

February 15, 1898.

F. C. Selous, Esq.,

Alpine Lodge, Worpleston,
Surrey, England.

Dear Mr. Selous:

You told me in your letter just what I wished to know. Evidently Mr. Percy Selous knows no more about American shooting than about the South African. I bought his book because of the name, and also because I supposed that if Bryan had anything to do with the book it would be trustworthy; but almost the first article I opened was one in which he described a bull whitti, when hit, as slapping its long tail upon its hind haunches—and I knew of course that he was inventing something, and had mixed up the white-tail deer with the whitti. In another place he describes encountering vipers and Gila in Canada, north-west of Lake Michigan; which is exactly as if he had described a day's sport around Cape Town, during the course of which he encountered a Macabala imp and a herd of blue wildebeest.

I am delighted to hear that Mrs. Selous expects to have a child, and I congratulate you both with all my heart. After all, there is nothing that in any way comes up to both and wife and

children, in spite of the penalty one has to pay for having
 given hostages to fortune. I know just exactly how you feel.
 Having a wife and six children, of whom I am very fond, I have
 found it more and more difficult to get away. For the last
 eight years, indeed, my hunting trips have merely been short
 outings. I am of course very much interested in my work,
 but I cannot say how I long at times for the great rolling
 prairies of sun-dried yellow grass, where the antelope stand
 at gaze, or wheel and circle; for the cottonwoods on
 the bank of some river, with a wagon drawn up under
 them, and the ponies feeding round about; for the great pine
 forests where the bull elk challenge, and the packtrain threads
 its way through the fallen timber. I am also for the wilder-
 ness I have never seen, and never shall see, except through
 your books, and the books of two or three men like you, who are
 now dead. It may be that some time I can break away from this
 sedentary life for a hunt somewhere; and of all things I should
 like to take this hunt among the big bears of Alaska, and try
 to work out their specific relationship. But I don't know
 whether I shall ever get the chance, and of course this sedentary life
 gradually does away with one's power. Politics is a rather
 engaging pursuit, and unfortunately with us it is acute in
 the fall, at the very time of the best hunting; and as my children
 grow older I am more and more concerned with giving them a
 proper training for their life work, whatever it may be.

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