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FREAKS OF MEMORY.

QUEER PRANKS FOR WHICH THERE IS NO ACCOUNTING.

Some instances of the singular Effects Produced Upon the Mind by Gazing Steadily at a Crystal-Forgotten incidents Recalled.

The queer freaks of memory are a constant puzzle to those who study psychological phenomena. Who has not been driven to the verge of distraction by the total inability to recall a name when an effort was made to do so and when the occasion for such remembrance was past had the missing name flash into the mind apparently of its own volition?

Great minds have wrestled to find an explanation for the pranks that memory plays and have had to give up the effort. In the course of a systematic attempt to arrive at some understanding with regard to the wonders of memory a very valuable and unique body of testimony has been obtained. The following questions have been put to 200 American university students and professional persons, 151 being men and 49 being women. The answers are here given with the questions.

Question 1.—When you cannot recall a name you want, does it seem to come back spontaneously without being suggested by any perceived association of ideas? To this 11 per cent answered "No" and 81 per cent "Yes."

Question 2.—Does such recovery ever come during sleep? To this 17 per cent answered "No" and 28 per cent "Yes."

Some examples given: 1. This morning I tried to recall the name of a character I had read of the night before in one of Scott's novels and failed. I taught a class, and walking home in the afternoon all the names recurred to me without effort.

2. I tried to recall the name of a book I gave up. Half an hour later, while talking of something else, blurted it out without conscious volition.

Question 3.—On seeing a sight or hearing a sound for the first time, have you ever felt that you had seen (or heard) the same before? Fifty-nine per cent answered "Yes."

The action of unconscious memory during sleep is illustrated by further queries.

Question 4.—Do you dream? Ninety-four per cent answered "Yes."

Question 5.—Can you wake at a given hour determined before going to sleep without waking up many times before? Fifty-nine per cent answered "Yes." Thirty-one per cent answered "No."

Question 6.—If you can, how about failure? Sixty-nine per cent seldom failed; 25 per cent often.

Question 7.—Do you come direct from oblivion into consciousness? Sixty-four per cent answered "Yes" and 16 per cent "Gradually."

Examples: 1. I had to give medicine every two hours exactly to my wife. I am a very sound sleeper, but for six weeks I woke up every two hours and never missed giving the medicine. 2. I am always awake five minutes before the hour I set the alarm. 3. I had had little sleep for ten days and went to bed at 9, asking to be called at midnight. I fell asleep at once. I rose and dressed as the clock struck 12, and could not believe I had not been called.

A strange phenomenon has come to light in the course of the inquiry into the mystery of memory. It has been discovered that by gazing steadily at a crystal consciousness is partly lost. In the void thus produced those who have practiced crystal gazing find that there enter unbidden forgotten incidents and lost memories. To give a few instances: A lady in crystal gazing saw a bit of dark wall covered with white flowers. She was conscious she must have seen it somewhere, but had no recollection where. She walked over the ground she had just traversed and found the wall, which she had passed unnoticed.

She took out her bankbook another day. Shortly afterward she was gazing at the crystal and saw nothing but the number one. She thought it was some hack number, but, taking up the bankbook, found to her surprise it was the number of the account.

At another time she destroyed a letter without noting the address. She could only remember the town. After gazing at the crystal some time she saw "321 Jefferson avenue." She addressed the letter there, adding the town, and found it was right.

A lady sat in a room to write where she had sat eight years before. She felt her feet moving restlessly under the table and then remembered that eight years before she always had a footstool. It was this her feet were seeking.

Psychical research brings to light many cases of similar strange tricks of memory. It is easy to find instances that serve to deepen the mystery. It is not so easy to give an explanation. The cleverest men who have attempted to do so have had to admit defeat.—Washington Post.

The Women of Belgium.

No one can travel in Belgium without being struck by the extraordinary activity and prominence of the women. Over the doors of shops of all descriptions the name of the owner or owner is frequently followed by "Soeurs" or "Veuve." You find them proprietors of hotels and restaurants. They are often custodians of the churches. They are employed to tow the boats along the canal banks. They cut up the meat in the butchers' shops, and they are even to be noticed shoeing horses at the forge.

To Be Avoided.

Mrs. De Sour—I want you to keep your dog out of my house. It's full of fleas.

Mrs. De Smart—Mercy on me! Fido, come here, sir! Don't you go into that house again. It's full of fleas.—Jewish Comment

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Fog in Photography.

One serious and at the same time unsuspected source of fog in photography is often due to the fact that the blacking has slightly worn off the lens mount and there is a reflection which results in a loss of brilliancy in the negative. Constant use and endless cleaning of the lens in time wear the blacking off, and this should be attended to and all metal parts kept well blacked. Where lenses are mounted in aluminium still more care is necessary in this respect, as, wherever in such cases the blacking wears off, white light instead of yellow light is reflected into the lens.

Sometimes diaphragms of the iris pattern are greatly at fault in this respect. By reason of its construction the leaves or vanes in this diaphragm are in constant friction while being set, and thus become polished and reflective, for which reason some photographers avoid having iris diaphragms in their lenses, notwithstanding their convenience. A careful examination of the apparatus will insure safety in this matter. Stops of the ordinary pattern become in time little better than bare metal, especially at the edges of the aperture.

Some Clerical Jokes.

"Do you have matins in your church?" "No, we prefer linoleum." Another clerk gave out in church, "Let us sing to the praise and glory of God a hymn of my own composition." A lady asked the dean to read at her bedside "that beautiful lesson *** there was summat about graves in it." The dean read her 1 Samuel, xvii. "She listened with arms outstretched and made no comment until I came to the verse, 'He had graves of brass upon his legs.' At this she raised her hands in ecstasy and said, 'Ah, them graves, them beautiful graves!'"—"Phases of My Life," by Dean Pigou.

The Araxes river, in Transcaucasia, has shifted to its ancient bed and now flows directly into the Caspian sea instead of into the Kura at a point 60 miles from the latter's mouth.

A proposal has been made by a French chemist to obtain easily assimilable iron tonics from vegetables by feeding the plants judiciously with iron fertilizers.

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