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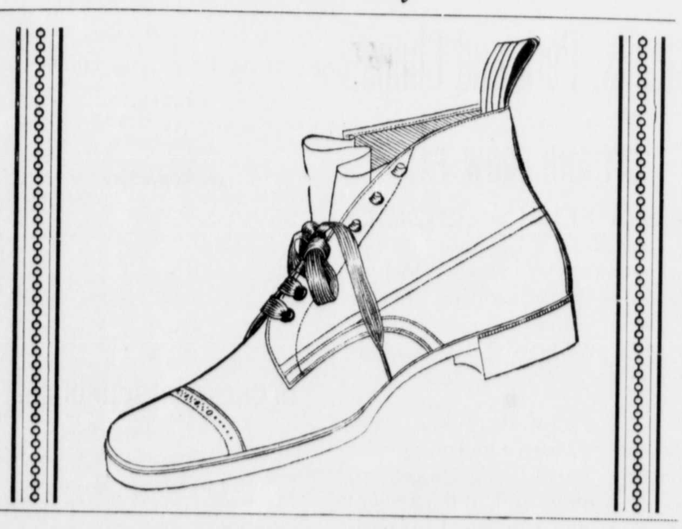

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PHOSPHORESCENCE.

Animal and Vegetable Light Rank Among Nature's Mysteries.

Animal phosphorescence is one of the most surprising and least understood of nature's phenomena. The pale, bluish white light of the glowworm has been found by naturalists to be dependent upon the motion of the insect's body or legs. From this it would seem that the phosphorescence depends upon some nervous action, regulated at pleasure by the insect, for it has the power of obscuring it entirely. If the glowworm be crushed and the face or hands rubbed with it, luminous streaks like those produced by phosphorus will appear. They shine more brightly in oxygen gas and in nitrous acid.

The power of emitting luminous rays belongs to several varieties of fly and three species of beetle of the genus elater. One of the most brilliant of these is the great lantern fly of South America, which gives enough light to enable a person to read by the rays from a single insect. Numerous classes of these flies are found in Surinam, where they illuminate the darkness in a most remarkable manner.

In some of the bogs of Ireland lives a worm which gives out a bright green light, a fitting color for the Emerald Isle. There are many other kinds of insects which become luminous in the dark.

Yet there are many curious instances of phosphorescence in dead animals and vegetable matter, the lobster among crustaceans, the whiting among fishes and decayed wood being striking examples. Their emission of light seems to depend, however, not upon putrefaction, for as this progresses their luminosity diminishes, but upon certain unknown atmospheric conditions. This phosphorescence of decayed matter has been regarded as somewhat different from the slow combustion of phosphorus, but upon examination all the chemical conditions are found to be the same.

The strange phosphorescent quality of some plants and flowers is not exactly the same as that possessed by animal matter, but it is as little understood. It seems to be an absorption of light and a subsequent liberation of it. If a nasturtium is plucked during sunshine and carried into a dark room, the eye, after it has reposed for a few moments, will discover the flower by the light emitted from its leaves.

The phosphorescence of the sea is due to a living animal, which gives out its light under nervous excitement, as when it is stirred by the motion of a passing vessel.

A Million or More of Deaf Mutes.

Recent estimation places the number of deaf mutes in the world at more than 1,000,000. This great number of human beings, living a life which a normal person cannot conceive, is destined to increase because of the tendency of these people to marry persons laboring under the same disability.

Examination of the records of 4,500 marriages of deaf persons shows 9 per cent of the children to be deaf, while only one-tenth of 1 per cent of the offspring of an equal number of marriages of normal persons are likely to be afflicted with deafness. Deaf parents whose relatives are not deaf run no greater chances of having deaf children than persons who can hear, but in the case of normal persons in whose families there are members who are deaf the danger of deaf children is, according to Professor E. A. Fay, who has studied the question, just as great as among deaf people.—New York Press.

Hens Is Curious Animals.

A boy who was required to write an essay on hens produced the following: "Hens is curious animals. They don't have no nose nor no teeth nor no ears. They swallow their whittles whole and chew it up in their crops inside of 'em. The outside of hens is generally put into pillers and into feather dusters. The inside of a hen is sometimes filled with marbles and shirt buttons and sich. A hen is very much smaller than a good many other animals, but they'll dig up more tomato plants than anything that ain't a hen. Hens is very useful to lay eggs for plum puddings. Hens have got wings and can fly when they get frightened. I cut off a hen's head with a hatchet, and it frightened her to death."

Sleep.

Up to the fifteenth year most young people require ten hours' sleep and till the twentieth year nine hours. After that age every one finds out how much he or she requires, though, as a general rule, at least six to eight hours are necessary. Eight hours' sleep will prevent more nervous derangements in women than any medicine can cure. During growth there must be ample sleep if the brain is to develop to its fullest extent, and the more nervous, excitable or precocious a child is the longer sleep it should get if its intellectual progress is not to come to a premature standstill or its life cut short at an early age.

Her Dilemma.

Ethel—I can't decide which of them to accept.

Kate—Why, that ought to be easy.

Ethel—I know; but, you see, Jack always gives me roses, and Reggie always gives me violets, and the florist tells me they cost exactly the same price.—Cincinnati Commercial Tribune.

Her Attractiveness.

Mr. Nervey—Miss Roxley, I adore you. Will you not be my wife?

Miss Roxley (haughtily)—The idea of your proposing to a girl in my station! You should know better.

Mr. Nervey—I do know better, but no richer.—Philadelphia Press.

We are all clever enough at envying a famous man while he is yet alive and at praising him when he is dead.

FAVORITE AGES OF WOMEN.

They Appear to Range Between Sixteen and Twenty-four Years.

It may seem strange that women have preferences for particular ages. An inspection of the census, however, leaves no room for doubt that certain years are preferred and certain other years disliked by the members of the gentler sex.

Of children fourteen years and under the number of boys is nearly 400,000 greater than the number of girls; at fifteen the boys are still 6,000 ahead of the girls; at sixteen the girls are 6,000 the more numerous, and each year thereafter until the twenty-fourth there is an excess of women over men. The favorite ages within these limits are eighteen and twenty. There are 24,000 more misses of eighteen than there are boys of that age, and the young ladies twenty years old exceed their masculine companions by 54,000. At twenty-four and twenty-five the numbers of the two sexes are nearly equal. Then the women begin to grow less with great rapidity. The most unpopular ages are thirty and forty. At the former age there is a difference of 78,000 between the two sexes; at the latter 83,000.

One peculiar circumstance is that there are more women twenty years old than there are girls of thirteen or fourteen or any age up to twenty. This fact conclusively demonstrates that twenty is a very healthful age. But if the younger ages are unhealthy, where did the increased number who are twenty years old come from? No women are born that old.

Only an unusually elastic theory can account for these peculiarities with becoming gallantry to the lovelier sex.—J. S. Gilham in Ladies' Home Journal.

YANKEE DOODLE.

The Original Version Dates From the Time of Oliver Cromwell.

The lively strains of "Yankee Doodle" are heard at every patriotic celebration, says a writer in Collier's Weekly, yet perhaps few of those whose pulses stir at the sound of the familiar notes are aware that it dates from the time of Oliver Cromwell and crossed the seas with the Puritans.

"Nankee Doodle" was one of the nicknames bestowed by the Cavaliers on the hated Roundhead, and a verse written upon Cromwell's entry into Oxford, riding on a small horse with a plume twisted into a sort of knot called a "macaroni," runs as follows:

Nankee Doodle came to town
Upon a little pony,
With a feather in his hat
Upon a macaroni.

The transition from Nankee to Yankee—which came from Yengee, the Indian word for English—was very easy, and the Royalists used it as a jeer at all New Englanders.

When the Colonials in Boston, preparing for the coming war, smuggled muskets into the country, concealing them in loads of manure, the Tories sang to the old tune of "Lucy Fisher:"

Yankee Doodle came to town
For to buy a firelock;
We will tar and feather him,
And so we will John Hancock.

When the British forces marched to the battles of Concord and Lexington their approach was heralded by "God Save the King," but when the "Yankee farmers" saw the foe in full retreat the strains of "Yankee Doodle" accompanied their flight, and from that hour, wherever the stars and stripes have floated, the once despised tune has been heard.

Galileo's Wit.

Galileo's wit, according to a biography, got him into trouble when he put into the mouth of Simplicio, the foolish opponent of the Copernican theory in his "Dialogues," an argument that Pope Urban VIII. had himself devised and insisted on Galileo incorporating in the work. Galileo made Simplicio quote it as an argument he had from a "very eminent and learned personage." The enemies of Galileo persuaded Urban that he had been "made game of," and this was the offense of which Galileo was guilty. It was not for upholding the theory that the sun stands still and the earth moves that Galileo was tried by the inquisition. Urban himself had supported the Copernican doctrines both as cardinal and as pope.

A Continuous Smoke.

In the Philippines the use of tobacco is universal. The native child acquires the tobacco habit as soon as it is able to walk. In the northern provinces especially it is no uncommon sight to see a child five or six years old puffing vigorously at a big cigar. The women smoke fully as much as the men and commonly smoke cigars where the men use cigarettes. In the northern parts of Luzon immense cigars often a couple of feet long and as thick as the wrist are used. Such a cigar is suspended from a rafter of the house by a string and smoked during the day by all the members of the family as desired.

Impossible Shakespeare.

Critic—Marvelous drama of yours, sir. There's a scene in that play that Shakespeare himself could not have written.

Author—Indeed! You are too flattering.

Critic—I was referring to that railway smash in the third act.—London Tit-Bits.

A Daring Man.

"He's the kind of a man who courts danger, I understand."

"Well, I should say so. Why, he does not hesitate to open a flirtation with any young widow he meets."—Chicago Post.

Energy will do anything that can be done in this world, and no talents, no circumstances, no opportunities, will make a man without it.—Goethe.

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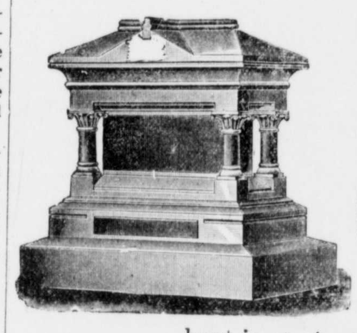

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