

OUR SENSE OF SPACE.

Experiments With Infants to Show That It Is Innate.

There are many optical illusions which show that our perception of distance, height and space are acquired rather than instinctive, and in the domain of psychological physiology one of the standing controversies touches this point. The German school of Leipzig is inclined to affirm that all our perceptions of distance, area and solidity and our ability to distinguish between right and left, up and down, before and behind, are acquired as a result of long practice and experience.

A person blind from birth who has learned to distinguish triangles, squares, circles and objects of other forms by touch is not able immediately after the acquisition of sight to distinguish these familiar objects by sight alone. He or she is still compelled to rely on feeling. In the beginning all objects appear to such a person (and perhaps they do so in the case of babes) as shapeless, tremulous spots of color situated close to the eye.

In the course of the debate that raged in Germany some experiments were made with babies. It appeared that in babies what must be described for want of a better term as a sense of space seems to exist. The infant was held in the arms of the experimenters for about a minute, at the end of which interval the child was permitted to drop upon its bed. In every instance the child exhibited a dread or panic when it felt the arms of the persons holding it relax. The babe, even at the age of one month, seemed to understand that its support was departing. It held, or rather, clutched, at anything it could reach, whether the arm, neck or collar of the person holding it.

From these experiments it has been inferred that there must exist a sense of space almost from infancy. What is the dread of falling but a manifestation of an innate sense of space?—London Post.

SLOW DEATH.

Disease Usually Takes a Long Time to Kill, Says a Scientist.

Few indeed are the men and women of full age, say twenty-five, who have not yet contracted the malady that will kill them, according to that distinguished scientist and physician Dr. Felix Regnault. Normally, as contemporary investigators are beginning to find out, it takes twenty years for a fatal malady to kill a patient. It may take thirty years. The popular impression is that a man may die suddenly or that he may require only a year to die in or six months. To be sure, a man may be killed or a child may die in a few months at the age of one year. But, ordinarily speaking, all deaths are very slow. Indeed, and about 95 per cent of civilized adults are now stricken with fatal diseases. They do not know it. They may not suffer from them. In due time they will have their cases diagnosed as cancer or tuberculosis or diabetes, or what not. But so inveterate are current misconceptions of the nature of death that the origin of the fatal malady—in time—will be miscalculated by from ten to thirty years.

In the case of human beings death, barring accident, is nearly always caused by some specific malady. This malady is as likely as not to be cured—what is called cured. The cure, however, no matter how skillful the treatment or how slight the disease, has left a weakness behind it in some particular organ of the body. One of the organs is, if not prematurely worn out, at least so worn that its resisting powers are greatly diminished. All of us in this way when we have reached a certain age possess an organ that is much older than the rest of the physique. One day we shall die because of this organ. Even if we live to be very old, indeed, we shall not die of old age, but of weakness of the lungs or of the kidneys or of the liver or of the brain.—Current Literature.

A Ten Years' Penance.

It is happily seldom that the revenge of a disappointed husband takes quite such an extreme form as in the case of the man whose wife ran thus: "When I remember that the only happy times I ever enjoyed were when my wife sulked with me, and when I remember that my married life might, for this reason, be considered to have been a fairly happy one because she was nearly always sulking, I am constrained to forget the repulsion the contemplation of her face inspired me with and leave her the sum of £60,000 on condition that she undertakes to pass two hours a day at my graveside for the ten years following my decease, in company with her sister, whom I have reason to know she loathes worse than she does myself."—London Tit-Bits.

Didn't Like the Walk.

A north country pitman went with his wife one Saturday night to do a little shopping. They visited a large drapery establishment, and the obstreperous shopwalker, having ascertained their requirements, said to the couple politely, "Will you please walk this way?" But unfortunately he walked very lame.

"No, mister," said the pitman, "Aa nivor hev wanked that way, an' Aa'm not gannin' to try!"—London Scraps.

Not Deceived.

"Never in my life have I deceived my wife."
"Same here. Mine only pretends to believe the yarns I tell."—Louisville Courier-Journal.

'Tis the mind that makes the body rich.—Shakespeare.

Advertisements.

ADVICE TO HUSBANDS

Give Up Your Barren Scepter as Master of the House.

JOHN HAY'S FIRST SPEECH.

A Witty Response to the Toast "Our Countrywomen" at a Banquet in Paris When He Was Secretary of Legation in the French Capital.

By official proclamation President Johnson set apart the first Thursday of December, 1865, as a day of national thanksgiving. The American residents and visitors in Paris deemed it an occasion to be celebrated with more than usual ceremony. The result was that at 8 o'clock on the evening of the 7th of December some 253 of our countrymen sat down to a dinner in the spacious dining room of the Grand hotel in Paris, then regarded by travelers as the most elegant public dining hall in Europe.

After a succession of speeches the chairman closed the entertainment with a toast to "Our Countrywomen" and asked Colonel John Hay, then secretary of legation in Paris, to respond to it. As this was probably the first public speech Mr. Hay had ever made and though nothing he then said could possibly add any luster to his subsequent career, it may justly be said that it was more successful than the first public effort in oratory either of Sheridan or of Beaconsfield. He replied in part as follows:

"My Countrymen (and I would say my countrywomen but that the former word embraces the latter whenever opportunity offers—I cannot understand why I should have been called upon to respond to this toast of all others, having nothing but theoretical ideas upon the subject to be treated—one, in fact, I must be presumed never to have handled. [Laughter and applause.]

"I have been called up, too, by a committee of married men. I can think of no claim I have to be considered an authority in these matters except what might arise from the fact of my having resided in early life in the same neighborhood with Brigham Young, who has since gained some reputation as a thorough and practical ladies' man. [Great laughter.] I am not conscious, however, of having imbibed any such wisdom at the feet of this matrimonial Gamaliel as should justify entitle me to be heard among the elders.

"So I am inevitably forced to the conclusion that these husbands cannot trust each other's discretion. The secrets of the prison house are too important to be trusted to one of the prisoners. So ignorance of the matter in hand has come to be held an absolute prerequisite when any one is to be sacrificed to the exigencies of this toast.

"I really do not see why this should be so. It is useless for husbands to attempt to keep this thin veneering of a semblance of authority. The symbols of government they still retain deceive nobody. They may comfort themselves with the assurance of some vague, invisible supremacy, like that of the spiritual inkado or the grand lama, but the true tycoon is the wife. A witty and profound observer the other day said, 'Every husband doubtless knows he is master in his own house, but he also knows his neighbor's wife is master in hers.' [Laughter and cheers.]

"Why should not you, husbands of America, admit this great truth and give up the barren scepter? Things would go much easier if you ceased the struggle to keep up appearances. The ladies will not be hard on you. They will recognize the fact that, after all, you are their fellow creatures, and you can be very useful to them in many little ways. They will doubtless allow you to pay their bills, take care of their children and carry their votes to the ballot box just as you do now.

"You had better come down gracefully, and above all, let no feeling of discovered inferiority betray you into evil speaking of the domestic powers. There have been recent instances of distinguished gentlemen, no doubt instigated by rebellious husbands, who have recklessly accused these guardian angels of your fireside of being extravagant and frivolous. These things are never uttered with impunity. I would not insure the life of one who libels the ladies for less than cent per cent.

"Disce Justitiam moniti et non temere Divas, which, as you may not understand the backwoods pronunciation of the classic warning, I will translate with a freedom befitting the day we celebrate:

"Now, all you happy husbands, Beware the rebel's fate! Live in obedience all your lives. Give up your latchkeys to your wives And never stay out late."—From John Bigelow's "Retrospections of an Active Life" in Metropolitan Magazine.

The Alternative.

Constitution—Say, Bill, the salary that goes with my job isn't half enough to live on. Can't you use your influence to have it raised a little? Alderman—I'm afraid not, Jake. But I'll do better than that. I'll use my influence to have a cheaper man appointed to the place.—Chicago Tribune.

A Quick Thinker.

Dittersdorf—Here come two evil looking rascals. I shouldn't wonder if we were held up. Heinz—I'm afraid so. By the bye, here's that dollar you lent me this morning.—Megendorfer Blatter.

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