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GERM CELLS OF LIFE.

THEY RETAIN VITALITY EVEN AFTER APPARENT DEATH.

A Startling Theory Showing That Instant Death is an Impossibility and That We May Be Conscious For Some Time After Dissolution.

"You often meet with the phrase "death was instantaneous," and you believe it, but instant death is impossible.

A professor has been studying the subject, a man of renown in his own world, and he has discovered certain important data proving conclusively that no one can meet with instant death. He works out his theory on the data afforded by the physiology of cells. He states that no one yet has proved the difference between a dead and a live brain cell. When this has been done, then we can more easily ascertain how long a time elapses before the death of a cell takes place.

But, first, what is a cell? To be brief, both plants and animals—including, of course, man—are built up of units, elementary units, which you can only detect under the microscope. Now, each tiny cell is a vital elementary unit. We are nothing but highly developed results of the individual vitality of huge quantities of these fundamental cells.

As this is undeniably so, how is it possible, by simple decapitation, say, to cause instant death in the millions of cells which compose the brain? It is known that brain cells have their own cell life and are liable to live a certain time after they are cut off from outside nutrition without the supply of any blood whatever from the body. The nourishment is supplied inside the cell walls, and it can go on living after being cut off from other resources.

From this argument it is clear to the professor that these millions of cells in the brain must continue to live after death has apparently intervened—that is, when death appears, but only on the outside, to have been instantaneous.

After a man's leg is cut off, or an animal's you can stimulate the nerves for a long time, but you cannot do it after the cells are dead. You cannot get any response at all.

Electricity has been thought to be the germ of life, but this is a fanciful theory when confronted with the new laws as by research established.

The countless millions of cells of which our bodies are entirely composed contain the germ of life, and it is impossible for these to be visited with an instantaneous unconsciousness.

You can take living cells from a pig's glands, and this same professor will demonstrate to you that after these glands have gone through their preparation the cells are still living.

But the curious fact remains that at present there are no data showing the supposed length of time it takes for the cells of the brain to empty themselves of the germ of consciousness or life, but it is certain that consciousness does not cease immediately after, say, a head has been cut off a body. The belief, however, is that at least four or five minutes must elapse ere death finally steps in to arrest life.

It has been noticed in the case of a decapitated head that the cheeks remain red for some minutes after the severance, a conclusive proof that the cells are living.

The heads of decapitated animals have continued to bite and snap at the air for three or four minutes after severance. This phenomenon is well marked in the head of a tortoise separated from the body. The life of the brain, therefore, must be retained for some time after the head is severed, from the very fact that, though being separated from the trunk, its nutritious blood and gases, taken from the fund stored up in the cells, are in sufficient quantity to carry on life, but for what exact period is unknown.

Do the brain cells die simultaneously? No, because they have their own individual cell life. Our scientific friend also makes the very startling statement that in many diseases the brain cells, although the person to all appearances is dead, may live for three or four hours after supposed death has taken place.

In the case of a healthy person being hanged, seeming death is not instantaneous at all. Organic motion is arrested, but real death is certainly not instantaneous. The brain cells are the last to die, and life is not really extinct until rigor mortis sets in, which, in the case of a healthy person dying suddenly, is protracted.

Now, when it is known that an ordinary cell lives after being removed from a living body, why, then, cannot the brain cells retain their life when the conditions immediately surrounding them are much the same as during their previous existence?

The head of a chicken was cut off, and after certain stimuli had been made it opened its mouth and gasped five minutes after its head had been decapitated from the body.

The head of a certain animal was cut off and found susceptible to light for many minutes after it was apparently dead. A strong electric light was held in front of the eyes and moved alternately near to and far away from them. The pupils of the eyes followed the light in its movements, expanding and contracting, that is to say, focusing themselves upon the light as it moved backward and forward. It was proved that the animal was capable of smelling by the use of certain pungent odors placed near the nasal organs—and all this because the brain cells were yet living.

Raising Ducks Without Water.

Ducks don't need water to thrive. There are many duck raising plants in this country where thousands of the fowls are bred each year for market and where there is not even a puddle for them to flounder in. One of these farms is credited with an output of 20,000 ducks a year.

PUNISHING AN EDITOR.

The Curious Method Adopted in a South American Country.

Curious methods of punishing indiscreet editors are in vogue in some countries. In "South American Sketches" Mr Crawford describes the interesting experience of an editor who had been unfortunate enough to give offense to the ruling powers by the freedom of his criticisms.

The editor was arrested and confined in a narrow passage between the cages of two jaguars, notorious for their bad tempers and their intense dislike for human society.

The intervening space was so regulated that neither of the ferocious animals could get its paws quite to the middle line between the cages, so that a spare, active person, if very careful to follow the classical advice about the advantages of steering a middle course, might manage to pass without special injury, though the achievement would be both exciting and dangerous.

Our editorial friend happened to be stout, and therefore was the more easily reached by the occupants of the cages. As if to add insult to injury, he was given a chair on which to sit and at the same time was furnished with a copy of his own paper, the issue which had brought him into trouble, in order that he might meditate upon its contents.

He tried to sit motionless and bolt upright, feeling those sleepy, cruel eyes fixed upon him. At the slightest movement or the rustle of the paper uneasy mutterings arose from the cages, and a paw would stretch stealthily toward him. Lenny quickly to the other side, he was sure to be met by the ugly claws of the second jaguar. It was a case of Scylla and Charybdis.

Every few minutes the jaguars became wildly excited and clawed fiercely at the shrinking editor, who, do his best, could not escape those rending toe nails. His clothing was torn to shreds, but except for a few scratches he was not really injured.

AN ENCHANTED PITCHER.

The Belle of a Fatality, It Is Preserved by Superstition.

About five miles from Aiken, S. C. on the Charleston dirt road and in sight of the railway, is a little place that was first christened Polecat, but afterward changed to Montmorenci, the French for that odorous little animal. Many years ago a young woman came with her pitcher to draw a bucket of water from a well at Montmorenci and set the vessel in the hollowed top of a stone post that some of the railroad men had moved there. While drawing the water a flash of lightning came that struck the chain to which the well bucket was attached, and the woman was killed in her tracks. Her remains were removed, but the pitcher was left just where the dead girl had set it. To this day the pitcher remains in the same place, and, so far from being removed, it is said that no living hand has ever touched it save its owner's, although near the side of the public road.

But the most wonderful thing is the superstition attached to the pitcher. There is an indescribable influence surrounding it that prevents its touch. Hundreds of people have gone with the firm determination of lifting the pitcher, but when they approach it a strange repugnance comes over them, and they hurriedly depart without carrying out the object of their visit.

One night a bully in the neighborhood, while under the influence of whiskey, made a bet with some friends that he would go and bring back the pitcher. He left to do so, but soon returned as pale as a sheet and empty handed. "Boys," he remarked, "no person alive can lay hands on that pitcher, and I wouldn't attempt it again for the whole of Aiken county."

He refused to tell his experience and said he would not talk about it. Other parties have gone to see it, but met with the same repulsive feelings.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Clean Coal Mines.

The Chilean coal mines opened in 1855, seem to be nice places to work in. The seam of coal runs from the shore under the waters of the Pacific ocean, and the tunnels are so clean that you could walk through them in a dress suit without making yourself dirty. They are lighted by electricity, and you can have a ride for a mile under the ocean on an electric car at a speed of 20 miles an hour. The mines form quite a catacomb of well lighted passages under the water. The output of coal is now 1,000 tons a day, and 750 miners are employed in them.

Cycling and Alcohol.

"Remember," says an experienced New York physician, "that alcohol stimulates the heart and circulation in much the same way as exercise does and that if you use it in any form while wheeling the reaction is speedy and far-reaching."

In the same way a long ride should never be undertaken immediately after a plentiful meal, this also tending to interfere with the heart's action and respiration.

A Foreign Writer's Burden.

"I find your political terms very puzzling," remarked the foreigner who was trying to gather material for a book on American institutions. "For example, to rotate means to move in a circle. A ring also means a circle. Now I am told that when a ring controls your offices they don't rotate any more."—Chicago Tribune.

A European statistician has discovered that only 55 per cent of the blonds marry, while 79 per cent of their brunette sisters engage in matrimony.

Forty tons of rust have been taken out of the Menai tubular bridge at one cleaning.

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