

WASC 2086

'Gunpowder'
Extract from
'Supplement to
the Rural Sports'
Rev. W. B. Daniel
1813



Painted by G. Englehart

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Ornamental

S. P. O. R. T. S.



The Rev. W^m B. Daniel,

Il y a encore de quoi glaner.

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1813.

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Supplement

TO THE

Rural Sports.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. DAVISON, LOMBARD-STREET, WHITEFRIARS.

1813.

TO THE MOST HONOURABLE,

The Marquis of Blandford,

BARON **Spencer**, of *Wormleighton*, in
WARWICKSHIRE, &c. &c.

MY LORD,

I address to your Lordship, FRAGMENTS, hitherto, widely diffused. They are for the most Part connected, with the NATURAL HISTORY, accompanied with ANECDOTES, of the different ANIMALS, that are Objects, of the SPORTSMAN'S Pursuit. Should your Lordship receive Information, or Amusement, from them, it will be a real Pleasure, to

Your Lordship's

Most obliged,

and

Obedient Servant,

W. B. DANIEL.

September, 1813.

Gunpowder.

AN Alteration in the Composition, and which is expected to lessen the Expence of *Gunpowder*, is SUGAR*. Mr. WINSOR has taken out a PATENT, for introducing it as an Ingredient in the Manufacture. He says, that when properly reduced to a *Powder*, by *Trituration*, it may be mixed with common *Gunpowder*, in the Proportion of *one-fourth* SUGAR, to *three-fourths* Powder, without *diminishing* its exploding Force. Query, does this SUBSTITUTE *augment* it?

GUNPOWDER, has received no Mode of Destruction more formidable, than from the Invention and Use, that Colonel CONGREVE has lately employed it in. These

* It is no less singular than true, that SUGAR was scarcely known amongst us, *Three Hundred Years* ago: SUGAR was *first* brought into EUROPE, from ASIA, Anno 1150, and at that Time, an Attempt was made to cultivate it, in ITALY, but it totally failed: the PORTUGUESE and SPANIARDS, however, in the adventurous Spirit of Colonization, which first distinguished them, carried the *Cane-root* into AMERICA, Anno 1510, which succeeded to the full Extent of their Hopes, and *thence* it was *transplanted*, to the WEST INDIA Isles, where its luxurious Produce, was extended with such Rapidity, as soon to become an Object, of *national* Strife and Warfare. SUGAR was first *taxed* in ENGLAND, Anno 1685. In 1798, the Quantity *imported*, was, 2,361,715 *Hundred Weight*; and the *net Amount* of the DUTIES, Anno 1813, paid upon this Article, were, ENGLAND, 3,580,223*l.* 18*s.* 10*d.* IRELAND, 690,550*l.* 3*s.* 9½*d.* making together, £4,270,774 2*s.* 7½*d.*

Pyrotechnic Arrows will fly nearly two Miles and a half, and are capable of communicating their *Fire*, for nearly *ten Minutes* after having reached their Point. They are large, and have an *iron-pointed* Socket at the End, which sticks in whatever it may be aimed at. This Socket has likewise a Tube, for the purpose of containing the *inflammable* Matter, with *six Holes*, through which it issues in a State of *Liquefaction*. The Stick attached to the *Rocket** is nearly *Twenty Feet* long. One hundred of these might be discharged in a Minute, from each Vessel. The *Rockets* are so constructed, as to instantaneously emit, on their Adhesion to any part of a *Vessel*, or other Substance, a *Liquid Flame*. The *Ingredients* of this destructive Composition, are said to be, of so very inflammable a Nature, as almost to defy the counteracting Effect of *Water*, which, for some time, seems rather to *increase*, than *extinguish* its Violence†. A few of them, were last Year thrown at

* In a **YORKSHIRE** Church-yard, is an Epitaph, the Subject of which, was unfortunately killed, by the Descent of the *Stick* of a *Rocket*, as is indeed *explicitly* told us by the **POET**—

“ Here I lie,
Kill'd by a *Sky-*
Rocket in my *Eye.*”

Emulous of the Praise, which the above *ingenious* Composition received, from the Rustics of the Village, a rival Rhymester, on the Death of an *Ostler*, who was *driven over*, produced *two Lines*, which “supplied the place of *Elegy*,” and ran thus—

“ Here I lays,
Killed by a **CHAISE.**”

† In 1812, an Attempt was made, by a celebrated **CHEMIST**, in **SWITZERLAND**, to *revive* that dreadful *Composition*, by which the Lives of our Fellow-Creatures, were sacrificed to such

DOVER, by way of Experiment, from *Archliffe Fort*, to the *Western Heights*, and immediately set on fire a Stubble field, in which they chanced to fall, near the celebrated Cliff of SHAKSPEARE. The Fuse with which they are provided, continues to burn for seven or eight Minutes, after they are shot off, when some of the *Rockets* explode, and act in the new Capacity of *Shells*. They are capable, we understand, of being thrown with almost as much Accuracy and Precision, as a SHELL, or CARCASE, is from a Mortar. The *average* Expence at first, was, *One pound four shillings* per ROCKET, but which will be reduced, to *One pound one shilling and eleven pence*.

With Respect to the *Musquet*, the GENIUS of modern Times, has greatly simplified the noble Art, of MAN-KILLING. The *Soldier* now carries his *Cartridges*, commodiously and safely, introduces them into the Piece with wonderful Celerity, and which he discharges *frequently*, in the Space of a *Minute*. SEE, opposed to him, the *Soldiers* of QUEEN BESS, with the Load of *Murryon, Caliver, Swords, and Daggers, lighted Match, and Touch powder*; they must have been momentarily exposed, to the Explosion of their *Powder*, and to the Danger of losing, or extinguishing, their *Matches*, besides they were deficient in

boundless Extent, at the Time of the CRUSADES. This FIRE has been spoken of, by the HISTORIANS of that Day, as possessing such Powers of *Destruction*, as *no Art* could counteract or evade, and to *re-acquire* a Knowledge, of so dire an Instrument of Annihilation, has been always regarded with *Abhorrence*. The CHEMIST was, however, *unsuccessful*. His *Materials*, which cost an immense Sum of Money, were, in the midst of his Preparations, *blown up*, and took with them, his RIGHT ARM, as a PEACE OFFERING.

Evolutions; for we find no Instruction for Advancing, Retreating, and forming into Columns, Divisions, and Squares; yet, as if the Mind of MAN, considered itself beneficially employed, in discovering the Means of KILLING OFF, *superior* Numbers, *Two* other Instruments for *Human* Massacre, have been devised. In 1811, Captain THOMAS DUNDAS, of the ROYAL NAVY, invented a new *inflammable Ball*, applicable in besieging a Town, and peculiar for its *small Weight*, by which means it may be thrown to a great Distance, and takes *Fire* on a very curious Plan. It spreads a *Flame* in *three* distinct Openings, which is so strong, that the *Fire* extends full a *Yard in length*, from the Ball itself; and is so powerful, that any Thing *under, over, or near*, cannot escape its Effects; and in 1812, a Mr. M——, a Resident of PORTSEA, submitted to Government, a SHELL, that at the immense Distance of *three Miles*, will explode *Twenty* Balls of *combustible Matter*, of *three inches* Diameter, and upwards of *One Thousand* Musket and Pistol Balls: these will be scattered on the *Horizon*, within a Circle, whose Diameter is *Fourteen hundred Yards*.—The Weight of the SHELL, will be upwards of *Two hundred and a half**.

* The WEALTH accumulated, from the Sale of GUNPOWDER, by an obscure Individual, deserves to be recorded, as much for its *Magnitude*, as for the strange *Disposal* of it. Mr. HILL left Property, to the enormous Amount, of *Eight hundred thousand pounds*.—To Mr. FISH, of *Greville-street, Hatton-garden*, and to another GENTLEMAN, he gave *Three hundred and sixty thousand pounds each*; To the Rev. Mr. TAYLOR, his nearest RELATIVE, (who was offered some time since, *One hundred thousand pounds* for the *Chance* of his LEGACY,) he bequeathed *Thirty-six thousand pounds*. He left NOTHING to his RELATIONS, in SOMERSETSHIRE, whom he had *placed* on a valuable Estate in that County, which cost him *Seventy-five thousand pounds*, and

It remains a Question, whether the super-eminently nice *Marksmen* of our Days, could be actuated by the same Principle, which MONTAIGNE recites: “ An Offer was made to an excellent ARCHER, condemned to *die*, that his *Life* should be saved, if he would shew some notable *Proof* of his ART; but he refused *to try*, fearing lest his too great Agitation, should make him shoot *wide*, and that instead of *preserving* his *Life*, he should also *lose* the *Reputation* he had got, of being a *good Marksman*.”

The *Certainty*, with which the AMERICANS, manage their *Rifle Guns*, PRIEST, in his Travels in AMERICA, gives this Account of. “ During the late War, in 1775, a Company of *Rifle-men*, formed from the back Woodsmen of VIRGINIA, was quartered here (*Lancaster*, in NEW ENGLAND) for some time: Two of them *alternately* held a *Board*, only *nine inches square*, *between his Knees*, while his *Comrade* fired a *Ball* through it, from a Distance of *one hundred Paces*! The *Board* is still preserved: and I am assured, by *several* who were *present*, that it was performed, without any Manner of Deception.”

which, he *always assured them*, they should *inherit*. Mr. HILL, the Testator, was originally a *Tailor* at BRENTFORD, and the Person who *succeeded* him in that Business, still carries on the Trade in that *Town*. It was by the POWDER MILLS at WHITTON, that Mr. HILL realised his vast Fortune. He enjoyed the complete Supply of TURKEY, in GUNPOWDER, whence he imported back the Produce of the LEVANT, and with it, carried on the Business, of a TURKEY Merchant. The *first* of the above *Legatees*, who died in 1813, seems to have been resolved to *dive* into a different Practice, to that of the *Testator*, in lavishing away Money. At his Sale, CHAIRS were disposed of, which cost him SIXTY GUINEAS, each Chair, and a CARPET, the Price of which was ONE THOUSAND POUNDS.

The Workmanship in this *Gun*, probably eclipses *all*, that the *Artificers* of modern Date, have executed. Anno 1712, a *Brass Gun*, was advertised to be *shot for*, at HOXTON, which was in the Shape of a *Walking-Cane*, might be used either as a *Gun*, or *Pistol*, and which contained a TELESCOPE, a DIAL on the Head, and a *perpetual ALMANACK*.

The material Improvements in *Fire Arms*, of late Years, have possibly left little more to be accomplished. ONE, however, if we may calculate from the *numerous Accidents* that *have happened*, will have a most beneficial Tendency, and that is, the GRAVITATING STOPS, contrived by Mr. JOSEPH MANTON. These act of themselves, and completely remove the Danger, of charging a *double Gun*, with *one* of the *Locks, cocked*; as it is *impossible* for a *Gun*, on this new Construction, (*although cocked*) to go off *whilst Loading*. This *Safeguard*, since *double-barrelled Guns* are so generally employed, merits the Attention of every SPORTSMAN, and there are but *very few*, who, in the Course of his *Shooting*, cannot recollect *how* He has been shocked, at perceiving the Peril he had escaped, when, either from his *Hurry* or *Inadvertence*, He has *charged One Barrel*, whilst the *Lock* of the *other* was *cocked*, and the *Gun* held in a Situation, to have blown him to Pieces. The ELEVATED TOP, invented by the same ARTIST, has been already noticed. Its *Utility* is confirmed, and has met with universal Approbation, and from a Variety of Accounts, the *Game* has been *killed* at *Distances*, which Gentlemen did not accomplish, till this Plan was adopted, by which the *Centre* of the Charge of *Shot*, is thrown upon the Bird, and which does not *now* escape, perhaps slightly wounded, from the *Body* of the *Shot*, sinking BENEATH the Object; add to this, that the *Line* of *Aim*, is much more correct, and easier acquired.

TWO of these CASUALTIES, occurred from the very Circumstance, which the GRAVITATING STOPS, are *altogether* designed to *prevent*; and the others are mentioned, in the Hope of inducing, PECULIAR CAUTION, not only to Persons, who are in the HABITUAL USE of, but to those, who but *seldom* handle, FIRE ARMS.

In 1809, Lieut.-Colonel BELL, of *Berwick*, was shooting on the *Lowhaughs*, near that Place, with a *double-barrelled Gun*, having fired at a Bird, and loading again, the *other* Barrel went off, and lodged the Contents in his Body: he died soon after.

In September, the same Year, JOHN JAMES TODD, Esq. (brother to Colonel TODD, of the first Regiment of *Guards*), went out shooting in the Neighbourhood of *Horn-dean, Hampshire*, when his Gun, whilst he was taking the Ramrod out, exploded, and the Contents of it being forced through his Body, he lingered for *twenty Minutes*, and then expired.

In 1812, at *Tittleshall*, in NORFOLK, Capt. GEORGE HOSTE, and his brother CHARLES (two of the younger Sons of the Rev. DIXON HOSTE), were out Shooting, the Gun of the *former* went off, and unfortunately shot his Brother, dead on the Spot.

In January, 1809, Mr. SAYERS, of *Cuckfield*, was re-loading his Fowling piece, the *Powder ignited*, (supposed from a latent Spark, left by the *Paper Wadding* in the Barrel,) and drove the *Powder Flask*, which was Copper, to a considerable height in the Air, and shattered it to Atoms. Mr. SAYERS luckily escaped, with no Injury, except a slight Scratch on his *Fingers*. ACCIDENTS si-

milar to the above, may be *effectually prevented*, by using Pieces of *Pasteboard, Felt, or Leather*, to charge with, instead of *soft Paper*.

We shall terminate this Portion of the SUPPLEMENT, with a short Narrative of the usual *Effects* in the HUMAN MIND, upon the Expectancy of a *Visit* from a CANNON BALL. Doctor WALKER has *thus* defined them.

I have had an Opportunity of making *Observations*, on the *Sights, Sounds, and Progress* of *Balls*. I have seen the Approach of *Balls*, two at a time, as well as of *Shells*; and observed, that the *Report* from a *Gun*, very far *outstrips* the *Ball* in its *Course*. This is a well-established Doctrine in *Physics*; but it is contrary to the common Opinion. It is true, the *Ball* gets the Start, and going *quickest* at first, arrives at a small Distance *sooner* than the *Report*; which is not made, till the *Ball* is *expelled* from the Piece, and on its Way; but the *Sound* shortly overtakes the *Ball*, and passes very speedily before it. The SAILORS think, when they have *heard* the *Report* of the Enemy's Gun, that the *Ball* is *passed*, and feel as *secure*, as we generally do, when hearing *Thunder* after the *Flash* of *Lightning*. But I noticed off *Algezira*, that the *Ball* came *after* the *Report*, though not *so long*, as the *Report* was *after* the *Flash*; and that *thus*, DEATH was *threatened*, through the EYE and EAR, before it could possibly *reach us*, in the *Shape* of a *Ball*. During the Coming of a whizzing *Ball*, I have observed a general Seriousness of Countenance, with *Silence*; in its passing *over* the Ship, a *Smile*; on its falling *short*, a *Laugh*. To People not employed with *something*, to engage the Mind, it is very trying to be exposed to Danger;

they have time to *fashion* their *Fears* into a thousand Shapes. Some of them herd together, and talk, rather in a low Voice, on indifferent Subjects, neither *serious* nor *laughable*.

Others keep alone, and seem careless about *what* may happen; one is ashamed to appear *frightened*; although willing to get, as it were *by Accident*, to the *Leeward* of a *Mast* or *Capstan*, if the *Firing* be to *Windward*. In such Situations, one is apt to have the Company of Boys, belonging to the Vessel, if they can contrive any thing *to do there*: they seem to be in a great Stir; but are in *Fact* proving, that SELF-PRESERVATION is the first LAW of NATURE.

Many, from *Habit*, appear to have had this FIRST SENSATION, almost extinguished in them. Wholly engaged in the *Business* and *Bustle* of the BATTLE, they have not Leisure to *think* of their *Danger*, and not suspecting *Fear* in others, they do not discover the Symptoms of it, which is so *readily* detected among these different Classes, by the sympathizing, and consequently, discerning PASSENGER.