially glad with what the Public Schools Athletic League has done in establishing instruction in rifle shooting in the United States. It is a very smart thing to do. In time of war it must depend for defense upon hasty levies of volunteers, and it is a prime necessity that the volunteer should already know how to shoot if he is to be of value as a soldier. In no modern war would it be possible effectively to train men to shoot during the brief period of preparation before the army takes the field. In consequence, the training must come in advance and the graduates from our schools and colleges should be thus trained so as to be good shots with the military rifle.

"When so trained they constitute a great addition to our national strength and great assurance for the peace of the country.

"With all good wishes, believe me,

"Sincerely yours,

"THEODORE ROOSEVELT."

These young marksmen are divided into two classes—those who are attending universities and colleges which give degrees, and those who are in schools. A code has been drawn up which has the approval of the National Board for the Promotion of Rifle Practice and the Secretary of War.

The plan now is to give medals to such clubs to be competed for by their members. A course of rifle shooting, both indoors and outdoors, has been arranged. Students who shoot through these courses receive a Junior marksmanship decoration, and their names are enrolled at Washington for use in time of war.

Approved by Roosevelt.

This schoolboy shooting movement has been inaugurated in New York. There the first indoor tournament was held at the Grand Central Palace, from December 23 to January 4. It had the sanction and the approval of President Roosevelt, who at once joined the association as a life member.

The majority of his Cabinet followed

of 25 in five shots lying down, received the "Junior Marksmanship" decoration. Other prizes were rifles presented by wealthy members of the association.

But this is only the beginning.

The movement is being extended rapidly all over the country. Schools may now borrow the death-dealing Krag—weapons that are sighted for shooting to hit at 1400 yards and have killing power at two miles.

Then there is the new sub-target machine, which teaches boys how to shoot without firing powder or bullet. These have already been installed in many of the public schools of New York and other cities. The personal equation is what the instructor wishes to set out. By the aid of this machine he finds it readily and can correct errors without difficulty. Boys who have never fired a gun loaded with powder and ball, after a few weeks' instruction, can go out into the field and hit the target with consummate ease.

This machine consists of an upright standard having at the top a horizontal rod in front of which is placed a miniature target about the size of a visiting card. To this is attached the ordinary Krag military rifle, which while capable of being freely moved, is so adjusted that when aim is taken with the rifle at a regulation target the very he is to follow the movement of the rod on the miniature target in the exact relative place where the target aimed at would have been hit if the gun had been loaded.

Furthermore, the instructor is able to see just how the boy holds the rifle—whether he pulls it off the target when he snaps the trigger or whether he is unable to sight directly into the bullseye. Standing alongside the boy he is to follow the movement of the rod on the miniature target to see the manner in which he is aiming, and to correct his defects in holding his rifle, which is impossible to do when a loaded gun is being used.

Teaching How to Shoot to Kill.

Gradually it is planned to extend this new idea of teaching boys how to shoot to hit all over the country. President Roosevelt is heart and soul in it and so are many prominent men of all parties. S. R. Duggan, the New York millionaire, has presented six schools of New York alone with complete shooting outfits, and other New Yorkers, Capt. G. W. Corwin, Inspector Warren Cruikshank, Col. Robert B. Woodward, Borough President Bird S. Cole, and Horace J. Morse have lifted out other schools. William Whitney, son of the late William C. Whitney, formerly Secretary of the Navy and a multi-millionaire, has presented the value of an education and training in rifle practice of the Seventy-first Regiment, N. G. N. Y., one of the best shots in the United States, is general instructor for the schoolboys.

In each school he selects a teacher who is interested as superintendent of shooting. In each class four boys who show proficiency are made sergeant-instructors.

At first the boy who made 40 out of a possible 50 was enrolled as a marksman. But so fast did the boys improve that it was found necessary to raise the standard. It was increased to 42, later it was 43, and now it is 44.

Today there is being placed in the hands of every schoolboy in New York and wherever else the schools are taking up President Roosevelt's idea, a manual of instruction in shooting. Windage, elevation, atmosphere, range and a thousand other little things

are taught the boys. The mathematics of shooting is explained; a general knowledge of how to shoot to hit and to kill imparted.

There are 1000 children in the schools of New York, practically the population of St. Louis, the fourth city in the Union. Of these 300,000 are boys. It is the aim of the National Rifle Association to teach everyone of them to shoot straight, and eventually extend the system from the East, where it is becoming the recognized thing, to the West and South.

To Insure Peace.

Said Lieutenant A. S. Jones, secretary of the association:

"Thinking men appreciate the fact that nations insure respect and confidence only in proportion to the measure of their strength. The commercial nation, relying in wealth alone and the good will of other powers to preserve it from intervention in its affairs, while lacking the military strength to protect its citizens, and to preserve the honor and dignity of the commonwealth, falls in its duty and leaves itself open as a prey to other nations composed of an aggressive people, desirous of increasing or extending their power, by not fostering a military spirit among the young men and boys of the nation. It is not to be avoided, because all men and nations are not peaceful or willing to submit themselves always to the dictates of reason and conscience. It is wise and necessary, therefore, to follow the advice of Washington—"In time of peace, prepare for war."

It may be assumed that 40 or 70 percent of the aggressive strength of a large body of volunteers would be under the age of 25; consequently military training should begin with the youths. They are really the backbone of a nation. In cities where boys often commence business careers at the age of 13 or 14, it is often hard for them to get the time, even if they desired, to practice with small arms; therefore, if they get any considerable measure of ground work for our scheme of rifle practice, we must commence with boys at school, and offer every encouragement which will conduce to that end. It is therefore essential, wherever possible, indoor ranges be provided in public schools and other institutions, and that a special endeavor be made to promote the use of private and other ranges by schools.

Military Science Voluntary.

"In this country, where all military service, including that in the regular Army, is in itself voluntary, the military training and education of all its men is more important than in any other country. In other nations there is a compulsory military service for every able-bodied citizen, and in case of conflict, we must rely on voluntary enrollments, meet the soldiers of those countries trained for service in the field, with soldiers equally as good or better. We may therefore consider the value of an education and training in rifle shooting not only to the citizen himself as an individual, and its value to the state, but as to its actual necessity for the safety and welfare of the Nation.

And General George W. Wingate, one of the foremost military experts in the United States, follows this up with:

"While there is no difficulty in case of war in getting all the volunteers the country requires and they can be taught a reasonable amount of drill in a few weeks, it takes a long time to teach them to shoot. Unless they can

shoot accurately they are of little value as soldiers.

"It, however, the boys who are graduating from our schools in the different states should be skilled riflemen, the country can rest content with a small standing army, knowing that in case of war it can put in the field at short notice an army of volunteers whose skill in rifle shooting will enable them to be fully the equal of any army which may be brought against them. The system is therefore a great factor for national peace."

In the United States today there are 11,000,000 schoolboys. Work will not stop in teaching them to shoot until everyone can shoot.

## THE BRITON AS A MARKSMAN

Comment on Killing of Deer as a Popular Sport.

London Correspondent in Arms and the Man.

At least a decade the rents or deer forests have been decreasing. At the same time grouse moors have certainly retained their value, which in some cases have gradually increased. This remark has reference to the dog moors of the Highlands; there the exclusively driving grouse moors are too scarce as yet to have found a fixed value.

Forest owners who look to the rents of their deer ground for income are not entirely of one opinion as to the causes of the drop in the rents, nor do they all agree as to the methods to be followed to change the tendency of values. Probably the chief cause of shortness of money for deer stalking is to be found in the poor specimens of antler growth in most Scotch forest deer. There are various methods by which the heads can be, and are, improved, but all of them are calculated to depreciate the sentiment of romance and wildness which had so much effect in making the killing of deer popular as a sport.

Although the deer at one time all belonged to the Kings of Scotland, and great drives, which lasted for days together, collected the beasts for the pleasure of the court, as in the time of Queen Mary, the pursuit of deer by gentlemen did not last over the period of Stuart trouble, when the pursuit of men was considered to be more suitable for a young laird who took to the pursuit of deer with the gun, was remunerated with, as his occupation was held to be unfitting for a gentleman, and because the procuring of meat should be left to the servants.

Also, we are told by Boswell, that Mr. Grant, of Glenmoriston, allowed anybody to go after his deer, in the full belief that nobody could do them much harm. As the occurred only 25 years before the opening of the 19th century, it may be affirmed that the fashion for deer stalking is no more than a century old. Scotch deer stalking ought to have crept the fashion, but did not, and taken in it by the late Queen and Prince Albert, together with the brush of Sir Edward Landseer, really set the fashion. It is now, and when the deer-faith at its height has lasted less than 60 years, and it cannot be assumed that there is anything inseparably associated with the sport that insures for it a continuance of favor. Its apex of popularity may be said to have been about 25 years ago, when the rifle was not the thing of precision it is now, and when the deer-faith was often called in to finish off the blunders of the shooter. Truly, the deer without the deerhound would have appeared unprofitable to Sir Edward Landseer, and not practical besides, since his own shooting at deer 90 yards away is recorded to have been anything but certain, and on some occasions to have required the services of the brace of hounds to course and to bring to bay the unwounded or "cold" deer. The gun in his hands was of as little use as the crossbow when a law of Queen Mary forbade the shooting of deer under pain of death; but we are not to suppose that this law was honored by the keeping when the deer were driven and coursed, and probably shot at when they could be

hit, for the detection of the fair Queen in the forest of Athole.

The decadence of prices has set in with a greater quantity of deer with the abolition of the deerhound, with the coming of the small-bore, high-velocity rifle, with the hand feeding of the deer in winter, with the crossing of the wild deer with park stags, and with the subdivision of forests.

The abolition of the deerhound was necessary in the reduced forests. The deer was the shooter's only so long as they were upon his ground, and the deerhound had a nasty way of driving them off. Consequently, a collie in a string is now preferable to a pair of deerhounds coursing down the wounded beast, perhaps through the sanctuary, and may be away into the next forest, to spoil the presence of their feeder, it is apt to spool deer stalkers in the making—those who have not tasted blood and do not know the various woods of the wild deer. These animals, therefore, are tame in the presence of their feeder, it is apt to spool deer stalkers in the making—those who have not tasted blood and do not know the various woods of the wild deer.

Each of these modern phases of the forest detracts only a little, perhaps, from the sentiment of sport. When, however, they are added to, by the crossing of wild deer with park stags, sentiment is subjected to a severer strain than ever before. There is a school of Highland sportsmen and deer ground-owners who are hostile to the introduction of new blood. What they say is that if the type of the wild deer's head is to be changed, if the fashion is set for something resembling a park deer's antlers, then the reason d'être of the Highland trophy is gone, for if it is to be judged as a park or German, or a Hungarian stag, the Highlands will not produce even a fair imitation.

The soul of the mountain is not good enough to grow the necessary vegetation. It is nothing to the point to say truthfully that some park deer cannot be distinguished from the wild Highlanders, even by the foresters themselves. The true Highland wild head never approaches the type of the best park antlers, and it is these, not the worst, that the other school desires to see in the Scotch forests. Foresters are in this dilemma: If they remain content with their little stags and dwarf antlers, nobody will pay high rents; if, on the contrary they cross, and get heavy heads, then it is said, as it was said of Lord Burton's 20-pointer in 1893, that the beasts that bear the better antlers are park deer. Some years before Lord Burton had received a present of Stoke park deer that had been purchased by the late Lord

Bochester at the breakup of that remarkable herd, so that there might have been some foundation for the statement. All the same, it is to be noted that deer stalkers were generally anxious to possess themselves of a Glenquoich head. Nevertheless that does not dispose of the fact that there is the other view—that which ranks Highland type of head before massiveness and points, beam and span. Unquestionably, the problem is a difficult one, because it is these same qualities that the Highlanders admire up to a certain point. That point is not the same for any two individuals, but is passed when the antlers suggest park blood. In Germany, where they have an annual that not only is the best of the year, there is kept a strict dividing line between the wild and the park trophies.

There, too, they speak of breeders of deer in the same sense as we mention breeders of shorthorns. Artificial horn-producing foods are used by some of these breeders, who are as proud of a place in the Berlin show as an Englishman is of winning the Derby. What they depend upon are food and freaks, and artificial manners to create the food. Food alone always does something to improve stags' heads, but that is not enough to rely upon, especially in the Highlands, where food is never as rich in nitrogen and bone-forming matter as that of the parks of England.

There is one park in particular where both food and antler freaks occur. This is Warnham Court, in Sussex. One of the first of the freaks there occurred shortly after the park was first annually manured with bone dust, and it is quite possible that not only was the vegetation made rich in antler-forming matter, but that the deer actually consumed the bone dust itself. Be that as it may, from a very ordinary herd of deer, that of Warnham Court jumped into the first rank, with the rest nowhere, on mere weight of antler.

A Servitor's Soliloquy.

Washington Stag.

I wait upon de white folks, an' I sho' admire dem lookin'.

Dey's all dressed up like people dat you sees in picture books.

Dey sits down to de table an' mos' all de folks dey kin' o' needs.

Dey's talkin' 'bout de country an' its different kind o' needs.

I gets so much excited dat I speeks to walk 'em 'round.

To dem de various troubles of dis world all sweep away.

But now 'a leazrin' better. When dem white folks stabs to dis.

Dar 'em 'nuffin' doin', but de conversation's 'em!

It's 'er 'like havin' music when you listen to dat talk—

I purty near stabs dancin', 'cause I feels too good to walk.

Commissin' 'em 'nuffin' doin', as sweet as any song.

It keeps on gettin' finer till de coffee comes along.

De way dey smites de sinners an' rewards dem 'bout de world.

It scum 'like we is livin' in de sho' nuff promise land.

De world will be de same nex' day, 'bout eight or nine.

Dar 'em 'nuffin' doin', but de conversation's 'em.

A syndicate has been formed for the purpose of making cars out of London for the use of motor cars.