

LIGHTNING'S DANGERS

Facts Regarding Storms With Electric Discharges.

SPOTS ONE SHOULD SHUN

Danger in an Umbrella—Fatal Accidents Few—Ancient Superstitions Dying Out—Committee of British Scientists Investigate Bolts From Heaven.

The ancient Romans avoided places struck by lightning; the houses, if damaged, were pulled down or fenced in, so that no one could use the building on which the gods had set the mark of their displeasure. This feeling was probably deepened by the fact that certain localities are visited by thunder storms more than others, the wrath of Jove descending in white flame time and again in the same spot. And it was the same superstition, lingering among Christians in a slightly different form, which made it so difficult for Benjamin Franklin to introduce the lightning rod. For the pious Americans of that day declared that "it was as impious to erect rods to ward off Heaven's lightning as for a child to ward off the chastening rod of its father."

Although many of the ancient superstitions are dying out, the fears of these fiery bolts from heaven is still deeply implanted in the human heart. Men and women of high courage will become greatly agitated during a violent thunder storm. An entire community will be stirred to its depth through a death by lightning. The career of Martin Luther's life was entirely changed by one of his dearest friends meeting with this awful end. For these reasons, and because the danger is a very real one, the views and theories of Killingworth Hedges, secretary of the Lightning Research Committee of the Royal Institution of British Architects, are of interest and value.

To begin with, it is encouraging to learn that, though there were many injuries and marvelous escapes, there were only two fatal accidents among the 500 cases of buildings struck which were sent in to the Lightning Research Committee. Certain positions, however, seem to be much more dangerous than others during a storm, and the following suggestions are worthy of careful consideration: Keep as far away as possible from an open fireplace, for, if the chimney is struck the grate and surroundings will almost invariably be blown out into the room. Do not sit in a greenhouse or conservatory or take refuge in a barn or alongside of a haystack. The popular idea that glass attracts lightning is absurd; in fact, if one does not mind the glare of the lightning, there is no evidence to show that it is unsafe to approach a window.

Fatal accidents generally occur when people take shelter outside a building. A wet wall often conducts some of the electricity, and a person standing near it provides a good path to earth. Especial care should be taken to avoid the proximity of a lightning conductor, and, as any pipes descending from the roof may act as conductors, keep as far away from them as possible. It is well known that trees are most dangerous, and Killingworth Hedges points out that there is great danger of being struck if one is anywhere under the boughs of a lightning striking a tree disperses the rain through all its branches, with, perhaps, fatal results to persons or animals in the area below. Trees act, to a certain extent, as lightning rods, so that one is fairly safe in their neighborhood, if not directly beneath their branches. When on a treeless plain it is wisest to lie down during the height of a storm.

Under no circumstances when exposed to a violent storm, should one hold up an umbrella or lead a bicycle. It is not that the lightning is directly attracted by such objects; but a flash on its way to earth gives out innumerable smaller discharges, so that to be near any object containing metal, which may be selected as offering the best path, is, to say the least, unwise. One must also remember that a shock which might only cause minor injuries if one's clothes were dry may prove fatal to a person who has been for some time out in the rain. In conclusion it may be observed that the report of the Lightning Research Committee represents not only the results of its own investigations, but also includes the independent opinion of various experts and high authorities on the Continent, including that of the members of the famous Electrotechnische Verein, of Berlin.

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Bad Symptoms.

The woman who has periodical headaches, backaches, sees imaginary dark spots or specks floating or dancing before her eyes, has gnawing distress or heavy full feeling in stomach, faint spells, dragging-down feeling in lower abdominal or pelvic region, easily startled or excited, irregular or painful periods, with or without pelvic catarrh, is suffering from weakness and derangements that should have early attention. Not all of above symptoms are likely to be present in any case at one time.

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BRUSH AND COMB KEPT CLEAN.

Washing Toilet Articles So They Will Be Free From Germs.

No woman can look her best, unless her hair, skin and hands are properly cared for, and to accomplish this the best of combs and brushes, &c., are required. In addition to good quality in these articles, they must be kept in the best of condition or the result will be unsatisfactory. For instance, a hair brush should be cleaned—that is, washed—once a week, yet frequent cleansing is more the exception than the rule.

For washing brushes there are specially prepared powders that cleanse the bristles, but I regard them as a luxury and not a necessity. Quite as good results are obtained by filling a basin half full of hot water, making this strong with ammonia, then putting the brush—that is, the bristles—down into the bath and lifting it out quickly half a dozen times, taking care to keep the handle dry. The first plunge loosens the dust and those after bring it out. In three seconds the brush should be clean and very cold water should then be run through the bristles to rinse and stiffen them. Soap should never be rubbed on a brush. In drying, the brush should be stood on end, that the water may run off quickly.

Combs should be cleaned in the same manner, and side combs need it also. Always, after using a tooth brush, it should be held under a hot water faucet to rinse thoroughly, and once a day it ought to be plunged into strong ammonia water to purify, thus cleansing it of germs.

The nonchalant manner in which women otherwise particular will wipe their faces with a soiled powder puff or pad is amazing. A puff should not be used on the face, for a bit of chamolis skin or a lamb's wool pad will distribute the powder quite evenly, and at the same time may be kept perfectly clean.

As to wash cloths, a soiled one is even more positive in its deleterious effects, because it sends moisture into the skin. No cloth should be used longer than a week, and then must be put into the laundry, washed and boiled, before drying in the open air.

Sponges should never be used except for the bath, and are the most unsanitary toilet article countenance. Their capacity for holding impurities is endless. If used, however, they must be plunged into strong ammonia or soda water once a day and always hung in the open air.

Suggestors.

No. 1—To take out iron stains, soak the spot in oxalic acid for 1 or 2 minutes, then hold over the teakettle nose, so the steam can pass through the goods.

No. 2—Mustard plaster made with the white of an egg will not blister.

No. 3—A pinch of salt added to the whites of eggs or cream will make them whip much quicker.

No. 4—Place salt in oven under baking tins to prevent scorching.

No. 5—Sprinkle salt over fresh coal, before going out. It will keep the fire much longer.

No. 6—Clean window shades by rubbing over with hot corn meal, then rub gently with soft dry cloth.

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