

PECULIAR NERVOUS AFFICTION.

Features of the Complaint Known to Physicians as Locomotor Ataxia. From the New York Sun: If Frenchmen are as subject as other folks to nervous hallucinations touching the symptoms of disease there is likely to be a widespread alarm in France as to locomotor ataxia. Dr. Goncelin has published in the Journal de la Sante an account of the symptoms forerunning and accompanying that disease, and his article has found its way into popular lay publications. Dr. Goncelin sets down five leading symptoms of the disease in its early stages, and intimates that where three of them are well defined the patient is almost certainly on the edge of the disease. One symptom is the inability of the person affected to stand firm and erect with his eyes closed. Another is the symptom of the stairs, so called from the fact that the patient is in constant fear of falling as he descends a stairway. The third symptom is found in the way the patient crosses his legs. He lifts the leg in this act much higher than is necessary to clear the knee of the other leg, and the toes describe in air an arc of a large circle. The fourth symptom is the confused and hesitating manner in which the patient moves when suddenly commanded to rise and walk, and the painful effort he makes to keep his equilibrium when suddenly ordered to halt in his march. In the first case under this symptom the patient seems uncertain of his equilibrium. In the second, under the same symptoms, he tends, when suddenly halted, to lean far forward, or, with a view to counteracting this tendency, to lean back at a perilous angle. The fifth symptom is the inability of the patient to stand firm and erect upon one foot, at first with his eyes open, then with his eyes closed. A man in normal health can ordinarily preserve his equilibrium upon one foot with his eyes open, but it takes some practice to enable him to stand still upon one foot with his eyes closed. The eyes are an important adjunct in preserving one's equilibrium, whether in walking or in standing. In the case of a person stricken with locomotor ataxia it is difficult to maintain equilibrium upon one foot with the eyes open, and impossible to maintain it for a single instant with the eyes closed. All these symptoms are to be noted with the fact in mind that persons in good health are likely to be nervously affected by the knowledge of the experiments with the view to discovering such symptoms are in progress. It is also important to remember that a person of sound health, but unused to smooth floors, descending an uncarpeted stairway of polished hard wood, is likely to be seized with a fear of slipping, and instinctively stiffens the ankles as one does in walking on ice. A steep stairway, too, is alarming to old persons or to nervous persons when they make the descent.

SPOKE WITHOUT LOOKING.

How a Busy Grocer Lost a Desirable Customer. She is just one of the very prettiest women in the whole Southwest, and she has come to Washington to spend the winter. Her skin is like the heart of a white rose. Her eyes—well, her eyes are just the color of Mrs. Joseph Thompson's eyes down in Atlanta, the color of the high light in a glass of old sherry, and her hair is as red as a frosted oak leaf. She is sensitive about that glorious hair, and this is a story of something that happened to her a fortnight ago. She had planned a dinner to celebrate her going to house-keeping, and a canvas back duck was implicated in it. So she went a-marting, and found her way into a shop or stall where game is sold. "Have you any canvas backs?" she said to the salesman. The man hesitated for just a moment. Then from the back of the shop the proprietor's voice bawled out: "No; but there's a nice red-head." And then an astonished clerk was left staring after an extremely indignant woman who swept out in a blaze of temper and dead-leaf hair.—Washington Post.

How She Found a Nom de Plume.

Miss French (Octave Thanet) thus explains how she got her nom de plume: "Octave was the name of a school friend. It is both French and Scotch. I thought if I could find another name to go with it that was both French and Scotch I would adopt that. I was riding on a train one time when we stopped at a way station, and on the siding near where I sat was a freight car painted red. On the side was chalked the word 'Thanet.' What it meant or how it got there I have not the slightest idea, but I decided then and there to adopt it. Lots of people still think that Octave Thanet is a man."

Where England Fights Best.

The prospect of another Ashantee war recalls Sir Wilfred Lawson's summary of the English campaign in 1873. He asked in the house of commons what England had gained by her victories over the Ashantees. "An old umbrella and a treaty," he made answer to his own question. He was reminded that there had been no treaty. He remarked that he was not sorry, as the treaty would have been worth no more than the umbrella.

An Oriental Couch.

An Oriental couch, says an upholsterer, may be easily made of home materials. Take an old packing box and place it on a mattress; cover with velveteen or some cheap Turkish looking cloth. Make a dozen square pillows covered with similar stuff of different patterns, and that corner of the room will be in style.

Can't Beat the English Sparrow.

After several years of tireless warfare, and the payment of many thousands of dollars in bounties, the farmers of Berrien county, Michigan, have given up fighting the English sparrow.

ITS PERILS ARE MANY.

Lake Superior is an Exceedingly Treacherous Body of Water. From the Detroit Free Press: The recent accident to the steamer Missoula tends to show more clearly than anything that occurred the vast area of Lake Superior, and the possibility of a vessel's crew reaching land after shipwreck and yet being unheard of for a couple of weeks after starting on a voyage. The shores of Michigan, Wisconsin and Minnesota on the big lake are traversed by railways and telegraph lines, and the towns and small settlements on the American side of the lake, even to the islands, furnish ready means of communication with the larger cities; but not so on that part of the Canadian shore north of the lakes, where a wilderness inhabited by a few fishermen and Indians exists. This is especially true of the Canadian shore just above Sault Ste. Marie, and for a long stretch of country to the north and east of the point where the Canadian Pacific railway turns in to the shore of the lake and traverses it toward Port Arthur and Fort William. When the Missoula broke her shaft and was rendered helpless she was less than twenty-five miles from Caribou Island on the course down toward Sault Ste. Marie. She was somewhat off the regular course of vessels bound down from the head of Lake Superior, but if she had been able to make any headway toward the Sault, or care for herself at all on the course she was following, she would have been picked up very soon after the accident by some passing vessel. But a southerly wind drifted her out of the course of even the few vessels trading to Canadian ports at the head of the lakes, and she was working over toward the wildest part of the Canadian north shore territory when her crew was compelled to abandon her. A glance at the chart will show that Brule point, where the crew of the Missoula first made land, is scarcely more than seventy-five miles from Sault Ste. Marie, where 15,000,000 tons of freight passes through a canal in a single season, and yet the men in one of the Missoula's yawl boats spent nearly two days working along the shore of the lake before they found any more sign of life than a deserted fisherman's shanty, in which they built a fire and dried their wet clothing. The fishing season has closed, but even fishermen are scarce in this territory during the most active periods. It is not strange, therefore, that the men from the Missoula were nearly a full week in finding means of communicating with the owners of the vessel after they had landed on the dreary north shore of Lake Superior.

Didn't Know His Neighbor.

Jonathan has been into the Maine woods eighteen seasons, and his occupation there has been gathering spruce gum. He builds a cabin in the fall when he is about to begin work in a new territory. It is generally a small one, but he takes great pains to make it one that can easily be kept warm. One year he passed five months without seeing a human being, and at the end of that time he found that another man had been in camp less than two miles from his all winter. They did not see each other's tracks for the reason that the other fellow was trapping, and confined his journeyings to a valley where a large stream and its branches gave him a field for his operations. Two miles away Mr. Stone lived in his little camp on the edge of a big spruce growth, and in following this he went away from, instead of toward, his neighbor, the trapper. When they had finished their season's work and got acquainted coming out, they told each other of the lonesome evenings passed in their respective camps.

Political Rights in Australia.

An agitation in favor of increased political rights is in progress on the Western Australian gold fields. An association, termed the Gold Fields' National league, has been formed, and a platform adopted demanding facilities for political registration, parliamentary representation on the basis of population, a reduction of railway rates and of customs duties, especially on the necessities of life, improved railway communication and full consideration for the interests of the gold fields as against the seaboard and agricultural districts.

Named by Bayard Taylor.

Mount Clair, in Montgomery county, Pennsylvania, was named by Bayard Taylor during the course of a spring day ramble in 1847. Taylor's association with the place should be sufficient to incite a desire to spell the name as he spelled it. The railroad company spells it "Mount Claire," which spelling originally must have been a blind guess by somebody who, perhaps, thought that it wasn't correct. It was near enough to pass.

Ram's Duel to Death.

An interesting duel was witnessed in Pike County, Pa., not long ago. The duelists were prize rams, and their method of combat was unique. They would repeatedly back off from each other to a distance of about forty feet, and then dash forward until their heads collided. This plan they continued until one ram dropped dead.

Charles A. Dana's Brother.

Junius Dana, who is by two years the junior of Charles A. Dana, lives quietly at Warren, O., where he is a director in a national bank. His life has been a very active one and typically American. Junius Dana is a frequent visitor to New York and a special room in his brother's house is ever at his disposal.

Two Chinese Girl Students.

There are at present two Chinese girls at the University of Michigan. One of them, Miss Shie, has been elected secretary of the senior class. The ultimate object of these women is to return to China as Christian medical missionaries.

CURIOSITIES OF PRINTING.

China Was Doubtless the Birthplace of the Art Preservative. China, the "cradle of the arts," claims the honor of the invention of printing. Away back in the year 993, nearly 1,000 years before Gutenberg issued the first volume of his famous bible, the Chinese were using the "block system" of printing, and in the tenth century, 400 years before Europe had become acquainted with the "art preservative," the almond-eyed Celestial types were better versed in the science of setting movable types than were the American printers of the days of Benjamin Franklin. The "block system" of printing, which was so well known in the flowery kingdom less than six centuries after the birth of Christ, did not find its way to Europe until about the first of the fifteenth century, when "devotional manuals," each bearing a portrait and a few lines in printing, became popular. These cuts and printed lines were taken from engravings made on a single block, the very earliest dated specimen of that character made in Europe bearing date of 1423. There is still a question as to who was the first European printer to use the movable types. It is not a question as to what European invented movable types, for it is known that the honor belongs to the far east. The honor of being the first to adopt the system appears to rest between Laurent Coster of Haarlem (died 1440) John Faust and John Gutenberg. In the above list some include the name of Peter Schoffer, a son-in-law of Faust. Dutch authorities claim that Coster was the first to use movable types, and that Gutenberg, who was at one time a workman in Coster's shop stole the idea from him. The Germans give Gutenberg the honor and set the date of his first successful practice of the art at 1436. The first entire European book ever printed from movable types bears the name of Johann Faust on its title page. It bore the name of "Tractatus Petri Hispani" and was printed at Mentz in 1442. As Gutenberg did not put his name on all of his books, or the date when they were issued, there is some doubt when the first appeared or how many were issued. Gutenberg's great work was his Latin bible, which appeared in 1456, and which is often catalogued as the "first book ever printed on movable types."

THE FORTUNE TELLER KNEW.

Didn't Need Second Sight to Foresee What Was Going to Happen. "I suppose everybody has visited a fortune-teller at least once in his life," remarked a drummer to a New York World reporter, "but I'm willing to bet that few men have ever had such an experience as I ran up against the other day. I was walking through a side street uptown when I chanced to see a clairvoyant's sign in the window. As it had just begun to rain and time was hanging rather heavily on my hands, I thought it was an excellent opportunity to satisfy a curiosity I had often felt. My ring was answered by a frowsy-haired girl, who ushered me into a rather shabbily furnished room. "I was joined by an elderly woman of motherly aspect. There was nothing of the proverbial fortune-teller about her, and I was more than astonished when she introduced herself as a celebrated clairvoyant. But her gentle smile and old-fashioned manner soon put me at my ease, and I felt almost as much at home as if I had been in my own house. Her motherly eye detected that my overcoat was rather wet, and she insisted that I take it off and let her hang it by a fire in the other room. "I felt so comfortable that it was with real regret I saw her at last terminate the interview by going into the other room for my coat. She was a very entertaining talker, and told me the same stereotyped things that fortune-tellers have been telling ever since the beginning, the majority of which are sure to happen to every man and woman who ever lived. As for the particular things she told me, only one, so far, has turned out true. She said I would lose a large sum of money. I never thought anything more about the affair until the next day, when I felt for my bank roll and found that the wallet had been taken out of the inside pocket of my overcoat."

A Cruel East Indian Woman.

In person the begum Somru was small, with a graceful, softly-rounded figure, a complexion of dazzling fairness, large black eyes full of animation, delicately-chiseled features and a hand and arm of such perfect symmetry that native poets sang of them as matchless wonders of beauty. Her dress was always in exquisite taste and of the costliest material. She spoke Persian and Hindustani fluently. Her manners were charming and her conversation spirited, sensible and engaging. But as a set-off to this long array of personal attractions her character was detestable. She was cruel, vindictive and treacherous. If one of her servants displeased or disobeyed her she would order his nose and ears to be cut off in her presence and watch the mutilation with gusto while she placidly smoked her hookah. When one of her dancing girls offended her by attracting the attention of a favorite officer she, in a fit of furious jealousy, ordered the unfortunate girl to be buried alive. There was a small vault under the pavement of the saloon in which the nautch dances were held and in that vault the begum saw her victim bricked up. When the horrible work was done she commanded the rest of the nautch girls to come out and dance over the grave in which their still living sister was interred. According to one account—denied by some of those who have investigated the story—the begum, that she might extract the last drops of fendish pleasure out of the cup of revenge, had her couch placed exactly over the vault.—Chambers' Journal.

Words in Books.

The total number of distinct words in the new testament, excluding proper names, and their derivatives, is 4,829. The vocabulary of the old testament is much larger. According to Gesenius's "Lexicon," the old testament contains 5,810 distinct words, not counting proper names and obsolete roots. A few comparisons with the above may not prove uninteresting to the readers of this department. The "Iliad" and the "Odyssey" together contain 9,011 distinct words; Milton used 9,028 different words and forms of expression in his entire works, and Shakespeare, the peer of all language twisters, used over 15,000, or one-third more than was used by all the writers of both the old and the new testaments.

In Russia.

Russian Official—You can't stay in this country, sir. Traveler—Then I'll leave it. "Have you a permit to leave?" "No, sir." "Then you can't go. I leave you twenty-four hours to make up your mind as to what you shall do."—Household Words.

Immortalized in Street Names.

When Paris either loves or loses some one whom she delights to honor, the inevitable ceremony of new signature for an old street is proposed and carried with acclamation. A movement to substitute the great scientist M. Pasteur's name for the present Boulevard De Vaugirard is already on foot.

HOW HE KNEW.

And the Wild Waves Had Nothing to Say About It.

They sat upon the silent beach silently, observes the New York World. A big, silver-crested wave and the sweet, serene silence broke simultaneously upon the beach. The young man shuddered as this execution suggested to his fevered mind his own pecuniary condition, and as the big wave receded and lost itself in the deep, dark depths of the ocean, his silvery voice burst out upon the stilly morn in riotous oceans of flowery eloquence. But, like the wave, he could not move her rocks. A sweet, sad smile emerged from his full, sensitive mouth, played fitfully about his handsome face for a moment and was lost in the lovely yellow of his bilious beard, and a look of pain sat rigidly upon his marble brow. His lips moved convulsively, in an effort to speak again, but as his full, feverish voice ventured out upon the golden-standard silence there was a shock, and he drew it hurriedly back. At length, with supreme effort, he drew himself tightly together and stuck. He was pleading for a lock of hair—a token of love. How earnestly, how eloquently he pleaded! What plaintive pathos and perspiration attended his burning words! Who could resist him? A lock of hair! It was but a small thing, she ruminated, supposing that the whole suit cost \$50. She gave it to him. He pressed it joyfully to his heart. She loved him! O bliss! Oh, my! Oh, yes. "Darling!" he murmured, in a softly-modulated, melodramatic voice, "I love you! I worship you! Tell me, dearest, that you love me in return. I never loved another," he added, as the thirteenth vision of unrequited love strode hurriedly through his mind. A heavy blush mantled her brow for a moment and then slid slowly down her hair and fell slishly into the sand. "I do love you, George," she answered, fervently. "I adore you." "And I knew it, sweetheart," he gurgled; and under the influence of that Elysian joy and his unpaid board bill, combined with an effort to press her to his bosom despite the sleeves she wore, seven large beads of perspiration stood out upon his classic brow and then ran consecutively down upon his subjacent features. "Knew it?" she repeated, interrogatively; and a shade of disappointment swept horizontally across her mobile face, removing large clusters of snowy whiteness where it swept. She had entertained a certain clandestine joy in the thought that she had played her part well and kept him without reference to what the true sentiments she entertained for him were. Now she had prima-facie evidence that she was mistaken and that she had been kept in the dark herself, and she was aggrieved. "And how," she questioned, pointingly, "did you know it?" "I knew," he rejoined, pressing the bit of hair to his lips, "I knew that you adored me by your looks," he breathed, ecstatically and all at once. And as he folded her to his palpitating breast the tide chased itself hurriedly out and the silent crab buried its blushing face in the sand and spake not.

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