

GILBERT AS A WIZARD.

Curious Tricks of an Old Time Investigator of Electricity.

H. G. Wells has called attention in "The World Set Free" to a half forgotten worthy who, in "the spacious times of great Elizabeth," loomed large indeed. Science, to be sure, does not forget him, and one great English poet, Dryden, has proclaimed with resonant emphasis:

Gilbert shall live until loadstones cease to draw.

Nevertheless how many young students of electricity today ever heard of William Gilbert?

"It was Gilbert, Queen Elizabeth's court physician, who first puzzled his brains with rubbed amber and bits of glass and silk and shellac," says Mr. Wells, "and so began the quickening of the human mind to the existence of this universal presence. And even then the science of electricity remained a mere little group of curious facts for 200 years, connected perhaps with magnetism—a mere guess that—perhaps with the lightning. * * * Except for the lightning conductor, it was 250 years before electricity stepped out of the cabinet of scientific curiosities into the life of the common man."

Gilbert's theories and guesses about magnetism—he concluded that the world is a vast spherical magnet—were serious and far-reaching, and he embodied them in a book with a ponderous Latin title—the first great book on physics published in England. But his experiments were chiefly of the curio and plaything sort. An English collection of Elizabethan letters and anecdotes of court life gives the opinion of a provincial young lady of quality, but recently come up to London to accept a position in the queen's household, who had witnessed some of them. She wrote home to her mother:

"The queen is now well recovered of her sickness, which was but little, tho it lookt at first as it wold be greater. She puts much trust in her Doctor, one Gilbert, and soe doe her ladies for the moste parte, and I am laught at by alle but onely Lady Margaret for that I doe fear the man and his cures that they bee not such as are permitted to Xtian (Christian) folke to undergoe. I have seen him playe strange tricks, taking, for the diversion of the queen's ladies, a silke glove from one and her bedes of ambre from another and a scrapple of the writing of her Love from another, if she have it about her and can be persuaded to give it uppe, and makinge the one to russe and give forth the speckles of fyre, and the others one to pick the other uppe by touching of it—and a blacke catte coming in he rubed her that she brisled and gave forth the little fyres that daunced alonge her furre in the dark as if the wyches that love blacke cattes were stroking her back. Soche matters are of the diuel and shoide not be medled with for sporte, they are not meet for good Xtians."

Poor, timid little lady! If she deemed Dr. Gilbert's tricks and cures of 300 years ago so perilous to the soul what would she have thought of the electric shocks, baths, massage and all the varied tingling, prickling, crackling and spark spitting electrical devices of our modern physicians?

Before the Toothbrush.
Before the invention of toothbrushes people used to clean their teeth with linen. This is evident from William Vaughan's "Fifteen Directions to Preserve Health," published 1602, in which the author tells those who want to keep the teeth "white and uncorrupt" that they must wash the mouth after every meal, "sleepe with the mouth somewhat open * * * and in the morning take a linnen-cloth and rub the teeth well within and without." In Vaughan's time several varieties of tooth powder were known, the recipe for one of the simplest being as follows: "Burne a piece of Corke till it looks like a Coale, then take it out of the fyre and it will fall to ashes, wherewith rub your teeth."—London Chronicle.

Fresh Figs.
The first known tree referred to in the Bible is the fig tree. We are apt to think of figs as very sweet dried fruit, brown in color, packed into long wooden boxes. When newly gathered figs are rather like pears in shape and of a green or purple color. Eaten in this state, the people of the east consider them the most delicious of fruit, but the figs are also dried, and in that form are included in almost every meal.

The Modern Way.
Mrs. Henry Peck—Men have degenerated sadly since the days of chivalry. Sir Walter Raleigh spread his cloak on the ground for the queen to walk on. Women do not walk on men's cloaks in these modern days. Mr. Henry Peck—No; they walk on men's necks now.—Puck.

Open to Conviction.
"I understand," said Mr. Dolan, "that you declared there should be no more fightin'."

"I said that," replied Mr. Rafferty. "But I never was obstinate, an' mebbe a few words of argument from you can make me change my mind."—Washington Star.

A Dilemma.
Wife—Henry, you really must have the landlord come and see for himself the awful damage the rain did to our ceiling. Hub—I can't without letting him see the damage the children have done to the rest of the house.—Boston Transcript.

We are all born for love. It is the principle of existence and its only end.—Disraeli.

ANIMAL INTELLIGENCE.

Cats, Dogs and Monkeys Seem to Be in a Class by Themselves.

Horses are generally given credit for a great deal more intelligence than they actually possess. Scientific tests show that in wisdom such as human beings display horses are hopelessly outclassed by dogs, monkeys and even cats.

The horse can be taught to do certain things just because he is too stupid to have any ideas of his own. Like many human prize pupils, he can learn, but cannot think.

So far as intelligence goes, psychological experiments show that it is practically a dead heat between cats, dogs and monkeys.

The dog has human morals; therefore people are apt to assume that he has human logic. But the cat, say certain persons, in sheer brains stands next to man. He has the adaptive intelligence that makes him equally at home in parlor and wild woods and gets him a living anywhere. A cat, it is argued, can think faster and take care of himself under more different conditions than any other living thing except man.

Monkeys undoubtedly seem more intelligent than they really are because they resemble human beings in actions and outward appearance so much more closely than other animals.

Some scientists maintain that, although the monkey may be really no more intelligent than the cat or dog, his intelligence is certainly more like the human type.

Although he may not think better, his methods of thought are more like those of a man than are those of the other animals.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

BLACK OPALS.

These Gems Fairly Blaze With Myriad Shades of Color.

Those exquisite gems, black opals, which were practically unknown up till comparatively recently, cost more, carat for carat, than do diamonds even, while experts declare that they are infinitely more beautiful.

And in this connection it may be pointed out that the term "black opal" is distinctly misleading. It was coined to distinguish it from the familiar light opal. As a matter of fact, the black opal is alive with myriad shades of flaming splendor, from brightest tints of green glowing fire to meteoric gold or lavender that in an instant quivers to crimson or slips into molten ruby or sapphire as the angle of light alters.

Black opals are dear, not only because they are so beautiful, but because they are so rare. They are found only at one spot, a comparatively small tract of ground in New South Wales, adjoining the Queensland border.

The field is called Lightning ridge. It is a wild and desolate spot. The nearest towns to it are Walgett and Collaredabri, and it is about 500 miles from Sydney as the crow flies.

Black opal mining is about the biggest gamble extant. There is really nothing to guide the miner in selecting a likely spot. The work is hard. The shafts average forty feet in depth, and all rock has to be "bucketed" to the top. Water is scarce, food almost unobtainable. On the other hand, the prospector who is lucky enough to stumble upon a pocket of fair sized, flawless stones reaps a fortune forthwith.—Pearson's Weekly.

How We Read.

Oliver Wendell Holmes owned up to his preference for reading in books to reading through them. "When I set out to read through a book," the autocrat wrote, "I always felt that I had a task before me, but when I read in a book it was the page or the paragraph that I wanted, which left its impression and became a part of my intellectual furniture." If we were only franker most of us would confess to being like Holmes in this matter of our reading.—New York Telegram.

Ancient Trades.

Bygone trades have a way of proving on investigation to be only modern industries under another name. A millner, for instance, was only a miller, after all, and a parmenter was nothing more strange than a tailor, though not even the experts are certain why he was so called. A raffman, however, is more interesting. Raff (an ally of the present word rafferty) was foreign timber, and a raffman was one who dealt in it.—London Chronicle.

Book Consumption.

In the United States but one person in 7,500 buys a book in the course of a year, while in Great Britain it is one in 3,500; in France it is about the same; in Germany and Japan it is rather better, and in Switzerland it is one in 872. Cheaper books, in paper covers, account for some of this difference. But whatever the cause it remains true that the Europeans buy twice as many books per capita as we do.—Atlantic Monthly.

A Boast Resented.

"I always try to attend to my own business," said the self approving man. "That's jes' what folks are talkin' about," replied Farmer Cornstossel. "Tendin' to your own business ain't what we elected you to the legislature fur."—Washington Star.

Protested.

"Villain, I defy you," said the heroine, drawing herself to her full height. "Do your worst."

"Don't ask him to do that, miss," pleaded a voice from the gallery. "His acting is bad enough as it is."—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

A CHINESE JACOB.

His Willy Scheme by Which Hsien Feng Reached the Throne.

How Hsien Feng, winning his father's favor after the manner of Jacob, reigned in his stead and hastened the swift decline of the Manchu dynasty in China is told by Messrs. E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland in "Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking."

Toward the end of his reign Tao Kuang, concerned as to the succession, had almost decided to confer it upon his favorite son, Prince Kung, a young man much superior in character and intelligence to him who eventually became heir to the throne. It happened, however, that the latter's tutor, Tsao Chenyung, knew of the emperor's predilection and, desiring to enhance his own position, cast about for some means of inducing the sovereign to change his mind and confer the succession upon his pupil.

The emperor, following the dynastic tradition, had given orders one day that his sons should go hunting in the southern park. Etiquette required that a prince who had not completed his studies should ask his tutor for permission to absent himself for the day. Hsien Feng therefore attended at the lecture room in the palace and found his tutor there alone. The prince went up and, making the bow that ceremony requires, asked for leave.

Tsao asked for what purpose, and he answered: "The emperor wishes me to take a day's shooting."

Tsao whispered to him: "Ako (the Manchu word used in speaking of or addressing princes meaning, literally, elder brother), take my advice: When you reach the park sit you and watch the others shooting. Do not fire a shot and give orders to your huntsmen not to set any traps. If the emperor asks you for your reason tell him that at this spring season it is not right to take life because both birds and beasts have their young to take care of, and such slaughter is a violation of natural harmony. Take care not to quarrel with your brothers, but do not endeavor to emulate them. If you, ako, will remember this, you are certain to win his majesty's approval, for I know his disposition. On this hinges your whole future. Be careful; do not forget."

When the princes returned in the evening and reported to their father only Hsien Feng had an empty bag. To Tao Kuang's questions he replied exactly as his tutor had told him to do.

The emperor was delighted and said, "This is the conduct of a superior man," and from that day he decided to make him his heir.

In later years, when Tao Kuang had passed away, Hsien Feng raised his tutor to the rank of assistant grand secretary, but he died before attaining to still higher honors.

When Tosti Kissed Melba.

The first time I sang "Goodby" it was in Tosti's studio, and he played the accompaniment himself. The lines "Hush—a voice from far away," "Listen and learn." It seems to say: "All the tomorrows shall be as today." "The cord is frayed, the cruse is dry; the link must break and the lamp must die." I sang throughout pianissimo, with only the two slight crescendos that he had marked in the music. Stopping suddenly at the end of those phrases, Tosti kissed me and exclaimed, "That is the way I heard it!" I knew what he meant. The desire prompted by imagination in its composing had been realized. And I was very happy. — Mme. Melba in "Woman's Home Companion."

Turn the Children Loose.

Turn them loose. That is the best way to develop the muscles of boys and girls. Turn them loose and let them live wild—climb trees, jump fences, chase squirrels, play with the dogs, dig in the garden, pick flowers, hop, skip and jump and do all sorts of things that a natural human animal wants to do. The trouble is, our boys and girls are tamed too much. We are all born wild and in the civilizing process have to be tamed more or less. Most of us, however, get tamed too much. We become so tamed that we are spoiled.—Good Health.

Norway Hotel System.

There is a capital hotel system in vogue in certain parts of Norway. In villages where no hotel exists one of the more prominent inhabitants is subsidized by the Norwegian government and in return is bound to provide accommodation for not fewer than four travelers. He may take in more if he chooses, but four is the minimum. The accommodation and food supplied are excellent and the charges moderate.

Garden Society.

"Why is the lily so naughty?" inquired the mushroom. "She barely nods to the rest of us."

"She is very proud," explained the ivy. "She regards you as an upstart and me as a climber."—Kansas City Journal.

Leatherback Turtle.

A marine creature hard to keep alive in captivity is the leatherback turtle. The leatherback is a sea turtle, and it is the biggest of all the turtles. It grows to weigh a thousand pounds or more, six or eight times as much as a man.

Quits the Contrary.

"Does your wife husband your resources?" "Not while she's trying to husband our daughters."—Baltimore American.

Good luck is but another name for common sense.

After the Honeymoon--

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