

**HITTING VS.
MISSING WITH
THE SHOTGUN**

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Hitting Vs. Missing with the Shotgun by S. T. Hammond

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S. T. HAMMOND

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MISSING WITH
THE SHOTGUN**

HITTING vs. MISSING

WITH THE SHOTGUN

By S. T. HAMMOND
(SHADOW)

Author of "Training vs. Breaking," "Nursing vs. Dosing," etc.

NEW YORK
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1898

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THE HAMMOND SYSTEM OF SHOOTING.

Mr. Hammond enjoys among his field companions the repute of being an unusually good shot, and one who is particularly successful in that most difficult branch of upland shooting, the pursuit of the ruffed grouse, or partridge. This prompted the suggestion that he should write down for others an exposition of the methods by which his skill was acquired. The result is this original manual of "Hitting vs. Missing." We term it original, because, as the chapters will show, the author was self-taught; the expedients and devices adopted and the forms of practice followed were his own. This then may be termed the Hammond system of shooting; and as it was successful in his own experience, the publishers are confident that, being here set forth simply and intelligibly, it will prove not less effective with others.

THE PUBLISHERS.

NEW YORK, October, 1898.

CHAPTER I.

Choosing the Gun.

THERE is no outdoor sport that is so generally and ardently followed as is the pursuit of feathered game, and in none is the desire to excel more strongly implanted in the hearts of its devotees. In the practice of wing shooting there is a fascination most alluring to tyro as well as expert. How wonderful to the inexperienced is the skill of the wing shot, who with unerring aim brings down the swiftly flying, startled bird! What swelling pride fills the heart of the novice when his first bird falls to his well-directed aim! With what supreme happiness he gazes upon the well-rounded form of his beautiful prize, and as he fondly smooths the glossy plumage and reviews the performance, his cup of happiness is full to overflowing.

As he declares to himself that there is no sport equal to this, and resolves that he will master its mysteries, visions of untold numbers of birds tum-

bling from their arrowy flight to his well-directed aim fill his imagination and surround him with a halo of happiness that hours or days of weary and fruitless tramping can never wholly dispel.

In trying to learn the art of shooting on the wing, the beginner usually has more or less trouble at the start from lack of proper instruction as to what he should or should not do; not that such instruction cannot be readily obtained for the mere asking; but the average boy, or man for that matter, when he gets his first gun is very prone to think that he knows about all that is worth knowing in relation to handling it, or even to loading it. Or, if he is conscious of his ignorance as to what is proper, his pride will often deter him from asking questions that would betray his ignorance upon the subject. In fact, it is a false pride of this sort that is one of the most besetting sins of sportsmen and would-be sportsmen, especially the latter, and is born of the desire to receive credit for better work than one's actual performance merits. As this volume is intended to benefit and instruct the beginner, I make early note of this trait in order that he may guard

against it; for I assure him that, as a rule, he will meet very few shooters who will not quickly discover the false pride, and as quickly see and despise the false pretense.

In order to best carry out my intention to make this work really a help to the novice, we must begin with the first steps that he should take in order to thoroughly learn the art. I have confidence enough in those who may be more or less familiar with many of the minor details of shooting to believe that they will not begrudge their less well informed brethren the space devoted to matters with which they may themselves be well acquainted.

The very first and most important thing for the beginner to do is to procure a gun that exactly fits him. No matter what others may say, nor how much you may be pleased with the appearance of the gun, or how much you may admire the pattern, do not, upon any consideration, buy it unless it fits you. In order to determine this very essential point, it will be best for you to test it at actual work at a target, although you may reach a fairly correct conclusion by sighting the