

DUEL WITH WAX BULLETS.

New Device from France Gives Amusement to N. Y. A. C. Members.

There was a duel last night at the New York Athletic Club. The combatants, Eugene Pitou and Dr. Edward Fowler, faced each other in the gymnasium. James Murray, Jr., one of the fencing instructors, gave the word to fire. Half a hundred friends of the principals stood on one side of the room anxiously awaiting the result of the encounter. Suddenly there was a crack of the pistols, the bullets flew across the open space of sixty feet, and each man was hit just below the shoulder. They did not fall, but smiled and congratulated each other on their respective good shots.

The bullets were of wax, and they are the first importations from France, where they have been used for some time with great interest and amusement. Some of the older members of the club were disposed to regard this wax bullet shooting as bordering closely on child's play, but all agreed that it was a fine shooting game, and the members of the fencing department are going to shoot wax bullets at each other at several of the forthcoming fencing competitions by way of diversion.

The bullets were shot from regulation French dueling pistols of .44 calibre. The bullets are placed at the end of a special cartridge at the back of which, instead of being filled with powder, is attached a small fulminate cap. There is sufficient force in the explosive material to drive the wax bullets with considerable force, but at sixty feet the bullet would do nothing more than cause a slight stinging sensation if it were to hit the bare skin. To obviate all possible danger the combatants wear long black gowns with fencing masks protecting their faces, the upper part of the mask being of plate glass protecting the eyes. To show what the wax bullet can do, a shot was taken at thirty feet and the bullet penetrated 100 pages of the telephone directory.

E. Gouspy, the N. Y. A. C. maître d'armes, and James Murray, Jr., fired at each other three or four times, and the marks of the bullets on their gowns were plainly seen. Dr. Hubby and G. K. Bainbridge then did some shooting, and several other members took a hand at the harmless shooting game; but in most cases they failed to hit anything except the big pieces of canvas stretched behind the duellists.

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