

Hair's Change Never Explained by Science

To a recent number of T. P.'s and Cassell's Weekly, Prof. J. Arthur Thomson—who is a kind of self-appointed British pope of popular science, and a very good one, too—elucidates the causes that make people's hair turn gray.

The subject was dealt with very successfully a number of years ago by Professor Poulton, the Oxford entomologist, in his book, "Animal Colouration," on which Professor Thomson is evidently basing his own ideas.

The story of the responsible bankers whose hair turned gray in a single week during times of crisis like the World War is probably quite true. Such cases are not uncommon in history. Marie Antoinette's hair, for example, is said to have turned white in a very short time as a result of emotional distress; and similar instances are recorded by a number of medieval writers.

The sudden change of color is due to the intrusion of little bubbles of gas into the substance of the hair, which reflects the light and prevents the pigment, which is still present, from showing.

British Expert Sees Addition to Wealth

Experiments in producing oil from coal, in which various science departments at Birmingham (England) university have been collaborating for three years, have shown that 61 per cent of liquid can be extracted from Lancashire coal by powdering it and subjecting it to very high pressures of hydrogen gas.

Modern Fowls Mere Amateurs Egg Layers

The ostrich lays the biggest thing in the egg line at the present age in the world's history. Hard boiled, it weighs three pounds, and would make a good breakfast for a large family.

The kiwi, a New Zealand bird, which itself weighs only about four pounds, lays an egg weighing 14 ounces. But the egg of the extinct aepyornis, which may be found in museums, is as large as 150 average hens' eggs.

The Modern Hostess

She was preparing for an elaborate dinner party at which the guest of honor was to be a distinguished Japanese visitor to San Francisco. To get the desired effects she had called in an interior decorator, a son of Nippon, and ordered him to design a flower scheme for the table.

Two Spinster Immortals

Maria Edgeworth is regarded as the inventor of the novel with a purpose, of which kind "Castle Rackrent," which sent her name into immediate fame in 1800, is a typical example.

Her society was courted by "everybody who was anybody." Byron admired her, and Macaulay was among her enthusiastic worshippers. There is no doubt she is worth reading today, if only for the naturalness and vivacity and character-revealing nature of her dialogue.

High Living Cause of Nervous "Break"

"Nervous breakdowns," Sir William Bennett announces in England, are increasing greatly. Thirty years ago, he says, there was no such thing recognized by the medical profession or the public. Now the number of cases is astonishing.

There is the same situation in this country. If anything, it is worse here. One hears talk nowadays of friends and acquaintances suffering from "nervous breakdowns" just as commonly as one heard of appendicitis cases when that disease was in its heyday.

What is the cause? Apparently the high speed of living. Too much activity of body and mind. Covering too much ground. Not necessarily too much exertion—too much exhausting of energy.

People live too emotionally, living in their feelings, letting themselves be hauled this way and that, when they might keep calm minds in the midst of action, like the steady driver at the wheel of a speeding car.

The man in calm control of his own mind and spirit doesn't break down. And simple, plain, nourishing food, adapted to the eater's real needs, helps immensely by freeing him from the internal toxins which destroy mental poise and power.

Turns From Bloody Career

Felix Dzerjinsky, the Communist Torquemada, the "salutary executioner," the head of the Russian "Cheka" since the Bolshevik advent, has changed his character and become a constructive business man, according to advices from the land of the Soviets.

Duke Wields Trowel

The duke of Argyll, hereditary master of the royal household in Scotland and chief of the Campbell clan, is devoting much time to work as a stonemason on a tower that is being constructed near Inverary castle.

Queer Combat

"I saw a mighty queer fight in town this afternoon," related Farmer Fumblegate, upon his return from the county seat. "A fat young feller and a thin old one fit mighty near all around the public square, tumbling down, rolling around, getting up and whacking away at each other some more, and so on."

"Mercy sakes!" ejaculated his wife. "What was the fight about?" "That was the funny part. Both said they weren't fighting for the principle of the thing, but b'cuz one had cheated the other out of \$2.—Kansas City Star.

Early Sign of Winter

One of the first trees to warn us of the approach of winter is the red maple of the eastern states, says the American Tree Association of Washington, which for a stamp sends free tree-planting suggestions. The light green of its small leaves turn to reds and yellows, some with red outstanding, others with yellow. The poplars are also early chroniclers of fall, their leaves turning yellow early, but dropping quickly.

Printing Industry Big

From 1923, establishments in the United States engaged primarily in printing and publishing newspaper, and periodicals reported a total output valued at \$1,269,501,566, an increase of 12.9 per cent as compared with 1921, the last preceding census year. Exactly 10,267 establishments reported.

Odd Coincidence

Three women—all strangers—met in a Portland (Maine) hotel elevator by chance, and they all wore dresses exactly alike. They became curious and an exchange of questions and answers developed the fact that one gown was bought in California, another in Kansas City and the third in Boston.

World Prowler Keeps Habits Under Control

The world traveler has just come in. Most of his life is spent in prowling around unfrequented parts of the globe for the government, discovering new plants and fruits and what not. Between times he is apt to go traveling on his own, for he is forever hearing about something in which the government is not interested but is for the moment the one great thing in life for him, "J. P." writes in the Kansas City Times.

"Must be sort of—er—upsetting," I said clumsily. What I was trying to say was that he did not live the nice, rule-ordered, all-bound-round-with-a-woolen-string kind of a life the rest of us do. "Don't you get kind of—er—hungry for the comforts of civilization now and then?"

He said that in the first place barbarism had as many comforts as civilization, if only one knows how to get and handle them. In the second place he never permitted himself to want something he could not get. So saying he produced a cigarette case stamped in gold by an artisan back of the beyond and handed out a cigarette that was a sheik's dream of heaven.

"How about cigarettes?" I said. "And coffee? And such things?" The world traveler said that was all right. He enjoyed tobacco and coffee and all the rest of what he considered the world's luxuries. But he never permitted himself to form a habit. He smoked cigarettes for a week or so and then a pipe. Or he would stop smoking for a time. After having black coffee in the morning for a time he would change to tea and then to coffee with hot milk and then to hot water.

"Try it," he said. "One handicaps one's self by permitting a habit to take command. I have traveled with men who were miserable when their cigarettes were exhausted. I never think of them when they are gone."

It's worth trying—to form the habit of defying habit. One is something of a chump, after all, to let one's appetite get out of control.

Too Much Talk

Charles M. Schwab, at a banquet in Loretto, was cornered by a young man of great loquacity. This young man evidently believed that his chance in life was now come, and he talked away at Mr. Schwab for more than half an hour. At last he said meaningly:

"You are a good judge of character, Mr. Schwab. What quality do I most need in order to succeed?"

"Well, young man," the steel magnate answered, "I've listened to you for some time now, and it seems to me that you need what is on that door over there."

"Ha, ha, ha! Push, eh? Pull, eh? Ha, ha, ha! Very clever! Push and pull! Is that what you think I need, Mr. Schwab?"

"No," said Mr. Schwab; "I think you need a device to make you shut up."

Good Home Brew

In these days of prohibition it is always nice to have a recipe on hand for making a home drink with a kick. One of our Peoria (Ill.) readers sent us a recipe for a home brew which, although it has a strong kick, comes within the law. The recipe is as follows: Chase a frog three miles and gather up its hops, to the hops add ten gallons of tan bark, half a gallon of shellac and a large bucket of soft homemade soap. Boil this mixture 40 hours, then strain through an I. W. W. proclamation to keep it working. Finally, bottle in pint bottles and add a grasshopper to each pint to give it a kick.—Pathfinder Magazine.

Hunter's Odd Bedfellow

Henry D. Ross, on a camping trip with his son in the woods north of Clifton, Ariz., had a bear for a bedfellow one night, and this after failure to find bears in several days of hunting. He sleepily resented the invasion of his blankets and pushed the intruder away. His explanation of the affair is that it was only a poor little cub, seeking companionship and warmth, and that he is too much of a sportsman to shoot a cub.

Horse's Remarkable Feat

During a recent running race in Australia, Roseben, a famous turf horse, easily carried a rider weighing 210 pounds and won his race, much to the astonishment of race track followers. It is the first time this animal had ever won a race carrying more than 147 pounds of rider. The race was for five furlongs and the weight was considered staggering by most horsemen.

Consolation

A story about Sinclair Lewis, the novelist, is going the rounds of Greenwich village. It seems that Mr. Lewis said to a girl at a Greenwich village tea: "Some folks tell me that my last book failed because it's too long. Do you think it's too long?" "Indeed I don't," said the girl poet. "I think it only seems too long."

Moors Honor Frenchman

Marshal Lyautey, who is resigning as military governor of those Moroccan sections at war with France, is greatly beloved by the tribesmen. When his life was despaired of two years ago he was prayed for in all the mosques of Morocco, this being the first time in the history of Islam that the name of an infidel was pronounced in public ritual.

Find Climate Has Effect on Suicide.

Berlin.—One of the most remarkable statistical surveys ever made, devoted to all phases of the subject of suicide, was made public here. The survey embraces all of Europe and is characteristically exhaustive and detailed.

The German investigators establish scientifically that climate and suicide are mathematically related—that countries with variable climate produce the most suicides, and that these countries are found between 47 and 57 degrees east longitude and 20 and 34 degrees north latitude, which embraces central Europe.

There are more suicides in flat countries than in mountainous. For central Europe, May and June are the most productive of self-destruction and the favorite days are Monday and Tuesday for men and Sunday for women. One-third of the suicides are committed at night, the rest in the forenoon and afternoon, with a very few in the early hours of the morning.

Twice as many Protestants in Europe ended their lives as did Catholics. Among the Jews suicide is on the increase, especially among those who are not orthodox, for in eastern Europe, among the pious Jews, practically no suicides at all are reported.

Four men commit suicide in Germany for every woman, but more women between the ages of twenty and thirty kill themselves than men. Divorce plays a big role in suicide in the rich, for there are ten men divorced who commit suicide to one married man, and five divorced women to one married woman.

It is established that women prefer drowning as a means of death, while men evince no marked partiality for any particular method.

The investigators insist that the movies influence suicides. They analyze 250 pictures and found there were 97 murders, 51 divorces, 19 rapes, 45 suicides and 176 thefts. The investigators conclude from this that the movies have a harmful effect on those predisposed to self-destruction.

Germany has the highest record for child suicide, ten boys under sixteen and three girls for every million population, while France has three boys and one girl for the same number.

Political Calendar is Announced for the Year's Campaign.

The spring primaries this year will be held May 18, the election calendar announced by chief Thorne, of Election Bureau, shows. Party nominations to be made at these primaries include those for United States Senator, the National House of Representatives, Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of Internal Affairs, 25 State Senators and 208 members of the State House of Representatives. At the primaries both State and county committeemen will be elected.

The first day on which signatures may be obtained to nominating petitions to be filed with the Election Bureau is February 17 and the first day for obtaining signatures to petitions filed with County Commissioners is March 11. The last day for filing petitions with the Secretary of the Commonwealth for the primary, March 29, and for filing petitions with County Commissioners is April 20.

Duchess of Fontanges

Marie Angelique, duchess of Fontanges, was the successor to Mme. Montespan in the favor of Louis XIV. "She was beautiful as an angel, but silly as a goose," said Abbe Choisi of her. She, nevertheless, captivated the affections of Louis XIV, who was tired of Mme. de Montespan.

As soon as she had discovered the passion she had inspired in the king, she became haughty and extravagant, spending at times as much as 100,000 crowns a month. She became the general dispenser of the king's favors and the model of fashion. She was made a duchess by the king, but did not long enjoy the rank, since she died at the age of twenty, in the abbey of Port Royal, at Paris.—Chicago Journal.

Present and Absent

A curious instance of Israel Zangwill's absent-mindedness came to my notice the other day. He was rehearsing one of his plays at the Scala, and arrived punctual to the minute on the stage. Taking up his position he opened the prompt copy and addressed an empty stage as follows: "I am here to the minute. Why is it that no member of my company can be as punctual?" At that moment his stage manager, who had been searching for him, put in an appearance, and gently reminded him that the rehearsal was in the foyer, where the entire company was already waiting for him!—London Mail.

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Rail Laying Machine Does Work of 24 Men; Lays 85 Rails an Hour.

A machine that lays from sixty to eighty-five steel rails in an hour and displaces a railroad gang of twenty-four men is at work on the Bethlehem branch of the Reading Railway, comments the Pennsylvania Public Service Information Committee.

The machine, commercially known as the "Burro," is mounted on a standard gauge truck and is self-propelling to a speed of fifteen miles per hour. It is driven by a gasoline engine which also operates the boom and cables. The crew consists of a crane man and three laborers.

Other features, except the rail-laying, are identical with the ordinary hand methods. Following the removal of the worn rail from the track all spike holes are plugged and new tie plates applied. The rail is put into place and the machine then proceeds over the rail just laid to the next open joint on the opposite side, after which the operation is repeated.

Four flange wheels arranged transversely under the truck are used to remove the machine from the track. Preparatory to moving, the clamp on the end of the cable running over the boom is attached to the track ahead and the machine is lifted as the cable is taken in. Short rail sections are then placed under the transverse wheels, the machine is lowered and pushed from the track, the whole operation requiring only eight minutes.

Roll Collars for Army.

The much complained of high standing collar on U. S. army uniforms is now a thing of the past. It has gone into discard along with the "Teddy" Roosevelt hat, the laced leggings, the spiked helmet of the Indian wars, and the flat cap of Civil War days.

It was abolished when Secretary Davis signed the formal order making the roll collar compulsory for uniforms of all men in the service, regardless of rank or branch. American soldiers had long known that the high collar was uncomfortable but it remained for the World War to show how detrimental it was in an emergency. Gen. Pershing was the first high officer to suggest that the U. S. army adopt the soft collar style of the British, French, Belgian and other European armies.

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