

LOOKING AND SEEING

There is a Marked Difference Between These Two Acts.

THE POWER OF OBSERVATION

Should Be Cultivated Even in the Most Ordinary Things—A Faculty That is Possessed by All, but That is Developed by the Few.

It is the hope and desire of all parents that their children shall make some sort of a mark in the world when they grow up. They do not in the majority of cases expect that their offspring will become famous and make names that will live for ages, but they cherish the thought that they will be successful men and women in some profession or business. That is the keynote—that success shall be their portion.

Yet it is a fact that most parents neglect or pay very little attention to some part of the child's education which is of the highest importance. They do not train the perceptive faculties. Power of observation will help you more than anything else in your struggle for existence, and yet there are comparatively few people who are keen observers. One small fact will prove this latter statement. The man who observes everything, he who sees everything he looks at, is singled out either as an inquisitive person or a clever one, and this shows that he is an exception.

It is easy to give instances of this lack of perception even in the ordinary things of life. Some years ago an artist engaged in a London firm of printers had to draw an advertisement in which the central figure was a cock in the act of crowing. Nothing seemed easier, but when he set to work the artist found himself confronted by a difficulty—does the cock show its tongue prominently when it crows? Every one of the hundred men employed by the firm had seen a cock crow scores of times, yet not one of them could answer the question. The artist had to go to a friend who kept fowls and chase the poor rooster round and round the yard until it crowed.

A schoolmaster, wishing to test the perception of his boys, asked them how many times they had seen a cow's pictures of that animal and found, as he had expected, that all the boys had seen the creature more times than they could remember. Then he offered to give small prizes to the boys who could correctly answer this question: "Are a cow's ears above, below, in front of or behind its horns?" Only two boys gained prizes, and their answers were guesswork.

Now sit down and test yourself in some such simple manner. You have all seen a horse "down." Can you describe how it rises? Does it get up on its fore feet first and then on its hind feet, or does it kneel first, then get on its hind feet and finally on its fore feet?

However, you need not confine yourself to the animal kingdom in testing your perceptive faculties. Many subjects will suggest themselves to you.

As an excuse for this want of observation it is often urged that "a man can't know everything," but the excuse is a bad one. There is a great difference between knowing little or nothing and knowing everything. When the faculty has been trained it requires no more effort to note the points of the object looked at than it does to glance at that same object and come away none the wiser.

The chances of success in life are on the side of the man who knows certain things because he has learned about them by using his senses instead of having to go to a book for all that he wishes to know. Books are indispensable, as there are so many things which cannot come within the range of our observation, but wherever possible we should use our senses to acquire knowledge at first hand.

This will explain why men who cannot read or write have built up substantial businesses. They have made use of the power possessed by all, but cultivated by very few.

The perceptive faculty must be trained during childhood and youth. After the completion of the twentieth year very little progress can be made. A grown man is unable to develop his powers of observation to any satisfactory degree. Youth is full of energy, and that is the time to inculcate the lesson that we should see all that our eyes rest upon.

It should be the object of every parent to teach his child to note every object that comes in his way. When out for a walk in a park the child should be told to observe the shapes of the leaves on the different trees, the painting of the color of animals toward the under part of the body, and so on, and should be told that when asked a question on the subject he must be prepared to say that it is so, not that he thinks it is.

All children have inquiring minds, and after a walk or two, coupled with such instruction as we have mentioned, you will find the child making great progress and acquiring a quality that will be invaluable in after life.

One of the methods adopted by Houdini, the conjurer, for quickening the perception of his son was to make him walk rapidly past a shop window or a stall on which a number of articles were displayed and then write down a list of the objects noticed. At first only half a dozen articles were perceived during the moment occupied in passing the store or window, but after having done it once a day for a month the boy was able to make a list of forty objects.—Pearson's Weekly.

FAMOUS BULLS.

From the House of Commons and From the Pulpit.

The house of commons, as might have been expected, has contributed a fair share to a very amusing collection of "bulls." It was in one of the debates of that body that the late Colonel Sanderson described Eastern Roumelia as "man enough to take her stand" in defense of a certain threatened right.

An Irish member of parliament once declared that of the outrages reported from Ireland three-quarters were exaggerated and half had no foundation in fact, a statistical computation that reminds one of another Irish member of parliament who declared excitedly to a group of fellow members, "I want to convince you that there isn't any truth in half the lies they are telling about Ireland."

The biography of Dean Hook recalls a certain minor canon who used to preach at the cathedral when Hook was a boy at Winchester school. In one of his sermons there occurred the striking reflection that "what is impossible can never be and very seldom comes to pass."

Another discourse was long remembered for its pathetic lamentation on the degeneracy of the age: "O tempora! O mores! What times we live in! Little boys and girls run about the streets cursing and swearing before they can either walk or talk!" But the Church of England has no monopoly of these violent contrasts, for it was at a City Temple meeting not many years ago that a speaker exclaimed: "I find my time is already gone. Therefore I will keep within it."—Windsor Magazine.

POSED THE DEAD MAN.

Scheme of the Gamblers in Crockford's House in London.

Crockford, the proprietor of a well known London gambling house, was made to play a queer role after he was dead. When one of Crockford's horses was poisoned just before the Derby the misfortune brought on an attack of apoplexy, which proved fatal within forty-eight hours. Now, many of Crockford's friends had staked large sums on another of the gambler's horses, which was a favorite for the Oaks and which was disqualified by the death of the owner. Only the people in the gambling house knew of Crockford's death, and it was resolved to keep it a secret until after the race.

The servants were bribed and sworn to secrecy, and the conspirators on the day after the night upon which Crockford died had the body placed in a chair at a window, so that people returning from the track could see the gambler sitting there. He was fixed up to look as if he were as possible and through the window and partially concealed from view by the curtains looked so natural that no one of the great crowd which came cheering by the house when on their return from seeing Crockford's horse win the Oaks suspected the trick.

The next day it was announced that Crockford was dead, but it was years before the true story leaked out.—Westminster Gazette.

Superstitions of the Cingalese.

An old Cingalese woman who lived in an ordinary native hut by herself died and was buried. On the following day a large iguana (a species of lizard which attains great size) entered the compound of a gentleman living close by and attacked his poultry. Hearing the noise and commotion, he came out and, on ascertaining the cause, got his gun and shot the iguana. No sooner had he done this than there arose a great uproar from the relatives of the old woman, who declared that he had killed her, because her spirit had passed into the lizard, in proof of which they pointed triumphantly to the fact that it had never before been seen in the vicinity and only appeared after her death. Rupees finally appeased the outraged feelings of the old woman's descendants.—Java Times.

The Elephant's Trunk.

The long trunk of the elephant is very, very wonderful. The neck of four footed animals is usually long to enable them to reach their food without difficulty, but the elephant has a short neck to enable him more easily to support the weight of his huge head and heavy tusks. The long trunk helps him to get his food, and the trunk is to an elephant what a long neck is to other animals.—Chicago Journal.

Denmark's Old Age Pension.

In Denmark any person who at the age of twenty-one pays to the state a sum of 16 10s. is entitled, if he reaches the age of sixty-five, to an annuity of £13. But if he dies before that age the money is forfeited.—London Mail.

Hazarding a Guess.

"Know anything about golf?" "Not much. Why?" "What's a bunker? Do you know?" "I suppose it's one of those cranks that simply live and sleep on the links."—Philadelphia Press.

Rebuked.

Small Tommy (after the slipper sentence)—Mamma, I'm glad I'm not a girl. Mamma—Why, Tommy? Small Tommy—"Cause I'd be ashamed to grow up and become a child beater."—Chicago News.

Her Choice.

"Can he sing well?" "Well, I'll tell you. He offered to sing the baby to sleep the other night, and his wife said, 'No; let her keep on crying.'"—Cleveland Leader.

THE WORD "BANZAI."

Has Been Used in Japan From the Earliest Ages.

It is not infrequent to find men speculating as to the origin of the now familiar "banzai," and we believe that a general impression classes this excellent ejaculation among the inventions of modern Japan. Quite recently indeed we heard a learned Japanese declare that the late Professor Toyama was the originator of the word as the Japanese equivalent of "hurrah." But the truth is that "banzai" belongs to a very much remoter date. History shows that it was used certainly as long ago as the year 486 A. D., and probably it was not an innovation even then. In the "Chronicles of Japan," a work published in the year 820 A. D., it is related that in the spring of 483 A. D. the Emperor Wo-ke, remembered by posterity as "Kenzo, Tenno," repaired to the park of the summer hall and there held revel by "the winding streams." His guests were a concourse of ministers and of high officials known at that epoch under the titles of Omi, Muraji and Miyakko. When the feast was at its height the guests, we read, "raised repeated cries of banzai." It may fairly be assumed that this formula of gratulation did not originate there but at any rate its undoubted use in Japan more than fourteen centuries ago deprives any Meiji savant of the credit of having invented it.—Japan Mail.

AIM TO SUCCEED.

The Self Improvement Habit as a Business Asset.

The very reputation of having an ambition to amount to something in the world, of having a grand life aim, is worth everything, says a writer in Success Magazine. The moment you earnestly find that you are dead in earnest, that you mean business, that they cannot shake you from your determination to get on in the world or rob you of your time or persuade you to waste it in frivolous things you will not only be an inspiring example to them, but the very people who are throwing away their time will also admire your stand, respect it and profit by it, and you will thus be able to protect yourself from a thousand annoyances and time wasters and experiences which would only hinder you.

In other words, there is everything in declaring yourself, in taking a stand and thereby announcing to the world that you do not propose to be a failure, or an ignoramus; that you are going to prepare yourself for something out of the ordinary, away beyond mediocre, something large and grand.

The moment you do this you stand out in strong contrast from the great mass of people who are throwing away their opportunities and have not grit and stamina enough to do anything worth while or to make any great effort to be somebody in the world.

First Omnibus.

"Omnibus" was an almost brand new word in its modern sense when Shillibeer took it from the French in 1829, and in France the name possessed a special significance for those who knew their history, for from 1672 to 1676 Paris had already seen a regular service of roomy public vehicles, "carrosses a cinq sous." Only these predecessors of the modern bus were not "omnibus"—for all. The letter-patent which instituted them for the benefit of middle class people laid down that they were not to be used by soldiers, lackeys or any other wearers of livery or artisans and laborers. These exclusive vehicles faded out of existence, and the new ones, which were started in Paris in 1828, were named "omnibus" expressly to signify their democratic character.—London Chronicle.

Widows' Caps.

The widow's cap is a survival of an old Roman custom. Widows were obliged to wear their weeds for ten months, and the bereaved woman shaved her head as a token of mourning. Naturally the widow could not very well appear in public with a bald head, so dainty caps were made in order to hide the disfigurement. The cap still remains, though the immediate necessity for its existence has long passed away.—Pearson's Weekly.

Advantageous Promptitude.

Henry IV. of France particularly liked answers to his questions given quickly and without preparation. On one occasion, meeting an ecclesiastic, he said to him: "Where do you come from? Where are you going? What do you want?" "From Bourges; to Paris; a living," replied the cleric promptly. "You shall have it!" cried the prince.

An Oversight.

"Look here," exclaimed the angry man as he rushed into the real estate agent's office, "that plot I bought from you yesterday is thirty feet under water!" "Pardon my oversight," apologized the gentlemanly agent. "We give a diving suit with each plot. I will send yours to you today."

Oddly Expressed.

The following letter of gratitude for services rendered appears in a London publication: "Mr. and Mrs. Blank wish to express thanks to their friends and neighbors who so kindly assisted at the burning of their residence last night."

The mean things done by those we dislike never surprise us.—St. Louis Republic.

The fool wanders; the wise travel.—French Proverb.

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