

THE SEA LION MUST GO.

AS LAUGHTER TAKE PLACE ON THE PACIFIC.

Destroy so Many Fish That Their Extermination Is Demanded—The Good Appetite of a 3,000 Pound Hair Seal—To Depopulate The Seal Rocks.

The most remarkable and interesting 'drive' ever heard of in the field of sport or of game economics is that planned by the California Fish Commissioner, which contemplates a huge raid on the rookeries of the sea lion along the middle California coast and the destruction of these animals by thousands. Not even the grizzly bear is so famous and popular a representative of the California fauna as the sea lion. His photographs are scattered over the world by the hundreds of thousands and hardly any traveller has seen San Francisco in decades without having seen the 'seals' at the Cliff House.

The Seal Rocks at the Cliff House and the boiling surf about them are not to be dyed in caradine with the official carnage planned. It is not at all necessary for the purpose of the Fish Commissioners that they should make any disturbance there. The population of the Seal Rocks is but an infinitesimal fraction of the whole sea lion tribe in this neighborhood. As popular knowledge of the sea lion is mainly derived from these little points of rocks, this is not realized, and neither is the need nor wisdom of the measures about to be taken. There are never more than a few dozen or a few score sea lions and their cousins out there, while elsewhere within thirty or forty miles there are many thousands. Whatever the slaughter there will still be sea lions to look at from the cliffs.

For twenty or thirty years the fishermen generally and the salmon pickers of the Sacramento especially have been complaining of the sea lions and praying for their destruction. The same agitation has bobbed up periodically. Fish commissions have heard delegations, discussed, resolved, and reported over and over again, and the verdict has always been that the sea lion destroys enormous quantities of fish, seriously interferes with the fishing industry hereabouts, especially the salmon industry, and that his number should be lessened. But the sea lion has been protected by law and each agitation has died without result.

Since 1866 there has been a State law which prohibits molesting these animals within a mile of the beach about the Cliff House or within one mile of the shore for a distance of ten miles along the Santa Cruz coast. It happens that outside of these limits the rookeries, including the main population, are on Government lighthouse or other reservations, and here a Treasury Department regulation forbids hunting.

The idea now is to get the permission of the Treasury Department to send men into the big rookeries on the Farallone Islands, thirty miles at sea, Point Reyes, Point Arena and Ano Nuevo, or New Year's Point, down on the San Mateo county shore, during the breeding season and kill the animals in large numbers.

A petition, indorsed by Senator Perkins, asking for this permission, was sent to Secretary Gage the other day, and President Vogelsang of the Fish Commission is quite confident that the permission will be granted. If the government does not hesitate too long, but gives its early consent, the slaughter will commence next month, when the breeding season is fairly begun and the breeding season is fairly begun and the greatest number of seals have congregated.

The exact method to be pursued has not been determined, but that is a mere detail. Deputies and some hired riflemen may be sent out to do the work, and as is most likely, the work may be done under some sort of a contract arrangement with skilled men.

There is no question that if the sealion is a luxury as he is a costly one. He eats an incredible amount of fish. Years ago two sealions were kept in captivity at Woodwards Gardens and such would eat from forty to fifty pounds of fish a day. When it is good fishing for sealions thousands of them in and about the bay eat that many daily. Their population about the middle coast of the State can only be guessed at. Commissioner Vogelsang estimates at 25,000 may be wrong either way. But 10,000 sealions eating fifty pounds of fish a day would consume 500,000 daily. The habit of the animal, however, is to keep on catching fish when he gets about full, take a bite of each one and throw the rest

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away. The estimate must be greatly raised for this reason.

Each one gorges himself and then entertains himself with catching more taking a bite out of the back or belly and throwing the rest of the fish away. Only now and then can one be seen but a deputy Commissioner states that a few months ago he watched a sea lion in the Sacramento River playing with a salmon like a cat with a mouse. He was evidently not hungry. He would stick his head above water, toss the fish high in the air to one side, dive and catch the fish in his mouth when it came down. The last time the fish came down endwise and the lion just held his mouth open and let it shoot down his throat.

As the animals are rarely observed it is circumstantial evidence that it is largely relied upon by the salmon fishers. This is presented in part by their nets. Nets costing from \$100 to \$400 are constantly found destroyed. The sea lions find a net full of fish and naturally presume that the providence which provided them salmon took the trouble to catch some of them. When the big dinner of fish is gone the nets are gone, too, and the fisher is loudly curse the sea lion.

This indicated sea lion is the best known member of an interesting family. What are popularly known as seals are the genus otariidae. They are of two classes the hair seals, known as sea lions, and the fur seals, the latter being of smaller size. There are five recognized species of hair seals or sea lions and four of the fur seals. The hair seal has no soft fur under his coarse, hard, hairy covering, and is of small economic importance. For this reason largely the sea lions have never been carefully studied by scientists, and, indeed, it is only in quite recent years that the fur seal has been so studied.

The sea lion occurs throughout the Pacific coast from Cape Horn to Behring Sea and along the Asiatic coast. The well-known California sea lion has been observed and written about more than any other species, mainly because it has been more convenient to those who cared to observe sea lions. Because it has been a more convenient victim of capture it has also been the one generally exhibited in zoological gardens everywhere and there studied and pictured. It is the California sea lion that has been exhibited at Central Park, New York, at the zoological gardens of Philadelphia and other Eastern cities, and in the zoological collections of Paris, London and other capitals.

The California sea lion occurs from a point southward variously placed at Lower California and the Mexican coast to half way to Behring Sea. As large and magnificent as is the California sea lion, he is smaller than the species that populates the northern resorts and especially the Pribylov and Aleutian Islands where his importance is lost in that of the fur seal. It is reported that 20,000 sea lions permanently inhabit the Pribylov Islands. All sealions display a considerable range of yellowish or reddish brown color and the male is always of two or three times the size of the female. The Farallone Islands are given as the southern limits at which the northern sea lion occurs and breeds, so that the two species mingle here somewhat.

While the California sea lion is the predominant species at the Californian real resorts there are others, and the average observer will fail to detect the different species. The true fur seal was formerly quite abundant along the California coast between the Behring Sea breeding seasons and since its practical extermination a few stray ones are often present here. The spotted or barber sea and the grey seal also frequent the California resorts of the otaries. The sea elephant formerly fairly abundant, is also an occasional visitor. These other species have their stories, but the California sea lion is the main character at present, and when Dr. Jordan put in a plea of guilty in behalf of the sea lion as a fish destroyer he acquitted the others.

A good specimen of a bull will weigh a ton, and some are judged to reach 3,000 pounds. Their lengths are from fourteen to twenty feet. Though so clumsy on land, they are no longer clumsy in the water. There is and enormous power in the mus-

cles of their flippers and tails and this and the build of their lither bodies make them wonderfully dexterous in the boiling surf by the jagged rocks they climb, and wonderfully dexterous and swift in overtaking the speediest fish of the sea they swim.

There principal food is fish, but they also feed on mollusks, crustaceans and sea birds. An observant writer who visited the rookeries at New Year's Point on the coast of San Mateo county in 1897 during the breeding season saw a great school of fish pass through a channel between two of the rocky islands the sea lions populated. The lions plunged from the rocks by the hundreds and crowded each other at the feast. They were quickly filled, and then they followed their habit of taking a bite out of each fish they caught and later the water was covered with dead floating fish.

The family life of the sea lion is especially interesting, and it is this family life that is planned to be invaded with powder, ball and steel. It is not so fine and systematic on the breeding grounds as that of the fur seal, but it is quite similar. The breeding season opens with the landing at the breeding grounds of the strongest males. For three weeks or so they simply preempt territory and fight.

The battles are terribly ferocious and even the victor have much hide torn into strips and an eye torn out. The defeated ones and the 'bachelors' go elsewhere. Dr. Jordan says it is mainly these that populate Seal Rocks.

The breeding season begins in May and the master of the harems are about to install themselves now. These males go without food for a month or more, living on their own fat. Then the females arrive and during June and July the young are borne and nursed and taught to swim. A striking degree of maternal care and love is exhibited, and even the males help teach the young. The mothers go out after food nurse their young and lead them into the surf. The mother will hold its pup's nose above the water in its first lessons at swimming, will play with it in the water, taking it now and then by the nape of the neck and throwing it, to carefully catch it when it alights, and will go away from the surf and float on the surface with its pup lying on its breast.

If the sea lion was worth hunting there would be no call for official extermination. He was worth hunting years ago. The white man began it when he first got here. The prizes were the coarse hides and the fat for oil for domestic markets and the whippers and some other small parts of the carcass for the Chinese market. They were slain by the thousands up to ten or fifteen years ago all along the coast, from Lower California north. Then the market for the hides passed away, and the whippers, &c., for the Chinese would not pay for the trouble and expense of killing them. This and the legal restrictions have given the sea lion a chance. The Government's prohibitions were not to protect the sea lion. The regulation was made because the hunters of sea lions, gulls' eggs, &c., at the Farallones and on other reservations got up such bloody wars and stole, wrecked or interfered with so much Government property and so much Government business that the thing was a nuisance to be abated. It is the fact that gives President Vogelsang confidence that the request of State officers will be granted. If it is to a romantic and picturesque campaign will be promptly inaugurated. The sea lions will be greatly lessened, but not exterminated. President Jordan indorses the campaign and says that if ninety nine of every hundred males were killed the race would still be all right and there would be many fish saved. It is said that the war will be made on the males. Probably it will, but the purposes is to reduce the herds during the breeding season, and it is possible that some mothers and pups will accidentally suffer.

President Jordan takes great interest in the matter and will visit the rookeries while the war is waged.

RAILROADS FIFTY YEARS HENCE.

An Authority Says Pneumatic Tubes Will Replace Them.

F. I. Whitney, general passenger agent of the Great Northern Railroad, in speaking of the future development of railroad travel says:

'The great development of railroad travel fifty years hence will undoubtedly be along the line of urban and suburban rapid transit. Long distance steam railroads, as we know them today, carrying both freight and passengers, are in some respects at the apex of their achievement. Speed is for all practical purposes limited to the maximum of sixty miles an hour, or but little more. The item of comfort has reached a point where there is little left to be desired. Accidents affecting life and limb on a modern passenger railway have been reduced to a percentage so low that it is actually safer to travel on a railway train than to walk along a city street.

It is possible that for some time to come long-distance travel will continue to follow the same general lines as exist. Steam locomotives may give place to machinery operated by electricity or compressed air; the two rails may in process of time become one. Cars, both passengers and freight, may be still further improved, but in the main in the railway system of 1950 will be simply an improvement on what exists to-day, with an ever-present speed limit of less than 100 miles an hour.

There is a department of railway travel, however, that demands and will experience radical changes, and that is urban and sub-

urban rapid transit of both passengers and freight; it is the crying need of the day. Municipalities and corporations are moving heaven and earth to provide better means for transporting the million foot men from their homes to their offices and workshops. Conditions, instead of improving, grow steadily worse. In all the large centers exceeding half a million population the congestion of street car lines—horse cars, electric cars or cable cars and elevated roads—is a constant menace to health, life and property.

Extension along the lines of existing methods is almost at a standstill. New York, the second city in the world, seems helpless before the ever-growing problem. Twice every day a struggling mass of humanity wastes precious hours in a slow, tedious journey between work and home. There is no more room for surface lines of railway. The extension of the elevated system means the ruin of valuable streets. What is wanted is some method that will practically annihilate distance and at the same time remove from the city streets the dangers and defects of the present systems. One possible solution occurs to me.

It requires no effort of the imagination to see an extension of the pneumatic tube system now in use in the larger cities. A view of New York, London, Paris, or any other large city in 1950 may show something after this fashion: Dustless, asphalted streets with no noise of clanging going or steel shod hoofs; clean unbroken pavements across which pass with noiseless rush rubber tired, horseless carriages; no deadly tracery of electric lines or network of smoke begrimed elevated trestle work. Instead at convenient intervals, the small round stations of the Pneumatic Underground Transportation Company. The passenger will step into an automatic elevator which gently lowers him to the track, if such a name can be applied to a system that has no track. Incandescent lamps light the underground station and the air is pure and sweet. Accompanied by other suburban residents the passenger enters a luxuriously appointed car whose arched sides and ceilings disclose its tubular construction. The conductor touches an electric button which closes the door softly and gently; there is a distinct but hardly perceptible forward motion as the car starts, and in almost an instant, so rapid has been the motion, the trip has been made from the Battery to Forty second street, and the silent elevator lifts the passenger into the sunshine before the Grand Central Station. Harlem is reached two minutes later, and from here the system branches out to distant suburbs. In connection with the pneumatic underground railway, automobile carriages of long slim, single rail air cars distribute passengers to their homes in an incredibly short time.

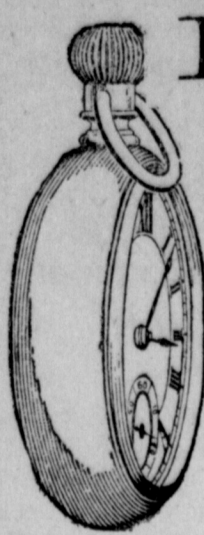
The pneumatic transit system may be extended to include neighboring cities, and the effect will be practically to annihilate all distances of less than one hundred miles, which is about the maximum at which will be necessary or desirable to use pneumatic transit for suburban trains. The use of this distance destroying system will add several hours a day to the leisure time of bus men and bring residence districts located thirty to eighty miles away within ten or twenty minutes run of business districts. The difficulties in the way of a practical application of the pneumatic tube system are not greater than confronted the inventor of the steam railroad of to-day. The principle is now in active service on a smaller scale, and the workings of it excite no comment whatever.

DUCKS BY THE THOUSAND.

Modern Operators Describe Everything Done by System and in Order.

Ducks, ducks, ducks—from the cradle to the grave—that is just what one may see on a certain seven-acre duck farm up in our beautiful State, and not a hundred miles from Philadelphia. Ten thousand of them! In the main building (the incubator house) is the cradle part of it, which is a period is put to their four to eight weeks of existence in the tiny house at the end of the long, low building. The stock, the natural progenitors of the little army that is killed at the rate of 125 per day, is kept over to the right beyond the splendid trees where there's a cold swift running stream. Over here there are five ducks to a drake, and they're divided into families. These drakes bid this vale of tears adieu at the age of one year. Outside 50 per cent of the eggs there's no loss (even the bedding is sold), and a learned member of the inspecting party says there's no necessity of this loss to any such extent. This doesn't count the rejected eggs, because there's no loss in these; if, after five to eight days in the incubators, the eggs have not developed the germinal spot they are taken out and sold. As fresh eggs? Do you ask—why assuredly. The stock ducks lay these eggs by the way on the earthy floor of their shelter, so there's no stealing nests.

The Incubator House is the main building. The 50 large incubators are on the first on the first floor, and the eggs are in drawers, so that the air circulates as through an egg basket. Incubators are



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but hot air chambers. A large oil lamp is under each incubator, and one man's duty is to watch the thermometers, for a uniform heat of 70 degrees must be maintained. The aforementioned physician whispers that the heavy loss of eggs (one half) due to this arrangement, and that a thermostat would see to the maintaining of the uniform temperature night and day. The human watchman is too likely to fall in with Morpheus of a night, or, like one of the 'unwise virgins,' to neglect to supply sufficient oil. The ducklings, by the way, once they're hatched, remain in the incubators a day or so to dry off and become reconciled to their short sojourn on earth. Upstairs is the feather department, and it's all a matter of sorting bins and drying bins. This down is, of course, a paying part of the business, for down is always expensive.

Between this main structure and the long, low building is a small affair in which food is mixed, the "dose" consisting of cornmeal, bran, butchers' crackle, ground stones or oyster shells and grass. The food is loaded on a little car, and then sent on its way, either down through the long building or out through the main inclosure on the elevated track seen in the picture, or both. In winter, of course, all the ducklings are in the long building.

The Runway is the name of the long, low building, and very cleverly arranged and well ventilated it is. An elevated platform runs its entire 300 feet in length, the steam-heating pipes being directly under this platform, and too high to burn the downy ducklings, which skip in under from the small runs on each side to get warm. These small runs are 10 feet square, partitioned with woven wire, and bedded right on the earth with 'threshing wheat,' as it retains the heat; each run is numbered, the number telling the age of the ducklings therein. They are kept moving just as though the police held sway on this quiet swampy farm. (In the really warm weather they go out into the runs shown in the main plot—you can just make out the stakes that mark the corner of these inclosures.) But whether the little food car runs out this runway or down the inclosed runway, it goes every two hours. They are literally stuffed, this diminutive white army, sometimes 15,000 strong. You can see them grow! And it isn't all eating. They are allowed water to drink with each meal. Further demands for water, though are met with the information that this is not a banting system. They may hang their clothes where they please, but they 'don't go near the water.' The old ones, over beyond, are allowed an occasional dip.

But here all roads lead to the barn near the end of the runway, which contains the steam power for heating and food grinding and the like. When a duck is doomed a man with a long pole, like a shepherd's crook, hooks it round the neck, and, having caught it, hands it to another. It is put in a little box by itself, taken to this barn, and, when a cock has been put in its mouth, a cruel blade is thrust into its neck. Then duckie is thrown into cold water and relieved of his down, after which he tickles the palate of the epicure, at 50 cents per pound.

Honest Answer.

The stories told of Snetzler, a famous Swiss organ-builder, prove that he was a man of rare and incorruptible honesty. At one time the parish officers of a country church applied to Snetzler to examine their organ and make improvements in it.

'Gentlemen,' said Snetzler, after a careful examination of the instrument in question, 'your organ be worth von hundred pound joost now. Vell, I vill spend you von hundred pound on it—and it shall den be worth fifty!'

Wife (who bakes her own bread)—'Do you like brown bread, dear?' Hubby ('houghtfully')—'Ye-es: light brown bread.'

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