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SPECTACLED CHILDREN.

Their Number is Increasing at an Enormous Rate.

Who has not noticed the growing army of spectacled children, and of adults below the age when one is expected to wear glasses because of the presence of approaching age? Especially among children is this seen. When we were a boy it was a very unusual thing to see a child with glasses and few adults under forty-five or fifty years of age wore them. Indeed it was so rare as almost invariably to require, if not an apology, at least an explanation.

Various explanations have been offered, and the popular custom even with oculists is to blame it on overcrowding in the public schools; on defective lighting of the school buildings; on too close application to study, and a number of other faulty methods of early life.

With all due respect for a respectable and growing class of specialists—the eye-doctors—we believe this condition is largely attributable to them. We believe if there were fewer oculists, and if those of this class were less wise, there would be fewer children and adults by several hundred per cent. wearing glasses.

We believe the homes are constructed and home environments have all been so adjusted within the last twenty years as to favor instead of obstruct the normal functions of the eye. We believe school rooms and public halls are built and have been built for some years past with more special reference to the care and comfort of the eye. We know that text books have better type and paper better adapted to the eye than when we were a boy. We know that school hours are shorter—that recesses are more frequent and that fewer days in the week are required in the school room.

In Pennsylvania thirty-five or forty years ago the school houses were built largely after one general style—a rectangular building about 40x60 feet.

The windows were on the sides. There was on the two sides and on the end up to near where the "master" sat, a broad writing board with a blackless bench running parallel with the writing "desk" or board. Most of the work done by the further advanced scholars was done facing the wall or window—neither of which was to exceed two or two and one-half feet distance. Here the writing and "ciphering" was done, and when through with this part of the day's work the scholar, if he turned his back to the desk the glare of light from the opposite windows greeted him. The seats for the smaller pupils learning their A B Cs or who had been promoted to spell and pronounce "ba" or "ab" were paralleled with the sides of the house and from morning until evening, from Monday to include Saturday, on dull days and on bright days, without shades on the windows; with only stolen relief from persistent application to the book, this search for knowledge went on. We speak from actual personal experience.

With all this we do not recollect a boy or girl of our acquaintance in school who used glasses in that early day. There were boys and girls who were pale and had bad headaches—there were boys and girls who fell behind in the race for promotion who were considered bright, these were boys and girls with red eyes but no spectacles. There were those who needed them.

Nobody thought of consulting an oculist—there were none. The family physician had too much to do to combat fever and ague and other malarial disorders to give any thought to so insignificant a part of the body as the eye. The liver must be regulated, the bowels looked after, the kidney touched up and "expectorants" prescribed, and if the eye was very painful "eye-drops" given, but as a general thing the eye had to take care of itself.

In course of time—by a process of medical and surgical evolution oculists have been developed, and as a result we are fast becoming a "spectacled" people. Now this class of

specialists are themselves to be blamed as well as compensated for the discovery of visual defects and for the variety of glasses used to overcome them.

The ophthalmoscope and the various revelations made by it in the hands of skilled specialists has revealed visual defects never dreamed of, and have suggested a course of rational treatment by properly selected lenses that not only greatly aid the eye but relieve many heretofore nervous and brain symptoms that were a puzzle to the general practitioner and that in children lead to an early abandonment of books or to permanently impaired eyesight.

Hence we believe that spectacles are the indices of advancing civilization, and some of the badges of professional ingenuity and efficiency, as well as the promises of wonderful achievements in the future in this specialty.

We favor all measures recommended and adopted that will secure the construction of public and private buildings in every way adapted to the care and development of the eyesight. We believe the world is progressing in this respect—that the time is fast coming when architects and builders who have the best knowledge of sanitary laws will be preferred to all others. At the same time we believe that until a race is born with less heredity defective vision, the army of the "spectacled" will increase, and the comforts of the wearers of eye-glasses will be enhanced.—Monthly bulletin.

The Timid Hawthorne Bush.

Few bushes in England are more timid of flowering than the common hawthorn. I have seen the hedges in bloom—here and there at least—as early as the middle of April, and I have seen them as late as the middle of June. No doubt the buds wait patiently for such weather as will bring out in numbers the particular flies on which, as a rule, they depend for fertilization, says a writer in the Longman's Magazine.

On this year of which I write I noted the meat fly abroad on April 24, while the May blossom broke into bloom on the 27th. For—must I tell the sad truth?—painful as it is to relate, the hawthorn flowers are fertilized for the most part by carrion insects. A certain undertone of decomposition may be detected by keen nostrils in the scent of May, which is, indeed, more agreeable in the open air than in a warm room, and it is this curious element in an otherwise delicious and pure perfume that attracts the meat-eating insects—or, rather, to be more accurate, the insects that lay their eggs and hatch out their larvae in decaying animal matter.

The hawthorn, however, keeps the unpleasant meaty odor well in the background, so that the perfume as a whole is decidedly agreeable in the open air, but many other fly flowers have it so strongly developed and so well imitated as to be positively nauseous. This is particularly the case with parasitic plants, which often combine with their predatory habits the vile and odious deception of inducing flies to lay eggs on their surface under the hateful pretense of being carrion in an advanced stage of decomposition. Could any flower sink lower from its high estate than thus to masquerade in the loathsome disguise of a decaying dead animal?

OCTOBER'S PARTY.

October gave a party— The leaves by hundreds came— The Chestnuts, Oaks and Maples, And leaves of every name. The sunshine spread a carpet, And everything was grand; Miss Weather led the dancing, Professor Wind the band. The Chestnuts came in yellow, The Oaks in crimson dressed; The lovely Misples Maple, In scarlet, looked their best. All belated to their partners, And gayly fluttered by; The sight was like a rainbow New fallen from the sky. Then, in the rusty hollow, At hide and seek they played; The party closed at sundown, And everybody stayed. Professor Wind played louder, They flew along the ground, And there the party ended, In hands across all round.

NERVOUS FRENCHMAN.

Some Comical Stories of Signor De Begnis, the Singer.

Among Mr. Lester Wallack's "Memories" are some relating to "the most nervous creature" he ever saw, Signor De Begnis, a singer, who came over to the United States in the same ship with Mr. Wallack and his father in 1838. He was about six feet in height, portly and pompous, and wore a huge velvet cloak and a black velvet cap. His grand appearance made his childish ignorance and cowardice all the more amusing. Everything he saw filled him with wonder, which he expressed without reserve.

Two nights after the ship sailed, the captain, thinking it was coming on to blow, sent aloft to shorten sail. De Begnis was excited.

"Oh, ah, mon capitaine, de man! What he go up dere for? Why he go up the pole?"

"He is going up to reef the top-sail," replied the captain.

"To do what?"

"To reef the topsail."

"To reefa de top de sail? In de dark? Mon Dieu! now he go higher, and without a candle."

He was never seasick, but was so timid that he was happy only in a dead calm.

When the rest of the passengers were scolding about the delay he would say:

"Ah, it is beautiful; it is a calum to-day. I am not afraid. When it blow I am afraid. To-day it is a calum, and I go to play veest."

Mr. Wallack, who was then hardly more than a boy, used to climb to the mizzen-top with a book in his pocket, and sit there with his arm around a rope and read by the hour. The first time that De Begnis saw him going up the shrouds he shouted:

"Ha! look at de young Wallack! Don't go up dere, you fools. Suppose de strings was to broke!"

One night it was blowing hard, and the ship was "taken aback." Mr. Wallack's father, being an old sailor, knew what it meant, and sung out to the steward:

"Shut in the deadlights!"

The next morning the sea had gone down, and De Begnis, who had been dreadfully scared, said:

"I was not the only one afraid. There was the old Wallack, he was afraid. I hear him call to de steward to give him a light to die by."

On the first day out, when the ship was "on the wind," lying pretty well over, De Begnis, only half-dressed, stuck his head into the main cabin and said:

"Steward! where is de steward? Aska de capitaine why the ship she goes so crook! Tell him de Signor De Begnis cannot stave!"

Standing one day beside the wheel, he said:

"What that man he do, he turn de wheel around?"

"He steers the vessel," the captain answered.

"What is dat he keep a-looking at like a fool?"

"That is the compass. He watches the compass and steers the vessel by it."

"Ha! dat is a umpick!" [humbug].

"How do you suppose we find our way across the ocean then?" asked the captain.

"You get de ship by de shore, you put up de sail, de wind she blow, and you go dis way and dat way, sometimes de straight way, and after a while you get dere by chance. God knows how! And yet you tell me dat de man he makes her go straight when he turn de wheel round! Umpick! All umpick!"

Rice.

Rice was known in China two thousand eight hundred years before Christ. It is not mentioned in the Bible, but is referred to in the Talmud. It was known in Syria four hundred years before Christ, was first introduced into Italy in 1468, and into the Carolinas in 1700.

JUDGE LYNCH was one of the first Irishmen ever given an official position in this country, but he is still in the business.

OUTGROWING WAR.

A Pleasant Theory Not Supported in the Camps of Europe.

The great and fatal argument against war is that it does not pay. There was a time when the force of this plea was not generally recognized. The mediæval spirit, with its chivalry and love of glory, survived long after the bodies of the old barons had turned to dust and their swords to rust. Passions were fierce, traditions strong, popular rights in embryonic feebleness. The hope of conquest, the quarrels of dynasties, religious differences, all tended to obscure the dawn of the coming era—the era of common sense, which balances the good and the bad of any given course and adopts the more expedient. Did not Louis Napoleon, when Emperor of the French, once boastfully proclaimed that the French nation was the only one that would go to war for an idea? Perhaps he was right. Alas! many thousand lives, many millions in money, a mutilated territory and national pride most bitterly humbled, eloquently attest that the mitrailleuse and the chassépot may not be safely trusted to disseminate ideas, however noble and however useful to mankind. But the Anglo-Saxon race prefers to express its preference and to make converts in other ways. It is no in the ascending period. Its influence upon the world is vast and growing. The United States is the leading nation of a hemisphere, and bids fair in a brief period to be the first of the civilized world in population and general prosperity. We have all the territory that we require, so that wars of conquest hold out no temptation. Our Government is so free that revolution would border on the ridiculous. So far as we may now foresee, there is no reason to apprehend such aggression from other nations as to make armed resistance imperative. The people of these States have proved their ability on too many battlefields to make their prudence suspicious. On the same principle that a tried duelist may refuse to fight because he has shown his mettle, sword in hand, nations with honorable records of brave deeds may be slow to wrath.—Harper's Magazine.

Two Kinds of Thirst.

Thirst is simply a sensation by which a lack of fluids in the system is made known, and in a state of health it is a generally faithful indication of the wants of the body. Natural thirst, which must be distinguished from the thirst caused by stimulating foods and drinks or by fever, is first indicated by a peculiar dryness of the mouth and fauces, caused by the failure of the pharyngeal membrane to secrete a due amount of liquids, but if fluids were to be introduced directly into the stomach through a tube, and not by way of the fauces—as has been done in some unusual cases—the immediate absorption thereof instantly allays the sense of thirst, from which it has been supposed that the sensation of thirst is in the nerves of the stomach, and that the throat sensation is a kind of reflex action.

However, this theory cannot be fully accepted, thirst being a sensation caused by the general want, which can be supplied through the blood vessels the rectum or the skin, as well as through the stomach or throat. The exhalations from the lungs and skin and the kidney and other secretaries are effected principally at the expense of water in the blood, which must be restored to its normal amount or intense general suffering follows.

A sudden loss of blood by the lancet or from a wound, or a rapid drain on the vascular system, as in cholera or in diabetes, also causes the intense sensation of thirst. The thirst of fever, on the other hand, is not caused by the lack of fluids in the system, but by the dryness of the throat, mouth and skin, caused by the unnaturally high temperature of the blood.—Chicago Inter Ocean.

NONE are so deaf as those who do not hear when when they are asked to take a

RAM'S HORN BLASTS.

Warning Notes Calling the Wicked to Repentance.

LITTLE thinkers are big talkers. FAITH always builds its house on the rock. A COWARDLY dog always shows his teeth. We forget the sunlight when we notice the shadow. If you would discover poverty, try to borrow money. God blesses us most when He makes us most a blessing. WHEN a man is driven to drink he loosens the brake himself. THE man with a big pocketbook generally has a small Bible. WEEDS are a standing reminder that God expects all men to work. AS LONG as there is dross in the gold it will be afraid of the furnace. It is so easy for one preacher to tell another how he ought to preach. THE yoke of Christ is the only yoke God ever made for the human neck. THE devil has trouble in introducing himself to people who are busy. THE more we do to help others the lighter our own burdens will become. A FAITHFUL trial of God's word will always prove that He is behind it.

It is hard to talk religion with people who have no religious experience.

COOLING the world with ice cream cannot be depended on to warm up a church.

WHEN the clouds are the blackest God is often preparing to give us the rainbow.

NO MATTER where the devil's mud strikes a true Christian, it leaves a bright spot.

WHENEVER God suffers us to have a need, it is to remind us that we also have a God.

THE most dangerous place for a Christian is where he does not feel the need of God.

THE bigger the house built on a poor foundation, the bigger the fool who builds it.

A REVIVAL is sure to follow where faithful preaching is done to the sinners in the church.

THERE are people who never accomplish anything because they undertake to do too much.

THE most famous people in Heaven will be those who have been most faithful to God on earth.

PRAY more when the sun is shining and you will not be so apt to backslide in cloudy weather.

THE devil's power on earth was broken on the day that God established the first Christian home.

SOME of us would have more prayers answered if we didn't stop praying as soon as we came out of the closet.

Carrying a Gun.

Learn to regard your gun always as an enemy. On no account grow familiar or friendly with him. Insist upon carrying him so that if he chooses to explode he can hurt nothing but the trees or fence. By constantly observing this rule you will not only insure your own safety, but keep your companions comfortable. Many men are made nervous for a whole day by happening once or twice to set down the barrel of a friend's gun; and in such a state of mind are of course much more likely to commit some act of folly themselves. As for men who use their guns like walking-sticks and to help them in getting over fences, words would be wasted on such madmen.

MISS RAY FRANK of Oakland, Cal., is to be ordained soon as a rabbi of the Jewish Church, and will be the first of her sex, it is said, to occupy such a position. She has been studying at the California State University and at the Hebrew Union College, at Cincinnati.

LOST IN A PASTURE.

A Stranger's Experience in a Texas Town. A Belcherville, Texas, letter to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat says:

"Say, mister your horses are in the little Belcher pasture. Any time you get ready for them I'll send a man on a horse to drive them up for you."

My jovial landlord addressed these words to me the day after I had arrived at the little Texas city from which this letter is dated. He was an accommodating kind of a fellow, and I, wishing to be equally accommodating, answered:

"Oh, you needn't bother yourself about that. My horses are both gentle, and if they're only in a little pasture I can catch them without any trouble."

Mr. Jackson looked a little dubious, but said "All right," and I supposed it was. Later developments showed, however, that the statement was incorrect. The next day I had occasion to use my ponies, and having previously learned where the "little Belcher pasture" was I started to hunt them up.

When I entered the pasture I noticed that it seemed to be a little longer than I had imagined. A few hundred yards from the entrance there was a little belt of timber, through which I felt confident a creek flowed. I supposed that the fence on the far side of the pasture was probably just beyond this creek. I walked down to the timber, jumped the creek at its narrowest place, and made my way through the timber on the farther bank.

After a walk of some thirty minutes I found myself once more at the edge of the open prairie, but with no fence in sight in any direction. There were hundreds of cattle and scores of horses to be seen, but none that looked like mine. I made some ineffectual search for mine, but had about the same chance of finding them I would have in finding a needle in a haystack. Then, in disgust, I tried to find my way back to the hotel. This was easier tried than accomplished. I had gotten "befuddled" in my wanderings, and had no very accurate idea as to the direction to be taken. Finally, however, after over an hour's wandering through the bushes and over the creek banks, I reached the hotel, covered with mud and "stick-tights," tired and much out of humor.

"Say, Jackson," I called, sarcastically, "how many counties does that 'little Belcher pasture' take in, anyway? Does it stop at the Rio Grande, or does it extend into Mexico?"

Mr. Jackson looked rather aggrieved, but grinned as he answered: "I said your hosses was in a pasture. I didn't say they were in no darned hoss lot, did I? Didn't I offer to have them drive up—for you? That pasture's five miles long, but it ain't over half a mile broad in lots of places, and there ain't much more than 1,500 acres in it altogether. Old man Belcher used to own 29,000 acres here, and we called that the Belcher pasture. He's sold all but this little patch, though, and that's why we call this the little Belcher pasture. See?"

I saw, and at the same time I began to realize, that I had gotten into the land of big pastures. Next day as I passed along the streets of the town I heard one man say to his companion:

"Boys, you see that fellow yonder? Darned if he didn't get lost in the little Belcher pasture."

The Lasso.

The cowboy's lasso is made by cutting a rawhide into thin strips and half tanning with the hair on. These strips are then stretched over a buck and braided into a rope, the strands being pulled very tight. The lasso is then buried in sand for a week or two, and absorbs moisture from the ground, which makes it soft and pliable. When taken out of the ground it is stretched out, and the hair is sand-papered off. It is then greased with mutton tallow and properly noosed, when it is ready for use.

AFTER people have done wrong, it is usually said of them that they moved in the best society.