

**NEW AND CURIOUS.**

**Oldest Book in the World.**

The only complete work that, with out question, can lay claim to being the oldest book in the world is known as the "Papyrus Prisse." It was presented to the Bibliotheque Nationale by a Frenchman of the name of Prisse, who discovered the Papyrus at Thebes. The tomb in which it was found contained the mummy of one of the Entews of the eleventh, or first Theban, dynasty. The date when the manuscript was written cannot, therefore, have been later than 2,500 B. C. But if the exact age of this identical copy should be doubtful, we know precisely from the text itself the date of its composition, as it states it was compiled by one Ptah-hotep, who lived in the reign of King Assa. The full title runs: "Precepts of the Perfect Ptah-hotep, under the King of the South and North, Assa." As this king was the last but one of the fifth dynasty, Ptah-hotep, who flourished in the reign of this Pharaoh and held the distinguished office of "Perfect" must have compiled his work about 3,350 B. C.

Divided into forty-four paragraphs, or chapters, the work is something very much more than a mere literary curiosity. It is written in Egyptian hieratic characters; it is rhythmic, if not poetic; is addressed to the educated classes, and embodies through high and noble principles for the regulation of individual life and conduct, and for the maintenance of good government.—[J. H. Mitchiner.

**To Measure Imagination.**

The latest discovery in the scientific world is a measure for the imagination. This interesting and important discovery, which, when applied to current life, will go far towards explaining much that average people consider mysterious, was made by Mr. E. W. Scripture, of Yale. Mr. Scripture is a man of scientific research, and his recent discovery—we can hardly call it an invention—is the result of many years of study and scientific experiment. When interviewed on the subject, Mr. Scripture said:

"Somewhat over a year ago I announced the discovery of a method for measuring the intensity of hallucinations. A research on this subject has reached a successful completion and will soon be made public. In the course of these investigations it occurred to me that it might be possible to measure the intensity of imagination also. The experiment was a complete success. The method is not difficult and is readily intelligible to any one of average understanding.

"In order to explain the method

it is sufficient to describe the first simple experiment made. The apparatus is quite simple and can be constructed by any one with comparatively little trouble.

"A screen serves as a frame for a piece of thin tissue paper. The tissue paper is illuminated by daylight in front and by a gas flame at the back. When the gas flame is turned down, the eye looking through the tube, sees a plain white circle illuminated by daylight.

"The first experiment made was upon a student, accustomed to using the telescope. He was told to imagine hair lines on the white surface, like the hair lines seen in the telescope. This was successfully done. He was asked to describe them and compare their blackness. 'There is', he said, 'a horizontal line, which is the blackest of them, and three vertical lines of about equal blackness.'

"He was told that the field of view was to be made gradually lighter by turning on a flame behind and he was to tell how the lines behaved. As the gas was turned slowly on he described various changes in the lines. Finally he said he saw a slant line he had not imagined before. It appeared just about as black as the horizontal line, and blacker than any of the others. Thereupon the experiment was ended.

"The slant line was a real line. This he did not know and still does not know."—[New York Herald.

Materialism characterizes the present civilization, but it is the refined Materialism of Greece. It is the Materialism that navigates the ocean with steamships fitted out with palatial splendor, and it thus exchanges the products of distant countries and fosters commercial intercourse. It is the Materialism that drives the locomotive over the iron rail, and thus binds nations in closer bonds of union, and increases social enjoyments and pleasures. It is the Materialism that spins, weaves and prints books by steam, writes by means of electricity, speaks by the aid of a telephone to a distance of hundreds of miles, sows by lever power, that turns toe wheel, cuts the harvest, threshes the grain and mows the hay by time and labor-saving machinery; Materialism that has accomplished more for the well-being and happiness of mankind than any other philosophy if really any other has ever been invented deserving to be called philosophy in the true sense of that word.—A. Featherman.

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