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THE MAXIM GUN.

Curious Origin of This Terrible Engine of Destruction.

The origin of the Maxim gun was somewhat curious. Mr. Maxim (Sir Hiram) after the close of the great civil war in America was visiting one of the southern battlefields. He picked up a Springfield rifle and began firing at a target. He soon discovered, to his amazement, that his shoulder was all black and blue with the recoil. This set him thinking, and he soon conceived the idea of utilizing this force in a gun which would fire automatically.

He went to London full of his idea, but no one would listen to him. In Birmingham the chief man in a factory refused to make a bolt gun.

In despair Mr. Maxim packed up his trunks and went to Paris. In two weeks the work was done. This gun Mr. Maxim exhibited in London in 1885. He spoke of it then as the gun of the future. It is now the gun of the present. It is a wonderful gun and a deadly one. By adjusting the indicator it will fire bullets at any rate from one per minute to 600.

This terrible weapon is started by the firing of the first shot. After that it works itself and will keep going as long as cartridges can be fed into the machine. When one belt of 333 is exhausted, all that is necessary is to hook on another.

When the British government gave an order for the gun they stipulated that it should not weigh more than a hundred pounds and should be capable of firing a thousand rounds in four minutes. Mr. Maxim produced a gun which weighed thirty-five pounds and fired 2,000 rounds in three minutes.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

AN IRREGULAR VERB.

One That Made a Frenchman Despair of Learning English.

"What does 'Beat it!' mean?" asked the man of an inquiring frame of mind of his well informed friend.

"Why," was the reply, "that means to go, depart, be off, take your leave, and don't be slow about it. I don't know what it came from unless it is a bit of policeman's slang for 'Get off my beat!' or 'Clear out unless you want me to beat you!'

"I am reminded of a line in one of Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes' amusing poems, scattered through the pages of his delightful 'Autocrat of the Breakfast Table.' It runs:

"Depart! Be off! Exceed!
Evade! Evampe!

But it takes a Latin scholar to discover the derivations of all his verbs of motion.

"There is a story of a Frenchman who on his way to England was made the victim of a practical joke in regard to the verb 'go,' whose 'went,' 'going,' 'gone,' are irregular enough, goodness knows. He was found to be struggling with this variation: 'I go; thou departest; he clears out; we cut stick; you make tracks; they absquatulate,' and as he read it he exclaimed: "Mercy! What irregular verbs you have in your English language!"—New York Tribune.

Getting His Own Back.

An ironworker, having had the worst of an argument with a friend, decided to get even with him.

Waiting, therefore, until his enemy had retired to rest one night, he approached his street door and knocked loudly in order to wake him.

Opening the bedroom window, the other hurriedly inquired what the noise was all about.

"Why," replied the outside one, "one of your windows is wide open."

"Which one?"

"Why, the one you have your head through," chuckled the other as he went away satisfied with the success of his plot.—Illustrated Bits.

Must Charge to Get Crowd.

The ladies' guild of an uptown church had planned an evening entertainment and reception and asked the rector to make announcement of it on the Sunday preceding.

"This is all right," he said, "but you must charge admission."

"Why, this is just a social evening," they protested. "We are inviting people."

"They won't come," said the rector, "because they will think it is not worth while. But charge a small admission and you will have a good crowd." So the women gave in, and subsequent events proved the rector was right.—New York Press.

They Made Her.

A grandmother was reproving her little grandchildren for making so much noise.

"Dear me, children, you are so noisy today! Can't you be a little more quiet?"

"Now, grandma, you mustn't scold us. You see, if it wasn't for us, you wouldn't be a grandma at all."—Harper's Weekly.

One For Each Life.

"I want a good revolver," began the determined looking man.

"Yes, sir," said the salesman. "Six chambers?"

"Why—er—you'd better make it a nine chamber. I want to use it on a cat next door."—London Express.

A Poor Corner.

When a girl puts a man off by saying she will keep a little place in a corner of her heart for him he may be sure that it is a corner for which she doesn't expect to have much use.—Chicago Record-Herald.

Youth holds no society with grief.—Euripides.

LAWS OF WAR.

The Code That Governs Hostilities Between Civilized Nations.

The "laws of war" as at present formulated by the civilized nations forbid the use of poison against the enemy; murder by treachery, as, for example, assuming the uniform or displaying the flag of a foe; the murder of those who have surrendered, whether upon conditions or at discretion; declarations that no quarter will be given to an enemy; the use of such arms or projectiles as will cause unnecessary pain or suffering to an enemy; the abuse of a flag of truce to gain information concerning an enemy's positions; all unnecessary destruction of property, whether public or private.

They also declare that only fortified places shall be besieged, open cities or villages not to be subject to siege or bombardment; that public buildings of whatever character, whether belonging to church or state, shall be spared; that plundering by private soldiers or their officers shall be considered inadmissible; that prisoners shall be treated with common humanity; that the personal effects and private property of prisoners, excepting their arms and ammunition, shall be respected; that the population of an enemy's country shall be considered exempt from participation in the war unless by hostile acts they provoke the ill will of the enemy.

Personal and family honor and the religious convictions of an invaded people must be respected by the invaders and all pillage by regular troops or their followers strictly forbidden.

GOT HIS OMELET.

Why One Man Ceased Trying to Be Funny With Waiters.

"I've never tried to be funny with a waiter," the traveler was saying, "since the time when I had a little experience with one in California. It was several years ago, and I was rather 'fresh.' I stepped into a restaurant one morning and ordered an omelet.

"'What kind?' asked the waiter.

"'Why, are there more kinds than one?' I said.

"'Oh, yes, sir,' he answered me; 'there are several.'

"'Well, bring me an ostrich egg omelet.'

"'All right, sir,' he said, 'but you'll have to wait quite awhile. It takes a long time to make an ostrich egg omelet.'

"I told him I had plenty of time. He went away and was gone fully an hour. Then he came back with a big covered dish.

"'There you are, sir,' he said, placing it before me and uncovering it.

"Well, it was an omelet, all right, and big enough for half a dozen men. Whether there was an ostrich farm in the neighborhood and he got a real ostrich egg or whether he made it from a couple of dozen hens' eggs I don't know, but I distinctly remember that it cost me $2—and I learned a valuable lesson."—Youth's Companion.

An Old Joke.

My Lord Craven, in King James First's Reign, was very desirous to see Ben Jonson, which being told to Ben, he went to my Lord's House; but, being in a very tatter'd Condition, as Poets sometimes are, the Porter refus'd him Admittance, with some saucy Language, which the other did not fail to return. My Lord, happening to come out while they were wrangling, asked the occasion of it. Ben, who stood in need of no-body to speak for him, said, he understood his Lordship desired to see him; you, Friend, said my Lord, who are you? Ben Jonson, reply'd the other. No, no, quoth my Lord, you cannot be Ben Jonson who wrote the Silent Woman, you look as if you could not say Bo to a Goose. Bo, cry'd Ben. Very well, said my Lord, who was better pleas'd at the Joke than offended at the Affront, I am now convinced by your Wit, you are Ben Jonson.—"Joe Miller's Jest Book." 1739.

A Wide Distinction.

Barney Malloy and Mike Cairey were shingling a roof. "Barney," Mike asked, removing a bunch of shingle nails from his mouth and settling back comfortably, "what is the difference between satisfied and content?"

"The difference? Sure, there's none," answered Barney. "If you're satisfied, your're content, and if you're content you're satisfied."

"That was my opinion, too, Barney, me boy, up to now, but it struck me sudden-like as I put that last nail in that I am satisfied, all right, that Molly Cairey is my wife, but I am durned sure I am not content!"

Seatless.

An English hostess was entertaining about 300 people at a reception and had provided only about seventy-five seats. In despair she said to a compatriot: "Oh, I am so distressed! Not three-fourths of these people can sit down!"

"Bless my soul, madam!" he exclaimed. "What's the matter with them?"

The Martial Spirit.

"When you go into battle," said the human analyst, "do you feel your heart surge with hostility toward the foe or anything like that?"

"Yes," answered the military expert. "In time of war we feel even more resentful toward the foe than we feel toward our rival associates in time of peace."—Washington Star.

A Study In Dimensions.

"Jimmy, how large a piece of cake do you want?"

"I want a big piece, but don't gimme so much that I'll have to divide it with sister."

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