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MYSTERY OF SMELL.

PROBLEMS AWAITING THE ATTENTION OF SCIENTIFIC MEN.

Some of the Remarkable Things Noticeable About Various Odors—Evidences of the Remarkable Development of the Sense of Smell.

One subject which in this scientific age has not been made the matter of thorough scientific investigation is the sense of smell. Our knowledge of the science of odors remains about where it was 50 years ago, although we have learned so much about light, heat and sound. The old imperfect classification of smells into "pungent, saline and saccharine" still remains. Indeed, about all that most of us know is that some smells are agreeable and some decidedly the reverse. There is no standard of smell, no unit odor established as a base of comparison. We do not know when one smell is twice as strong as another. As a famous chemist said, "Quantitative analysis has not yet been applied to the skunk."

A writer in The Independent does, indeed, say that on an examination of several thousand flowers he found that there was a connection between color and perfume. He finds that of white flowers 14 per cent gave out agreeable odors; of gray ones, 11 per cent; of red, a little over 8 per cent; of yellow, a little over 6 per cent; of blue, 4 per cent, and of green, only 2 per cent But, further, yellow flowers contain the largest number with a disagreeable odor, and the white the next largest. But this analysis is vitiated by the fact that a perfume agreeable to one person may be sickening to another.

There is no æsthetic standard of smells, and there are but few which all declare to be delightful. An English manufacturer of perfume asserts that he is able to combine odors so as to produce a certain effect and talks of a perfume scale, but this seems rather commercial than scientific. If he could really produce an odor which everybody would recognize by the combination of different smell elements, the foundation of a science of smell would be laid.

One remarkable thing about odor is that the emission of it does not appreciably diminish the mass of the body from which it is given off A grain of musk may fill a room with odor for years and weigh as much at the end of the time as it did at the beginning. Its weight must have been diminished, for it is impossible to believe that an effect on our organs of sense can be produced without an impact of material particles from a source of energy, but the amount of matter dissipated is infinitesimal in the case of an odorous body.

The sense of smell is apparently universal, but stronger in animals than in men. The lowest orders smell with their mouths, insects smell with their hairs, fishes smell in water, and the acuteness of the power of smell in dogs and in savages is well known. Humboldt says that Peruvian Indians could tell in the darkest night whether the person approaching was a European, a negro or an American Indian. In those deprived of the other senses the power of analyzing odors is sometimes abnormally developed.

The Scotch boy James Mitchell, a blind, deaf mute, could distinguish the individuals in a room into which he was led. John Mossman, a deaf mute at Parkersburg, W. Va., was able to locate oil wells with the certainty that a setter finds partridges. His nose brought him a fortune of $500,000 as fees for professional smelling. It is strange that no one has trained a dog to point petroleum. Possibly a dog might be taught to "stand" a nugget of gold in the frozen soil of Alaska, as pigs find truffles in Perigord, for metals have a characteristic smell. It is probable that everything gives off a characteristic effluvium, though our sense is not delicate enough to detect the subtler ones.

Some gases, like hydrogen, have no odor; others, like chlorine and the product of the Hartford Gas company, have a very perceptible one. There is a general idea that a body must possess a molecular weight 15 times as great as that of hydrogen before it can affect the olfactory nerves of human beings, but even that needs confirmation. We frequently confound taste and smell, and it is said that no one can distinguish an onion from an apple by taste alone.

Some odors cling to the surface of things, as the odor of game, which rarely rises much above the ground; others are rapidly diffused through the air. Why is this? No one knows. One of the most singular things about the sense of smell is that it is not subject to illusions. Sight may be deceived. One may imagine he sees things which are not before him; he may hear a roaring in his ears when there is no sound, but it is said that even the insane are not subject to olfactory delusions. There are no ghost smells. If this is true, what is the reason, what is the explanation, of the phenomenon? Again, why are the earth and fields so much more fragrant in the morning than at noon, when, on the other hand, the strength of most odors is increased by heat?

The scientific men ought at least to "make a bluff" at some of these problems. As it is, here is an original sense of power of perception of the utmost refinement, older, probably, than the sense of sight, a power for the exercise of which we use a complicated mechanical and nervous mechanism, the nature and modus operandi of which are as much a matter of conjecture as were those of the senses of sight and smell 1,000 years ago Evidently science has not discovered everything yet.—Hartford Courant.

Nothing New.

"No," said the long haired poet, "I cannot write at all times. The divine afflatus only urges my pen at certain inspired moments."

"I see," said the busy editor; "same old plea—temporary insanity."—New York Journal.

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California.—Four tours, leaving New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburg January 8, January 27, February 16, and March 19. With the exception of the first party going and the last returning, all of these parties will travel by the "Golden Gate Special" between New York and California, stopping at intersecting points *en route*.

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Tickets for the above tours will be sold from all principal stations on the Pennsylvania Railroad.

For detailed itineraries, giving rates and full information, address Geo. W. Boyd, Assistant General Passenger Agent, Philadelphia.

The Florida Limited via The Southern Railway to be Resumed.

The Southern Railway now operates two trains daily to Jacksonville and St. Augustine, and will inaugurate a third, the Florida Limited in January 1898.

If you are going to Florida at any season of the year, you should ask for tickets via the Southern Railway. All information can be obtained by writing Jno. M. Beall, District Passenger Agent, 828 Chestnut street, Philapelphia.

Reduced Rates to Baltimore.

The B., C. & A. Railway Co. will sell five-day excursion tickets to Baltimore at the following low rates: From Claiborne, $1.55; McDaniel, $1.60; Harper, $1.65; St. Michaels, $1.75; Royal Oak, $1.85; Kirkham, $1.90; Bloomfield, $2.00; Easton, $2.10; Bethlehem, $2.35; Preston, $2.45. The above rates also apply from Baltimore to points mentioned above. These tickets are not for any special trip, but for any and all trips until further notice. T. MURDOCH, Passenger Agent.
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The Southern Railway.

If you are going to any point in the South, Southwest, Mexico or California, ask for a ticket via the Southern Railway. It reaches all prominent points. All information cheerfully furnished by Jno. M. Beall, District Passenger Agent, 828 Chestnut street, Philadelphia.

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†7:22 a. m.—Ac. York B. & H. Div.; main line east of Emory Grove, also Carlisle and G. & H. R. R.
*8.11 a. m.—Main Line, Chambersburg, Frederick, Emmittsburg and N. & W. R.R. to Shenandoah.
§9:30 a. m.—Accom. for Union Bridge and Hanover.
†10:17 a. m.—Accom. for Union Bridge, York, Gettysburg, also Carlisle and G. & H. R. R.
†2:25 p. m.—Accom. for Emory Grove.
§2:35 p. m.—Accom. for Union Bridge.
†3:32 p. m.—Exp. York and B. & H. Div.
§4.00 p. m.—Accomm. for Emory Grove.
*4.08 p. m.—Ex. Main Line Points, also Frederick, Emmittsburg, Shippenburg and N. & W. R. R.
†5:10 p. m.—Accom. for Emory Grove.
§6:10 p. m.—Accom. for Union Bridge.
§10.45 p. m.—Accom. for Emory Grove.
x11.25 P. M.—Accom. for Emory Grove.
*Daily. †Daily ex. Sunday. §Sunday only

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J. M. HOOD, G. M. B. H. GRISWOLD, G.P.A

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Two Johns		Kirby's	
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Kingston		Bellevne	
Dover Bridge	1.30 P.M	Double Mills	
Hog Island		Easton	9.30P.M
Windy Hill		Oxford	10.30PM
Choptank		Corner's	
Wrights		Tilghmnn's	11.30P.M

Arriving in Baltimore at 5.00 o'clock following morning. Returning the steamers leave Baltimore from Pier 4 Light st Wharf at 7 o'clock p. m. daily, except Sunday, for all points named and arriving at Easton about 3.00 a. m. Oxford 3.45, Cambridge 6.00, East New Market 7.00 and Denton 11 a.m. Connections at Easton, Oxford and Cambridge with railroads for all points.

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