

ODDS AND ENDS.

MODERN SHRAPNEL.

DEADLY EFFECT OF THIS FEARFUL IMPLEMENT OF WAR.

What happens when a single projectile suddenly bursts into two hundred separate messengers of death, shells and solid shot.

The improvements in modern guns have embraced all calibers, from that of a small arm firing a projectile only one-third of an inch in diameter to the monster which sends a solid piece of steel 12 inches through and weighing over half a ton. Not only have the guns improved, but also all their accessories, especially powder and projectiles. The smokeless powder of the present has changed the conditions of war almost as much as modern armament.

Keeping step with these advances have been those made in the various classes of projectiles. Even the smallest of these, with its case hardened bullet, far ahead of the old fashioned lead bullet used in the small arms of 30 years ago.

One of the most effective of modern projectiles is the shrapnel. It is one of the forms of case shot. The others were the old-fashioned grape and canister. A case shot may be said to be a collection of missiles in a case, which breaks up either in the air or at some point in flight, thus setting free its death dealing particles.

As soon as the case is broken each of these particles goes on a separate path, and it is a sorry day for the man struck by one of them. All of these falling upon a piece of level ground would mark out an irregular oval, whose area varies with differing conditions. It has been found that the best point to burst the shrapnel is about six yards above and 50 feet in front of the enemy.

Colonel Shrapnel of the British service first invented shrapnel in 1805. This early form consisted simply of a gopher shell filled with bullets and a bursting charge of powder in the space between. This was a crude invention, which scattered the fragments too much and was liable to go off when not expected and not do so when desired.

This form was improved upon during the civil war, and the modern shrapnel can be considered the most dangerous of all life destroying projectiles. It consists of three parts—the tube, the base and the head. The powder charge is in the base, which is firmly attached to the body either by electric welding or by screwing. Leading from the base through the center of the body is a tube which is also filled with powder, which is ignited by the fuse at the point of the shell and carries the fire to the main charge. Between 300 and 300 bullets rest upon a diaphragm just over the powder charge. These are held in place by a matrix of rosin which is melted and poured upon the bullets when in place. A skeleton case of cast iron contains the projectiles for each shell.

The head is put on in the same manner as the base, and when the fuse is inserted the projectile is ready for use. Some shrapnels have the bursting charge in the head instead of the base. These are used in rather complicated, but the United States has as good a one as there is. It is a time fuse and in actual test has shown its reliability.

It can readily be seen that one great objection to the shrapnel is its high cost. The shrapnel costs about \$2.00. The same gun is usually supplied with three styles of ammunition—the solid shot, the shell and the shrapnel. Some batteries are also supplied with canister for use in close quarters. The bullets in the canister have a wider dispersion, because the case breaks up in the gun. Canister was used to repel the famous attack led by the Confederate general Johnston at Gettysburg. A perfect hail of bullets swept the slope leading up to Cemetery Hill, against whose destructive effects human valor was of no avail.

"BURNING STICKS."

Columbus' Impressions on His First Introduction to Smoking Tobacco.

It was on the island of Cuba, in the autumn of 1492, that the use of tobacco was learned by Europeans. Columbus makes the first mention of the weed in his diary under date of Oct. 15. When he and his men landed on Cuban shores, the kindly natives, who mistook them for messengers from heaven, brought them numerous offerings. Among these, as stated by the admiral in his diary, were some "dry leaves, which must be something much prized by them (the natives), for they had already brought some in San Salvador as a present."

Little heed was paid to these leaves in the beginning by the Spaniards. They were in search of gold and saw no possibility of converting miserable weeds into such precious commodities. In the course of time they began to notice that as the natives went to and from their villages and the shore smoke escaped from their mouths, "in a truly diabolical manner." Soon they discovered that these ungodly children of the wilds carried in their hands a "burning stick," which every now and then they would put into their mouths and blow out a cloud of smoke. This had a most headachish look, as it is recorded, to the Spaniards, and they inquired, as well as they could by signs, into the custom.

They learned that the burning sticks were composed of the dried leaves so treasured by the natives, and that the custom of smoking the fragrant weed was supposed to lessen fatigue on long journeys. They tried it for themselves and found this actually to be the case. On many a troublesome jaunt thereafter they were refreshed as the pleasant perfume curled upward from their own "burning sticks."—Detroit Journal.

SPECULATING ON SHIPS.

How Underwriters Gamble on Overseas Vessels Posted at Lloyd's.

When a ship is overdue, an opportunity is sometimes afforded for a gambler at Lloyd's. It can be readily understood that underwriters who are interested in the "overduers" are only too willing to get rid of the risk by paying a premium on the insured rate, to those who are willing, on their terms to relieve them of their responsibilities. The premium varies with the chances of the vessel turning up; the smaller the chances the higher the premium and vice versa.

The rates paying on "overduers" serve as accurate barometers of the probabilities of otherwise of the ship ever being heard of again. These underwriters who speculate on "overduers" are generally known by the significant name of "doctors." The insurance on an "overdue" may pass through many channels before the ship is, on the one hand, "posted" at Lloyd's as "missing," or, on the other hand, she arrives in safety.

A ship is never "posted" until the committee is thoroughly satisfied that her case is hopeless, and until the outstanding amount is put up for a week or two. If this elicits no news, the committee at its next meeting votes the ship as "missing," and a notice is posted accordingly. The loss is then settled and paid for. It may be incidentally remarked that "posting" at Lloyd's constitutes a legal death certificate for any one on board the missing ships.—Good Words.

Smallest and Oldest Republics.

Gonst is the smallest republic as to area, but Tavolara is the smallest republic as to population. Gonst is only one mile in area. It is located on the flat top of a mountain in the Pyrenees, between France and Spain, and is recognized by both of those countries. It is governed by a president and a council of 12. It was established in 1648 and has 130 inhabitants. The president is tax collector, assessor and judge. Gonst has no church, clergyman or cemetery. The people worship in a church outside of their own territory, and the dead bodies are slid down to a cemetery in the valley below. In that valley all the baptisms and marriages are performed. Tavolara is 12 miles northeast of Sardinia. It is an island five miles long by a half-mile wide. Its total population consists of 55 men, women and children. The women go to the polls with the men and elect every year a president and council of six, all serving without pay. The inhabitants support themselves by fishing and raising fruit and vegetables. The republic has no army and no navy.—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Market Quotations on Scalps.

The market price of "scalps," as agreed upon between the early French colonists of Louisiana and the Indians, with whom they bargained to fight out their battles with hostile Indians for their, varied with circumstances. At the time the French were at war with the Alibamons a "scalp" of one of the last named, when brought to them, was paid for at the rate of a gun, five pounds of musket balls and as much powder. "On the 14th of March" (1704), writes De La Harpe, "a party of 20 Chickasaws (Chickasaws) brought in four Alibamon scalps. They were given for each scalp a gun, five pounds of balls and as much of powder, according to the contract made with them."—New Orleans Picayune.

Names of Litigants.

In an old Indiana case a man named Shallercock undertook to live up to his name by running an unlawful ferry, but the decision of the court said to him, "You shall not cross."

The name of an adopted citizen of the Chickasaw Nation, whose adoption was canceled and who was thereupon expelled, was Run Hannah.

A California woman who said in her will "I have no fear of the hereafter; O my Lord, teach me to live right, then I dying there is no sting," bore the prophetic Christian name of Euthansia.

The name Dr. Physick, which might be looked for in some allegory, appears as the name of a real person in a recent law report.

Some peculiarly suggestive combinations of names in the titles of cases are these: People versus Kaiser, Priest versus Lackey, Kick versus Merry, Protected Home Circle versus Winter, Grant versus Lookout Mountain Company.

In reminiscences of the early Minnesota bar Judge Charles E. Flandrau tells in the Minnesota Law Journal of an argument before the supreme court in 1853 by ex-Chief Justice Goodrich on behalf of an Indian convicted of murder. The Indian's name was Zu-ai-za, but as the counsel could not pronounce it he always referred to him in his argument as "my client, Ah-sue-rus."—Case and Comment.

The Irresponsible Small Boy.

This is a true story, and it really happened in a New York family. It looks as if it might be an old story brought up to date or renovated for the occasion, but it is exactly as the small boy arranged it and not to the edification of his family. The small boy was very fond of ice cream. It never cloyed his palate. It was with the same delight that he saw it each time brought on the table, and upon each of these times he showed the exuberance of his feelings by crying in rapturous tones: "Oh—oh! Ice cream! Ice cream! Ice cream!"

"People will think we never have ice cream or anything else to eat," she said to her son one day. "Now, we are going to have company to dinner tonight, and I don't want you to say a word when the ice cream is brought on." The small boy promised. He really was a good little boy, and he intended to mind. But when the cream was brought on the old feeling of rapture was so strong that he forgot entirely and cried out as usual. Then he remembered and stopped short, looking very repentant. He had not intended to call out, and his mother was mortified. He changed his tone entirely: "We have ice cream almost every night," he remarked carelessly.—New York Times.

Painfully Polite.

The people of Dresden are very polite, so overpolite that they not infrequently bring down ridicule upon themselves. It used to be told in that city that a stranger was one day crossing the great bridge that spans the Elbe and asked a native to direct him to a certain church which he wished to find.

"Really, my dear sir," said the Dresden, bowing low, "I give greatly to say it, but I cannot tell you."

The stranger passed on, a little surprised at this valuable answer to a simple question. He had proceeded but a short distance when he heard hurried footsteps behind him, and turning round, saw the same man running to catch up with him.

In a moment his pursuer was by his side, his breath nearly gone, but enough left to say hurriedly: "My dear sir, you asked me how you could find the church, and it pained me to have to say that I did not know. Just now I met my brother, but I grieve to say that he did not know either."

Her Opinion in Full.

The car turned sharply around a curve and the tall man who was holding on to a strap somewhat loosely was suddenly thrown from his upright position with a force that landed him in the lap of a dignified dwager sitting near him, while his high silk hat fell from his head and rolled down the aisle of the car.

"Sir," she said as he rose to his feet again with profuse apologies, "I am compelled to say that in my judgment you were lacking in that complete grasp of the strap which was essential to the highest efficiency in maintaining an upright attitude when turning a curve."

As He Understands It.

"As I understand it," remarked the intelligent foreigner, "you Americans regard George Washington's hatchet as the emblem of truth."

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