

THE BLIND SHALL SEE

SO SAYS EDISON, THE WIZARD OF MENLO PARK.

Two Remarkable Experiments—Result to Be Reached by Means of X Rays. Within Three Years He Hopes to Have Completed His Experiments.

Thomas A. Edison, the wizard of electricity, makes a startling announcement as the result of some remarkable experiments made in his West Orange (N. J.) laboratory. He asserts that within three years the blind shall see—that even men without eyes shall be able to see. The only prerequisite is that the optic nerve shall be intact, and with this the case he pledges himself that the blind shall see, shall distinguish objects, shall know the difference between sunlight, moonlight and the dark, shall be able to distinguish the difference between colors and shall recognize their friends.

For the purpose of trying the experiments as to the effect of the Roentgen rays on the sightless, two men were selected and taken to the laboratory. Both were absolutely blind and had been so for years. One was Jacob Mahrbacher, a boiler maker, 35 years old, who lost the sight of one eye through the formation of an abscess as a result of a chip of iron lodging in the eye in 1892, while the other eye became affected by sympathy, and the sight of that also was soon totally lost. The other subject was Otto Kallensee, who has been blind for over 11 years. One of his eyes troubled him from babyhood. An abscess developed, and this caused the loss of the sight of both eyes in 1885.

Mr. Edison and his assistants were all ready and waiting for the patients. The wizard greeted the men heartily and shook their hands warmly, assuring them that he would not promise that they should see, but that he hoped at least that they would be able to distinguish light from darkness. Both of the subjects said that they would welcome even this brief respite from the darkness into which they had been plunged and from which no human relief seemed possible.

Little time was lost in preliminaries. The men were taken to the small room on the second floor where the X ray experiments are conducted, and there Mahrbacher was the first one tried. He took a seat in a chair directly in front of and close to one of the Roentgen tubes. In obedience to the directions of Mr. Edison the current was flashed on and off at intervals of a few seconds. Each time when the current was turned on the room was flooded with the ghostly effulgence of the Roentgen rays. Mr. Edison then said:

"Do you see anything yet?"

And the answer came in sorrowful accents:

"No; I can see nothing. All is dark."

"Never mind," replied Mr. Edison, "we'll try another and stronger tube."

A much more powerful tube was placed in connection, and the current again turned on. Again came the question:

"Do you see anything yet?"

A moment of suspense and silence, and then Mahrbacher exclaimed:

"I see millions of little points before my eyes like sparks."

Still other tubes were tried, but no better results were obtained.

Then Kallensee was placed in the chair and the current turned on the first tube. The patient did not see anything.

The second more powerful tube was connected, and the instant that the current was turned on Kallensee fairly screamed in his excitement:

"I can see a light!"

The light was turned on and off by a wave of the wizard's hand, and each time there was a quick response from Kallensee:

"Now it's burning. Now it is not."

This plainly showed that he saw something, but there was no distinction of objects—only of the sense of light. Various other tubes and the lights were tried, and strange to say, the best results were obtained from ordinary incandescent lamps in red bulbs. These were described by Kallensee as showing more uniformly clear light impressions, although softer.

This suggested a new idea to the wizard, and he spent some time in thought. Finally he said that he felt sure that he had caught the right idea. Then a flash of intelligence spread over his face, and he said what will bring hope to thousands of afflicted men all over the world:

"The blind, that class of men who possess intact nerves but deficient eyes, will be made to see, and that within three years. I shall now devote myself to specially prepared X rays that will, I feel sure, answer the purpose. Of course I do not claim that those blind will be enabled to read, but they will be able to distinguish persons and things. Constant research is being made in this field, and I doubt not that wonderful results will be attained."

"I will rig up a tube to be run in ice cold water that will be especially adapted to the needs of these men, and I feel confident of success. Do not be discouraged, men. I know it is hard to be blind, but we'll find a cure for you yet."

Physicians do not indorse Mr. Edison's claims. They say that while it is possible that impressions of light may be obtained provided the optic nerve is all right, the destruction of the retina of the eye removes the mirror in which the forms of surrounding objects are taken cognizance of, and this fact precludes, except in perhaps exceptional cases, any relief to the blind that would be at all satisfactory.

Mr. Edison said that no one was more astonished at the results attained than he was. He had been led to the series of experiments by his own experience. Last week, after he had been in the X ray room a long time, his eyes began to tingle and smart. He pressed his hands on them to relieve the smarting, when, to his astonishment, he saw that the

bones in the hands were clearly visible, and that without the intervention of any fluorescent screen.

He tried the experiment of passing one hand over the other and found that he could see clearly through both, his eyes in the meantime being tightly closed. This suggested the experiment on the blind men, and he sent for the two, with the results above noted.

Mr. Edison was asked about the possibilities of the future. He said that they were beyond calculation. The tubes that he is using are not well adapted for this kind of work. He thinks the long, round tubes, immersed in a freezing mixture, with the temperature well down to zero, may yield better results, and he said that he would rig up such an apparatus in a week or two and then try the experiment again.

While he is of the opinion that any such thing as complete sight to the blind is out of the question, he feels sure that an alleviation of their condition will be effected. He suggests that it is entirely within the field of probability that the blind may be enabled to read by means of metal plates in which the letters shall be illuminated by the light of the Roentgen rays. Farther than this he will not go.—New York Herald.

NOVEL PATENTS.

Two Inventions by Men Who Have Sympathy For Their Fellows.

There are two persons at least in the world who entertain a feeling of sympathy for the man who blows out the gas and the man who cannot find the keyhole. They have shown their interest in a practical way by patenting inventions for the protection of the one and the assistance of the other of these benighted individuals.

Of the two inventions the "jag" device is the simpler, and probably will prove the more popular. It consists of a small searchlight, by means of which a worthy but inebriated citizen may locate the keyhole in his front door. The light is a small incandescent globe, as big as the end of a man's thumb. It is sunk in the jamb of the door, behind a small but powerful lens, whose rays are focused on the sometimes elusive keyhole. The lamp is operated by a small push button in the lintel of the doorway, so located that the wayfarer man, though exasperated, may not fail to find it. One push lights up the keyhole, and the latchkey does the rest.

The device for handicapping the gas blowing imbecile is delicate in its conception and no less certain in operation. It consists of a metal disk, suspended from the arm of the gas bracket, just behind the frame. The disk is delicately poised just in front of a metal peg. The disk and the peg are the two ends of an electric circuit, which is normally open, but when the man goes to blow out the gas he blows the disk against the end of the peg and closes the circuit, which automatically cuts off the flow of gas.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHS.

Successful Experiments in Taking Pictures of Electric Lighted Streets.

William A. Eddy of Bayonne, N. J., has discovered that photographs of houses and streets can be taken at night, owing to the present extensive use of electric lights. The first outdoor electric light night photograph on record was taken by him at 9:45 on Nov. 8 and shows a faint view of the corner of Avenue D and Fourth street, Bayonne, followed by a clear view at 9:50 p. m. of the corner and trees of the grounds formerly owned by the late Dr. Payne.

On Nov. 13, 12 exposures were made at Bayonne between 11 p. m. and midnight, and on Nov. 15, between 8 p. m. and 1 a. m., 12 exposures were taken in New York, including views of Madison square, the New York postoffice and Herald square.

The photographs in New York show whole blocks and streets. Some of the Bayonne photographs are so clear that the carbon in an electric light globe is discernible, and the houses are as clear as if taken by daylight. Mr. Eddy is preparing to take midair kite photographs of electric lighted cities.

The X Ray Shirt Waisted.

Of all the devices yet invented by woman for the ensnaring and destruction of a man's soul the X ray shirt waisted is the most diabolically efficacious. I call them X ray shirt waisted because they have somewhat the effect of the Roentgen photographs, in that they disclose most bounteously the feminine framework through a warp and woof transparent. They are the most solicitous things. The sleeves are but substantial lures for the eye to the ivory arm. Through these sleeves one can note even a vaccination mark so plainly as to feel a very distinct hatred for the leaving it there as a sign manual of scientific privilege. You can note the dimples and the little elevations that by their particular deviations emphasize the general roundness of the arm. Fastened closely around the wrist with a little band, the expansion of the ballooning sleeve is imparted to the wrist and makes the effect of its plumpness more insistent.—St. Louis Mirror.

The Old Man Gets Home.

Molly, I'm glad to meet you! An how air the children all?

I've been away since the fust o' May, clean up ter the gates o' fall.

But I'm done with 'lectioneerin, no matter how times may go.

So you look after the house, Molly, an I'll take keer o' the hoe!

They say you jest made half a crap, an things is lookin' am.

That the squire closed out the mortgage we've been a-own of him.

An thar's mighty little ter keep us warm in the winter's cold an snow.

But you look after the house, Molly, an I'll take keer o' the hoe!

I've been half round the country workin from sun ter sun.

But all I had on Jimkins, an Johnson it wuz that won!

An I've come home like the prodigal, an the veal won't have no show.

But if you'll take keer o' the house, Molly, I'll take keer o' the hoe!

—Frank L. Stanton in Chicago Times-Herald.

STORIES OF THE DAY.

Anecdotes of Voorhees, Who Has Been Reported as Dying.

Voorhees in the senate has ever been a joy to the newspaper folk. Affable, frank and vigorous, it was always a pleasure to turn from a conversation with such stately in and outers as Senator Vest and talk with Voorhees. What little Vest told you might all be wrong and the merest seeds of grief. He was perfectly capable, too, of denying every word of it the moment it was printed and would, if he found his utterances inconvenient. Voorhees never denied, never weakened. Voorhees stood by his guns.

Once Voorhees gave me an interview on the subject of the New York banks. It was unique in its fashion of coining, but he stood by it—every word.

It was during the repeal of the purchasing clause of the Sherman law, during the extra session in 1893, and Voorhees was leading the fight for repeal in the senate. The filibuster was stubborn, and Teller and Dubois, in the rocky passes of the senate rules, were disputing Voorhees' advance and holding the repeal at bay.

The struggle waxed long and tedious, and the banks, in sore straits—some of them below their reserve—began to grow hysterical.

In a gust of excitement born of their peril they one day arose—the bank presidents held a meeting, I believe—and indulged in speeches and resolutions to the effect that Voorhees was not doing his best to pass the repeal. The bankers were inclined to regard Voorhees as mixing a dish of treason for them, and said so.

That afternoon I met Voorhees in the senate restaurant, where he was solemnly devastating half shell oysters in company with the mayor of Terre Haute.

"What can I say for you touching these banks, senator?" I asked. "What reply do you want to make to their strictures?"

"I'll tell you what to say," replied Voorhees, and he fixed a grave, though flaming, eye upon me. "You may quote me as saying about those banks any thing to their disaster that a wire will carry or a paper print. You can't overdo my opinion of those banks."

I took the senator at his word and prepared and wired an interview for him that read like a railway collision. Voorhees looked it over in the paper when it came and gave it his full approval.

"It's a trifle weird," he said, "but it's right. It's exactly what I meant."

Voorhees is a man of more than six feet in height and of magnificent presence. Big in person, rich in words, vivid in his thinking, Voorhees was one of the most eloquent talkers who ever stood in the senate. Years ago he was more or less given to forensic combat and went gayly to war with any who cared to face him.

It was Ingalls who broke Voorhees of this hasty habit of battle and caused the Tall Sycamore to resign his commission as one of the senate minute-men of the Democracy.

Voorhees was in the house when the civil war broke out and continued to fill a seat in the lower body during part if not all of Lincoln's administration. And he got more or less tangled up with the Confederacy.

Ingalls was aware of these low, swampy places in Voorhees' early record. He carefully collected proofs and organized for an onslaught on Voorhees. The sunflower senator's desk was loaded to the guards with all sorts of printed and written grape and canister for the Hoosier.

Voorhees never dreamed of the deadfall Ingalls had rigged for him. It's to be doubted if any other senator had the least inkling of what was impending. One afternoon Ingalls, who, performed as a fashion of senate hen hawk, swooped suddenly, with a shrill and unexpected screech, at Voorhees and gave him beak and talon both.

Voorhees was much aroused at this unexpected visitation, and promptly hurled divers epithets of ungrace at Ingalls, of which perhaps the softest phrase was "liar and poltroon."

Ingalls smiled. Without a word further of preliminary skirmishing he fell upon Voorhees hip and thigh. He opened his desk and began to read letters, papers, documents. For two hours he hammered Voorhees as man never was mauled in the senate before, and he clinched every rivet with a document. When he ended, there was hardly enough of Voorhees left over which to hold funeral services.

Voorhees could not reply and never did. He "talked" the next day, but it was no answer to Ingalls. From that hour there was a senate change in Voorhees. He showed nothing of that former hopeful recklessness that sought encounter for the mere fun of a fight. And there was not a desk in the chamber at which he would not shy like a horse. It might conceal the basis of another Ingalls ovation.—A. H. Lewis in New York Journal.

Killed a Puma With Pocket Knives.

George W. Cooper and a youth named Nienberger had a desperate encounter with a mountain lion recently while driving into Piedmont, Wyo. They were coming in from a lumber camp without arms of any kind, and when nearing the city a massive mountain lion sprang from the underbrush and buried his fangs in the neck of one of the horses. The men were dazed for a moment. Cooper threw a billet of wood at the intruder. The next instant the lion abandoned the team and made for the boy. The latter jumped sideways and the lion landed between them. Nienberger had drawn a knife, and this he buried in the throat of the brute, while his partner struggled to release his hand to get another knife from his pocket. He succeeded, and between them the lads dispatched the lion. Three other lions were seen to scamper away from the vicinity.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

A SHOWER IN THE VILLAGE.

This Word Picture Somehow Awakens Pleasant Memories.

Over the whole village that stillness reigns which only a Sunday in summer can produce. It is nearing the noon hour, and there is a glare of sunlight everywhere.

The quiet of the streets seems to be intensified as one approaches the corner where the small stone church stands alone. There is a service going on inside, and the rolling music of the organ faintly wafted from within reaches the deserted streets outside. Rows of houses with closed blinds and unoccupied doorsteps meet the eye on every side, and down a narrow lane near at hand a freshly painted barn gleams hotly in the fierce sunshine. Three or four pigeons have fluttered to the roof and are sunning themselves and softly cooing.

Near the door of the church a horse and buggy stand, and now and again the animal, bothered by flies, stamps and splashes in the shallow puddle under him.

A dog trots lazily up the street and stops on his way to chase and bark at a few belated sparrows. One of the pigeons stalks with dignity across the roof, and another flutters into the air with a whirring sound and disappears.

The sound of the organ has died quite away and only the distant clucking of a disturbed hen breaks the quiet. The sunlight seems to have taken on a darker shade.

A sharp gust of wind sweeps up and down the street and rushes through the foliage of the sleeping trees. The sparrows that occupied the street are not in sight. No living thing is to be seen, and the newly painted barn, that a moment ago looked scorched and blistered, seems to have taken on a cooler tinge. The breeze has died quite away, and there is a moment of supreme stillness.

Then a dull, sullen sound that seems like the roar of a distant train steals upon the air. It comes again, and there is no mistaking it—it is thunder. A hurried hen runs across the lane and disappears behind a board just as three large drops mark the dust covered sidewalk. Drops are falling everywhere, and as they increase in number they decrease in size. There is a gentle patter on the sidewalk, on the house tops, through the trees, which becomes more and more hurried until it generates into a steady rush of falling rain. The landscape is almost shut out from sight.

Slowly and by hardly perceptible degrees the steady rush becomes a patter, and the sun, with sudden brilliance, changes each drop to a glistening diamond.

The rain ceases, and the sparkling trees gently shake themselves in the sunlight.

The shower is over.—Walter M. Eginton in New Bohemian.

A Spell.

Florence's father's initials are A. H. S., and while Florence knows her letters, she is not yet able to spell. The other day she came running to her mother.

"Oh, mamma," she exclaimed, "I can spell umbrella."

"I hardly think so," said her mother. "But I can," she insisted.

"Very well. How do you spell it?"

"A-h-s," she said promptly.

"Why, Florence," contended the mother, "that doesn't spell umbrella."

"Yes, but it does," she urged. "I saw it on papa's umbrella, and I'd like to know why it would be there if it spelled something else."—Detroit Free Press.

Mexican Police.

The Mexican police attend closely to their duties and are very polite. At night each policeman carries a lantern, and this lantern is set out on the sidewalk opposite wherever he may be; so it is possible to look down a street and see a whole row of these twinkling lanterns.



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