

QUIZZING THE CHEMIST.

Curious and Amusing Experiences of Sir Hiram Maxim.

Having occasion to use some metallic mercury in his London laboratory, Sir Hiram Maxim sent his man, Silverman, out to purchase "one pound of metallic mercury in a strong glass bottle with a cork stopper." In "My Life" he tells the story of what happened.

Silverman soon returned and said that he could not find any metallic mercury. I asked him whether he had tried at a shoe shop or a beer shop.

"No," he replied, "at a wholesale chemist's."

I told him he must have made a mess of it somehow, and I sat down and wrote out carefully, "Wanted—one pound of metallic mercury in a strong glass bottle with a cork stopper."

Before long he came back and said that there was no such stuff as "metallic mercury" known in the chemist's shop and that he had been to a wholesale place. As the shop was not more than 200 yards away, I went around with him and said to the man behind the counter:

"I have sent this young man here twice for some metallic mercury, and he tells me that you have nothing of the kind."

"No, we never have any call for it," he replied.

"But is not this a chemist's shop?"

"Yes; one of the largest in London."

"Do you sell all kinds of chemicals?"

"Yes."

"Then how does it happen that you have no metallic mercury?"

"We have never had any call for it before. We do not know what it is."

"Have you any bicarbonate of soda?"

"Yes; tons of it."

"Have you any bicarbonate of potash?"

"Certainly; any amount of it."

"What is bicarbonate of potash a bicarbonate of?"

"Why, naturally of potash."

"Could you let me have some potash before it is made up into a bicarbonate?"

"Certainly."

"Have you any bichloride of mercury?"

"Yes; lots of it."

"What is bichloride of mercury a bichloride of?"

Here I had him. I asked him if it were his first day on duty.

"No; I have been here twenty years."

The head man, who had overheard our conversation, then came up and said, "Why, of course the gentleman wants quicksilver."

Curiously enough, it had never occurred to me to call it by that name, although I ought to have thought of it. However, it never called quicksilver by scientific men.

"I hate to gossip about people, and yet I don't like to go around in society as a prude."

"No need to say a thing, my dear. Just elevate your eyebrows at the proper point, and you'll get along."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

Model Man.

"Was your husband good to you, Mandy?"

"Dread he was, miss. I worked eighteen hours a day for years for dat man, an' he never once found fault wif a thing I did for him."—Detroit Free Press.

Peccanarily Speaking.

"You say that Jenkins owes every thing he has to you."

"Worse. He owes much more than that he has to me."—Boston Transcript.

He that is ungrateful has no guilt but one. All other crimes may pass for virtues in him.

BUYING A DIAMOND.

If Money is No Object You Can Get an Absolutely Perfect Stone.

The properly cut diamond has fifty-eight facets, including the table and culet, thirty-two facets above the girdle and twenty-four facets below. The surface of the table should be 40 per cent of the whole.

Perfect, colorless stones form only 5 per cent of all the diamonds produced. A diamond is considered perfect in formation when no flaw or imperfection can be detected under the ordinary "loop" or magnifying glass used by jewelers. The flaws usually found are carbon spots (where the carbon has not crystallized perfectly), feathers, bubbles, hairs, flaky formation, like that in a piece of ice when struck by a hammer. The absolutely perfect stone must be free from all of these defects and cut in the right proportions. The "clean" diamond is free from any flaws or inclusions and is most difficult to find. Many of these flaws are so small as to be imperceptible to the naked eye and really do not affect the brilliancy and beauty of the stone.

Do not expect to get an absolutely perfect stone for any reasonable figure, for they are so rare as to command excessive prices. If you want a good stone see to it that it is of good color and brilliancy and is well cut.

The real requirement of a diamond is that it make a proper effect, and the minute flaws which can be found only with a strong microscope are not worthy of consideration by the ordinary purchaser who wishes to have a good stone almost exclusively for decorative purposes.

If money is no object and you are willing to pay \$500 or more per carat you may hope to secure an absolutely flawless stone, but for all usual purposes you are wasting half of the money expended. —New York American.

WHEN YOU GET ANGRY.

Influence of the Emotion Upon the Adrenal Glands.

Just above the kidneys there are two small glands, each about as big as a pea, known as suprarenal capsules or adrenal glands. They belong to that small group of glands in our bodies which have no ducts and whose secretions, whatever they are, pass directly into the blood. These two little glands play an enormous part in the physiology of hate.

The secretion of these little glands is called adrenalin, and its secretion cannot be controlled by the will. When it is poured into the blood the amount of sugar in the blood will rise in the course of a few minutes between 10 and 30 per cent.

A strong emotion, such as hate, causes an increased secretion of adrenalin in the glands and simultaneously an increase of sugar in the blood, and this sudden accession of sugar supplies the muscles with a much needed food. So that one of the effects of the secretion of adrenalin would be a direct benefit to a man in a rage wishing to exercise stern muscular effort involving fight, conflict or struggle. It has been proved that the removal of the adrenal glands has a weakening effect on muscular power, and an injection of adrenalin has an invigorating effect, and not only does adrenalin bring out sugar from the liver stock to feed the muscles, but it also restores fatigued muscles, at least temporarily.

Men in a state of hatred, therefore, are in the same condition as men who are putting out their utmost physical effort. They are in a condition, should they come across the object of their hate, to exert the maximum harm upon it. —New York American.

BASEBALL HEROES OF OLD.

Two Famous Pitchers, Amos Rusie and Poor Charley Ferguson.

Not a few of the more than 150 veterans to whom my nearly half a century old question was aimed would hear to none other than the mighty Amos Rusie as the greatest pitcher of all time. For his miraculous speed he is famous in the minds of the fans who watched, for this speed and nothing else. But ball players tell me that his sharp curve ball, that broke almost directly over the plate, was even harder to hit than was his fast ball. They are willing to go on record as saying that on two occasions when Treadway of the old Brooklyn was at the plate, his feet far apart in his customary position when batting, this amazing inshoot thrown up by the mighty Amos darted swiftly from the plate and whizzed between the batter's legs.

Give Rusie a dark day and a little ball and woe to the team that was seeking a better batting average. In his day the league balls were made in two sizes. Often, too, in those days one ball only was used throughout the game. It was part of the official scorer's duty to toss out the ball, and it was optional with him whether the little or the big ball was put in play. When the old New York team appeared on the field at Pittsburgh for a series one day the sun was obscured and storm clouds hung low over the diamond. The man who then was captain of the Pittsburgh team told me the story. "If it's Amos today," I said to John Gruber, "give him the big ball. If it's anybody else, it doesn't matter."

"The score card said, 'German or Rusie for New York.' So out came the little ball. But when the game started Rusie went to the box. And on that black day, and with that little ball in play, what he did to us I'll not forget, no, not in a million years."

In the progress of my inquiry I heard many a time the remark, "If poor Charley Ferguson only had lived!"

Poor Ferguson! He was in the spotlight only long enough to be picked by a practically unanimous public as not only the greatest pitcher who up to that time ever lived, but the greatest all around player as well.

One of his methods of testing his control of the ball was to place on end on a stool at the plate the frame of a cigar box. Then he would go out into the pitcher's box and try to pitch the ball through the little oblong space thus presented. There are living today men who remember to have seen Ferguson pitch—pitch, mind you, not toss—the ball through the frame of the cigar box four times out of five trials.—Elmer Ellsworth Bates in Leslie's.

Big Guns.

Lord Kitchener at a dinner once apologized for his want of eloquence.

"I can't speak. That is why I don't," he said. "I think it is better to keep silent than to put you to sleep. The officers of the British army are noted for their inability to make a public speech. Whenever an officer is foolish enough to rise to answer a toast the guests say to one another significantly as he sits down: "Well, you know, the bigger the gun the bigger the bore."

Island of Lemnos.

The island of Lemnos, in the Aegean sea, has a long and varied history, but is now noted chiefly for its medicinal earth. This earth, which has been highly esteemed in the east since classic times as a cure for numerous ailments and an antidote to poison, comes from a dry mound near the village of Kotschinos and can only be dug before day-break on one day in the year—Aug. 6—when Greek priest and Turkish hodja both attend and go through an elaborate ceremonial.

A Tale of Heroism.

"I went for a bath yesterday," said an Auvergnat. "I had been in the water some time when I suddenly perceived an enormous shark advancing toward me with its jaws open. What was I to do? When he was a yard off I dived, took out my pocketknife and ripped up the monster."

"What! Then you are in the habit of bathing with your clothes on?" said one of the listeners.—From the French.

Revenge.

His Father—If you marry old Stubbs' daughter you shan't have a shilling of my money!
The Son—But, father, if I don't marry her I can't get a shilling of old Stubbs' money.
His Father (with a grudge to satisfy)—My own boy! Marry her and render that old skinflint penniless! —London Standard.

HELPING THE PRESIDENT.

John Cheerfully Backed McKinley in a Diplomatic Crisis.

At the time of the Boxer rebellion President McKinley was taking a needed rest at his home in Canton, O. The long distance telephone was situated between two windows running to the floor of the room. Under one of them, projecting from the foundation of the house, was a faucet of water to the lawn. One morning the president was called to the long distance telephone by Secretaries Hay and Root. A message had been received in Washington from the czar of all the Russias and the German emperor. It requested that the president of the United States should place the American soldiers under the command of Count Waldersee, the German general, in order to insure harmony of action on the part of the allied armies.

There was some paring going on in the street opposite the house, and as the day was warm the workmen became thirsty, so one of their number was sent for water. While the chief executive was consulting with his secretaries concerning this important matter over the telephone, John walked up, hung his pall on the faucet and turned on the water. The water running into the pall made a great deal of noise and disturbed the president, the windows being open. He asked his secretaries to wait a moment, and then, leaning forward and looking out of the window, said:

"John, that water running in the pall makes a very disturbing noise, and I am busy talking over the long distance telephone. Please turn it off for a few moments."

"All right, major," replied John, and turning off the water he filled his pipe and lighted it, and then, sitting down with his back to the house, listened to the conversation which the president was carrying on.

Here was the ruler of a hundred millions of people engaged in the transaction of most important and serious public business, and there was a common laborer intruding himself into the transaction, but McKinley was not impatient, nor did he resent this interference. He dictated to his secretaries over the telephone the reply, consenting that the American troops should be placed under the command of the German general on the condition that this government at any time reserved the right to revoke the permission, provided the policy of the army so commanded ran in any way counter to the ideas of the United States.

Having dictated this important dispatch, the president hung up the receiver.

"John," he said, "I am through now, and you can turn on the water again." John did so and then, leaning on the window sill, said:

"Major, I hope you are going to settle that Chinese question all right. You don't need to be too darn yielding, for all of us boys are behind you."—New York Times.

Inspiration in Dreams.

Coleridge must be added to the list of authors who have found inspiration in dreams, for he himself has told us that he composed over 200 lines of the "Kubla Khan" during a sleep of three hours. On awaking he wrote down the fragment now existing, but the interruption of a visitor banished the rest from his mind. The first idea of "The Ancient Mariner," too, was suggested to the poet by a dream of his friend Cruikshank. And Kipling's "Greatest Story in the World" was but the half remembered dream of a commonplace young man.—London Mail.

What Makes Mirrors Reflect?

Mirrors that are made of glass have metal placed on one side of the glass. The light will pass through the glass, but will not pass through the metal backing. Light has the property of bounding from a surface that it cannot penetrate, the same as a ball would when thrown against a surface that it cannot penetrate. The light passes through the glass of the mirror, meets the metal backing and then bounds from it. This bounding of the light from the metal surface is called reflection, and mirrors are said to reflect.—St. Nicholas.

A German Legend.

The Germans have a legend of Frederick Barbarossa that he is not dead, but in an enchanted sleep, sitting with his knights at a marble table in the cavern of Kyffhausen, in the Harz mountains. His long red beard has grown during this long enchantment and, covering the table, descends to the floor, and he sits thus waiting the moment that will set him free. There he has been kept for long centuries. There he must stay for aces.

One of a Pair.

The applicant for the post of butler seemed somewhat dense, but in other respects fairly suitable. Almost as an after thought the mistress of the house put a final query "I suppose you are a single man?" she asked.

"Er—er—no, mum," he stammered. "I'm twins!"—London Opinion.

His Objection.

Scottish Bachelor—Will ye hae some tea? Visitor—Oh, please don't trouble! Bachelor—It's no the trouble; it's just the expense.—London Punch.

Hard Work.

"Pa, what is meant by lit'rary endeavor?" "Trying to sell the stuff, son."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

The more that fortune smiles the more one ought to tremble.—F. de Neufchateau.



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The War Department.

The war department as an executive department of the government of the United States was established by an act of congress on Aug. 7, 1789. The secretary of war ranks third among the cabinet members in the line of succession to the presidency. He has charge of all matters relating to military affairs, subject to the direction of the president, the distribution of stores, the signal service, the survey and improvement of harbors and the administration of the insular possessions.

INSECT MARVELS.

What the Hop Aphid Unchecked Would Do in One Year.

Few persons, writes James Buckland in a report of the Smithsonian Institution, realize how enormous is the number of insect species or how amazing is their power of multiplication. The number of insect species is greater by far than that of the species of all other living creatures combined. More than 300,000 have been described, and probably twice that number remain to be examined. Virtually all living animals, as well as most plants, supply food for these innumerable hordes. The fecundity of certain insect forms is astounding.

Riley once computed that the progeny of the hop aphid, which sees thirteen generations born to it in a single year, would, if unchecked to the end of the twelfth generation, multiply to the inconceivable number of ten sextillions of individuals. Supplementing that calculation, Forbush says that if this brood were marshaled in line, ten to the inch, it would extend to a point so sunk in the profundity of space that light from the head of the procession, traveling at the rate of 184,000 miles a second, would take 2,500 years to reach the earth.

Kirkland has computed that in eight years the progeny of one pair of gypsy moths could destroy all the foliage in the United States. A Canadian entomologist declares that in one season the descendants of a pair of potato bugs would, if unchecked, number 60,000,000.

The voracity of insects is almost as astounding as their power of reproduction. The daily ration in leaves of a caterpillar is equal to twice its own weight. If a horse were to eat as much he would require a ton of hay every twenty-four hours. Forbush says that a certain flesh eating larva will consume in twenty-four hours 200 times its original weight. A human child, to do as well, would have to eat in the first day of its life 1,500 pounds of beef.

Trouvelot, who made a special study of the subject, affirms that the food taken by a single silk worm in fifty-six days equals 80,000 times its original weight at hatching. What destruction this one insect would cause if even a one-hundredth part of its eggs ever hatched! The facts show how great is the value to man of the insect eating birds.

Sir Isaac Newton never attempted to tell the people of his day what gravitation was. His very frank statement was as follows: "I do not anywhere take it upon me to define the kind or manner of any action, the causes or physical reasons thereof or attribute forces in a true and physical sense to certain centers when I speak of them as attracting or ended with attractive powers."

An Explanation and a Hint.

"How do you account for his remarkable success?"

"I don't know unless it was that he was always too busy on his own work to stop and spend time trying to account for the success of others."—Detroit Free Press.

There Was One.

Judge—What's your charge against the prisoner? Complainant—Burglary. He stole \$5 from me at the station. Judge—But for burglary there must be a breaking! Complainant—Well, your honor, when he took the five he broke me.—Boston Transcript.

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