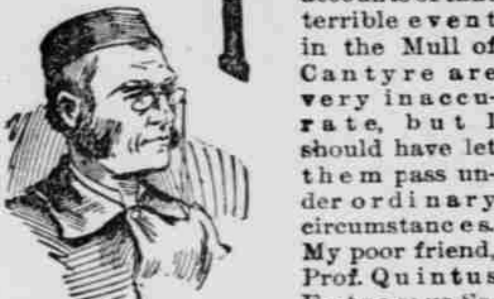


DEATH OF PROF. SEQUITA

BY FREDERICK BOYLE

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HE published accounts of that terrible event in the Mull of Cantyre are very inaccurate, but I should have let them pass under ordinary circumstances. My poor friend, Prof. Quintus Sc...

consequences that they might—Prof. Sequita, the glory of English science, the dear friend of so many among his conferrers, undertook that last operation which should crown, and, as it were, sum up all the labors of the human intellect, in all ages.

What was that operation? I cannot tell precisely. Mrs. Sequita has found very little to assist conjecture in the study at Epsom, and of his papers at Ratholin not the tiniest fragment remains. It would be quite consistent with the professor's other arrangements to destroy every hint of his purpose before leaving home. For if the operation succeeded, he designed, I know, to make a public announcement instantly; but if it failed, he would be anxious to prevent others following the same deadly course of experiment.

But although unable to give any exact information, I can furnish some hints. Prof. Sequita chatted to me—a friend from boyhood, ignorant of technical science—more freely, perhaps, than to his brother savants, upon the final purpose of his investigations. There is no harm, I think, in sketching the general idea which those conversations left on my mind.

Even the motive of his retirement to the Mull of Cantyre is misunderstood. It has been hinted in society, I hear, that an impatient scorn of his contemporaries drove that great soul to make his dwelling in a barren spot, far from the haunts of men. In other words, Prof. Sequita—the simplest of human beings, whose whole mind was absorbed in projects for the happiness and advancement of the race—was a philanthropist.

I am reluctant to name the idea that formed itself in my mind, because it may do the professor injustice; but your readers will understand that it is entirely my own. I fancied then that he had the project of reducing electricity to a form which might be inhaled, or by some such means taken into the body, like gas—not, as at present, by a series of shocks which must kill before any great quantity has been absorbed.

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WEBSTER'S ORATORY.

Glimpses of the Great American in His Best Moments.

The writer heard Webster speak many times during the last ten years of his life. During the early part of this period he was called on to defend the general policy of the whig party in the gatherings of that party in Massachusetts. He did this effectively, but he did not push his enthusiasm into the work that did Choate, or go over the ground with that thoroughness of detail in argument that did Winthrop. Mr. Webster seemed to need more of an occasion to arouse him. His audiences always went wild in his welcome, and would be enthusiastic at the least possible incentive to enthusiasm in his speech, but he was apt to be rather heavy and dull, though to the average man it seemed to be a gratification to be in the presence of Webster which compensated for lack of effort on his part.

Another scene in Faneuil hall is remembered which more than parallels this one. It was something more than four years later, we think. A whig state convention had sat there all day. The extreme anti-slavery section of the party, under the lead of Stephen C. Phillips, had been very active. It had really controlled the body. As night approached many delegates had gone home. The most important vote of all, intended to commit the party against the support of any candidate satisfactory to its southern section, was to be taken. Webster was in the city, and at this juncture the conservative party managers sent for him. Suddenly it seemed to pervade the gathering that he was at the door.

—The Emperor Francis I. of Austria was once present while two of his sons were quarreling violently. At last one of them said: "You are the greatest ass in Vienna." "Hush!" said the emperor, "you forget that I am here."—To-day.

—Fogg—"There's an example of the bottle working a man's ruin." Egg—"Humph! Whisky?" Fogg—"Nep; ink. Jury awarded the girl fifty thousand dollars damages in a breach of promise suit on the strength of the letters he wrote, and it took every cent he had to pay it."—Buffalo Courier.

—Irish vicereps are stripped of their sovereign attributes as soon as they reach English waters. The following story is told of Lord Houghton and a lady with whom he was acquainted. They both found themselves on board the Holyhead packet. During the voyage from Ireland the lady treated the vicerey with ceremonies respect. So soon, however, as the packet entered Holyhead harbor she said to him: "Now, Bobby, you are no longer a vicerey, so take my bag and make yourself useful!"—London Truth.

—The earl of Derby, while walking on his own land, once met a collier. His lordship inquired if the collier knew he was walking on his land. "Thy land? Well, I've got no land myself," was the reply, "and I'm like to walk on somebody's. Where did thy get it fro?" "Oh," explained his lordship, "I got it from my ancestors." "An' where did they get it fro?" queried the collier. "They got it from their ancestors," was the reply. "And where did their ancestors get it fro?" they fought for it." "Well, begad," said the collier, squaring up to the noble earl, "I'll fight thee for it!"

—According to the statistics of Mr. Carroll D. Wright there is one divorce to every four hundred and seventy-nine marriages in the United States.

PERSONAL AND LITERARY.

"Authors are always foolish to strive to secure popularity," writes Edgar Fawcett. "It is like the wind that blows. The great secret of contentment on the part of a writer is to assure himself that he has got out of his pen the best work it can perform."

—Besides her recent volume of short stories Miss Olive Schreiner has written a longer work, the title of which probably will be "From Man to Man." It is described as a study in the comparative ethics of men's treatment of men and their treatment of women.

—John D. Rockefeller, the Standard oil millionaire, got along in business very well as plain John Rockefeller until he began to get rich. Then he appropriated the letter D as a middle initial. Nobody knows what this letter D stands for, and nobody ever will.

—Francis Parkman, the historian, left an estate valued at \$195,950. This did not include a summer estate at Newcastle, N. H., copyrights and stereotype plates and contracts, these being of uncertain value. The real estate is valued at \$55,000 and the personal property at \$140,850.

—In 1835 the Austrian press censor refused to sanction the publication of two books one of which was "Principles of Trigonometry," which, he said, discussed the Trinity, a forbidden subject. The other was a scientific treatise on the destruction of insects, which he imagined made a concealed attack on the church.

—Father Kenelm Vaughan, of England, a Catholic priest who spent three years in a missionary journey through South America, from Panama to Patagonia, addressed the students of Johns Hopkins university the other day on the subject of his adventures. The journey was made on muleback, on the backs of Indians, in canoes, in hammocks and on foot.

—Princess Helen of Orleans is golden haired, blue eyed, tall and very lovely. She is a magnificent equestrienne, and is a familiar figure on many an English hunting field with her favorite horse, Chocolate. She swims, and shoots with unerring aim, and is most skillful with the seals and foils—all this without sacrificing any of her dainty femininity or Parisian elegance.

—William Lane Booker, the British consul-general, who has just been knighted, remained thoroughly British in outward aspect after nearly forty years' residence in this country. He is above the medium height, neither stout or spare, ruddy, grizzled, blue-eyed and slightly bent at the shoulders. He walks rapidly, and pays little attention to persons and things upon the street. It used to be said that one of his duties was to receive the rents from Queen Victoria's real estate in New York.

HUMOROUS.

"How many foreign languages can your wife speak?" "Three—French, German and the one she talks to the baby."—Tit-Bits.

"Are you certain that Hale is going to marry Miss Frost, of Boston?" "Yes; he's having steam heat and stoves both in his new house."—Inter-Ocean.

"There's a peculiar thing about Mrs. Frett." "What is it?" "She has been in a pickle all her life, and yet she doesn't look well preserved."—N. Y. Press.

"Do you really and truly love me, Harry?" "Yes." "Love you? Why I even have a fondness for that nuisance of a brother of yours." "Oh, Harry! You have made me so happy!"—Boston Transcript.

"Do you think," said Willie Wishington, "that it actually hurts a man to be hit with one of Cupid's arrows?" "No," replied Belle Pepperton; "as a rule he merely becomes senseless for a time."—Washington Star.

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FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

A FELLOW'S SISTER.

"A fellow's sister," said blue-eyed Steve. "Is a fellow's best friend, I'd have you believe. 'Cepting it might be his mother. She loves you, oh! just like everything. And her voice is filled with the sweetest ring. As she soft-dike says: 'Little brother.'"

"No matter that a fellow's outgrown the name. By five-foot-ten. It's just the same. She fairly makes him smother. With her love and kisses, when he's come To visit her in her far-away home. And he finds she still says: 'Little brother.'"

"I just pity the fellow who's not even one Of the dearest sisters under the sun. For he knows not the joy of another Who's blest with love so pure and true: For of sisters dear God gave me two. And they both love-like say: 'Little brother.'"

"Were ever sweeter home words given, Fraught with a very glimpse of Heaven, 'That father, sisters, mother?' Naught to a fellow's heart, I trow. Unless it's those words I hear ringing now— 'Dearie we love you, little brother.'"

—Nellie Hawes, in Housekeeper.

OPTICAL ILLUSIONS.

Some That Are Curious and Interesting to Young and Old. We are more or less familiar with curious optical deceptions produced by means of contrasting forms and lines; but there are other illusions quite as curious, of a somewhat different sort, in which the little ones, and even children of a larger growth, will be interested.

Roll a piece of music or stiff paper into a tube, grasp it with the right hand, and hold up the left hand edgewise to it, as shown in illustration No. 1. The result will be that if you turn to the light and look steadily through the tube, with both eyes open, it will appear to you as though the palm of your left hand were transparent, and you could see through it. The position



NO. 1.

of the left hand must be adjusted to the visual angle of the person trying the experiment, and it needs to be brought nearer to the eyes in some cases than in others. At the proper point the illusion will be perfect.

The same illusion can be produced by holding the hand with the inside edge placed against and laid along the bridge of the nose and the forehead, and the whole hand held stiff and inclined a little way either to the right or left from a right angle with the plane of the face.

The solution of this curious illusion is, of course, that the images formed in the eyes overlap each other, and the space shut off on one side is pictured by that eye from which the scene or object looked at is not shut off by the interposing hand.

If a card perforated by a pin hole be placed close to the face, resting against the nose, as shown in illustration No. 2, and a pin be held by the point in such a



NO. 2.

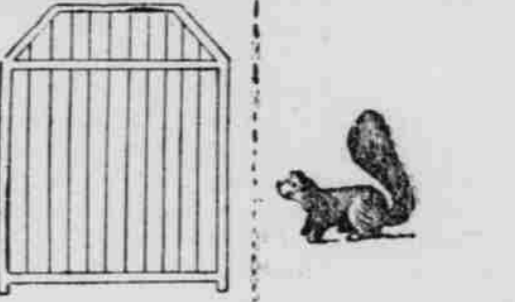
way that its head comes between the eye and the pin hole in the card, the pin being held close to the eye, the former, strange to say, will appear on the other side of the pin hole, reversed and magnified. You see the pin, in fact, not as you hold it in your hand, but through the perforation, on the outer side of the card.

It will be found necessary, unless you have exceptionally firm nerves, to rest the hand holding the pin against the cheek bone, for the difficulty is to get the pin head directly between your eye and the perforation in the card, and to hold

it there without wavering. I must confess my inability to satisfactorily explain this illusion, nor have I seen any explanation that seemed to meet the case fully and at every point.

Illustrations 3 and 4 show two stars, one white on a black ground, the other black on white ground. Neither be taken into strong sunlight and looked at steadily for a period, the eyes when withdrawn and cast upon a blank white surface will project an image in which what is dark in the original will become light, and what is light will become dark. The necessary period for keeping the eye fixed upon the objects, for this experiment, and

intensity of the secondary image, depend upon the constitution of the eyes of the experimenter. No. 5 affords a very curious optical illusion. Place a card on edge length-



NO. 5.

wise on the dotted line between the cage and the squirrel, turn toward the light so the card will not throw a shadow, then place the middle of the end of the nose on the upper edge of the card, and after a moment's steady looking the squirrel will appear to enter the cage.—Demorest's Magazine.

ANIMAL BAROMETERS.

Tortoises, Catbirds and Other Creatures Foretell Rainstorms. The tortoise is not an animal one would naturally fix upon as likely to be afraid of rain, but it is singularly so. Twenty-four hours or more before rain falls the Galapagos tortoise makes for some convenient shelter. On a bright, clear morning, when not a cloud is to be seen, the denizens of a tortoise farm on the African coast may be seen sometimes heading for the nearest overhanging rocks.

When that happens the proprietor knows that rain will come down during the day, and as a rule it comes down in torrents. The sign never fails. This prescience, to coin a word, which exists in many birds and beasts, may be explained partly from the increasing weight of the atmosphere when rain is forming, partly by habits of living, and partly from the need of moisture which is shared by all.

The catbird gives warning of an approaching thunderstorm by sitting on the low branches of a tree, uttering curious notes. Other birds, including the familiar robin, it is said, give similar evidence of an impending change in the weather.

AMUSING SCIENCE.

An Innocent Plot Which Combines Mysticism with Fun.

Take an ordinary drinking glass and fill about three-quarters full of water or any other liquid. Let the rim of the glass be quite dry. Place on top of it, as if to protect from dust, an ordinary playing card, with its face downward. The card should be large enough to project slightly beyond the edge of the glass at each side. Let the card remain thus for about half an hour. At the end of that time you will find that the humidity arising from the liquid has caused a slight depression in the middle of the card and curved the edges so that they no longer rest upon the glass. This is the stage at



which your experiment is supposed to begin. Lift the card carefully by one corner and place it face upward on the glass. Have ready a small cork stopper, in the top of which you have inserted a little paper manikin. Place this stopper carefully on top of the card just where the surface appears to be swollen. Let it rest a few minutes, until, by the action of the humidity of the air in the glass, the effect first produced on the card is reversed. With a sudden, sharp sound the slight elevation on which the manikin sits enthrone sinks into a hollow and both cork and figure are projected into the air. The spectators, having no clew to the trick, are mystified at this apparently inexplicable phenomenon.—Once a Week.

STORY OF A BELL.

How a Stalk of Corn Contributed Largely to a Great Purpose. In the church tower of the little town of Grosslaswitz, in the north of Germany, hangs a bell, and on it is engraved its history, surrounded by a bas-relief, representing a six-eared stalk of corn, and the date October 15, 1729. This is the story of the bell: At the beginning of the last century the only church bell at Grosslaswitz was so small that its tones were not sufficient to penetrate to the ends of the village. A second bell was badly wanted, but the village was poor, and where was the money to come from? Every one offered to give what he could, but the united offerings did not amount to nearly enough for the purpose. One Sunday when the schoolmaster, Gottfried Hayn, was going to church, he noticed growing out of the churchyard wall a flourishing green stalk of corn, the seed of which must have been dropped there by a passing bird. The idea suddenly struck him that perhaps this one stalk of corn could be made the means of producing the second bell they wanted so much. He waited till the corn was ripe, and then he plucked the six ears on it and sowed them in his own garden. The next year he gathered the little crop thus produced, and sowed it again, till at last he had not enough room in his garden for the crop, and so he divided it among a certain number of farmers, who went on sowing the ears until, in the eighth year, the crop was so large that when it was put together and sold they found that they had enough money to buy a beautiful bell, with its story and its birthday engraved upon it, and a cast of the corn stalk to which it owed its existence.—London Globe.