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SPIDERS THAT CHANGE HUE

Chameleon-Like Insects Take Color of Leaves and Flowers to Catch Prey.

Every traveler that returns from tropical regions has extraordinary stories to tell of the strange mimicry of leaves and flowers by insects. Sometimes the purpose of the imitation seems to be concealment and sometimes the laying of a snare to catch other insects. A curious instance of this was noticed on the Gold coast of Africa by a member of a British scientific expedition when he stopped to examine a singular looking white flower with a blue center.

He found, to his astonishment, that it was not a flower at all, but a spider's web, and that the supposed light blue heart of the flower was the spider itself lying in wait for its prey. The legs of the cunning spider, yellow mottled with brown, were extended in such a way as to resemble the divisions between the petals of the flower.

The web itself, very delicately woven into a rosette pattern, with white, and three threads that suspended it from the bushes were so fine as to be almost invisible. The whole thing had the appearance of being suspended in the air upon a stem concealed beneath.

When the scientist knocked the spider from its perch into a white gauze net his surprise was increased upon seeing his captive instantly turn from blue to white. Its former mimicry had been practiced as a snare; now it was playing a similar game for the sake of concealment.

But the end of the performance was not yet reached. When the investigator shook his captive its body again changed color, becoming this time of a dull greenish-brown. Later he captured another larger specimen of the same species of spider, whose flower web resembled an orchid. This spider exhibited the same remarkable power of changing its color.—Harper's Weekly.

Young Girl's Brave Act.

Remarkable bravery and presence of mind were displayed lately by Iwennie Franklin, aged 16, of New York, when she saved two boys from being burned to death. Half a dozen youngsters bedecked in war costumes of Indians were playing around a "council fire" in a vacant lot when George McCullough, aged six, got too close to the fire, and his clothes became ignited. His brother, Alexander, a year older, tried to beat out the flames and the fire spread to his clothing. The girl leaning out of the window of her home saw the accident, and the two brothers rolling on the ground. She ran out of doors, leaped over a fence and holding first one boy and then the other, heaped sand over them till the fire was extinguished. Both boys were unconscious, but not seriously injured.

Soft-Toned Bells of China.

The natives of China use large bells of their own make in many of their temples and monasteries, writes the United States consul at Foochow. I have noticed all through Japan and China that the tone of the monastery and temple bells is very soft and smooth, due to the superior quality of the material used in their manufacture and to the absence of iron clappers, the result being a marvelous softness and mellowness of tone. The bells are never swung, being always suspended in a fixed frame, and the sound is produced by striking them on the outer edge with a wooden mallet. This makes the soft tones which are so delightfully melodious.

HAIR FOR SKIN GRAFTING

Applied in Chopped Form, It Is Found to Be Good Substitute for Ordinary Cuticle.

Chopped hair has been successfully substituted for skin in skin grafting by the French surgeon, P. Carnot, who has applied his method in many cases. It is based on the fact that the cells of the hair and its roots are epidermic outgrowths and can easily be transformed into skin cells.

The use of hair not only does away with the necessity of taking skin from other persons, which is a painful operation, but it is said to be an improvement as well, as it is strong and hardy, and being inured to a minimum of nutrition is able to thrive under unfavorable conditions, such as prevail where grafting is necessary.

The manner of performing the operation is simple, a few hairs being pulled from the head of the patient or of a relative, and with the bulbous root removed the freshest or newest parts are cut into small pieces so as to form a coarse powder. This powder is then strewn over the surface of the wound and a proper bandage applied.

Within a week white spots appear on the surface, rapidly increasing in size. The spots extend and thicken and finally form a perfect new skin.—Popular Mechanics.

Gave Life for Brother.

A pathetic story of how a seven-year-old boy sacrificed his life for his six-year-old brother was told at the Hackney (England) coroner's court the other day at the inquest on Walter Days. While the two boys were playing on the towpath of Regent's canal at Cambridge Heath, Ernest, the younger boy, accidentally fell into the water, and Walter jumped in to save him. Ernest, who was held up in the witness box by his mother, said that all he remembered was that after falling in his brother "kept pushing him towards the bank." Ernest was saved by a third boy, but Walter was drowned.

The Musical Laugh.

So much do we hear and read of the attraction of laughter that we find it almost shocking to realize how very seldom a musical laugh is heard.

Very few men have agreeable laughs. Women as a rule understand the art a little better. Laughter comes more naturally to them. Not because they have a great sense of humor, but because they use laughter for a greater variety of purposes than do men.

Women laugh in coquetry and they also use a light laugh to bridge conversational gaps. Women really use laughter in all their lighter moods. All laughter to be at all attractive must first be natural. So, then, the ideal laughter of a man or woman must have sincerity as its basis. And ideal laughter is always kind. Real mirth laughs with a person, never at them.

Early Christian Burial.

There is an old saga of Thorfinn Karlsefne which shows that long after Christianity was introduced into the north it was the practice to bury the dead in unhallowed ground on the land where they died, and that a stake was set up over the grave. "When the priest afterward came," says the saga, "the stake was pulled up and holy water was poured into the hole, and they sang over the body, even though it was long afterward." Some of us might like to believe that this early Christian custom may have given rise to burial at cross roads—the pious instinct of placing pariahs under the shadow of the cross.

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TO SAVE OLD MANUSCRIPTS

Japanese Silk, Thin and Transparent, Is Passed on Them and Preserves Them.

In the preservation of rare manuscripts and books an additional safeguard has been found in Japanese silk.

Its use has removed a fear that long existed in the minds of librarians that the rare old manuscripts would dry up and return to their original elements. Fortunately, however, the employment of a silk of extreme thinness and transparency has settled the question of the life of these manuscripts for the next two or three hundred years at least. By that time, perhaps, some other method may be discovered.

This silk is thinner than the thinnest tissue paper, the threads being finer than spider webs. It is pasted over the manuscript so firmly that it wards off all dust and air, and yet is so transparent that it does not interfere any more with the appearance of the manuscript than would an ordinary pane of glass. It strengthens the manuscript so that the danger of handling is reduced to a minimum.

For some time past the United States library of congress has had in hand the examination and protection of all its old manuscripts, employing for the purpose the silk mentioned. Unless one be an expert in old manuscripts, he is unable to recognize the fact that the silk has been used.

Chess-Playing Automaton.

There have been several automaton chess players, but it should not be necessary to say that they were all worked by the man behind the machine, or rather, within or under the machine. At the great fair held in the Crystal Palace, in London, in 1851, an automaton played the game beautifully; and so early as 1753 Baron Von Kempelen of Hungary invented an android that was the marvel and wonder of the time. Von Kempelen went all over Europe with his "Turk."