

EXPLOSIONS CAUSED BY DUST

Investigation Has Proved That Grain Is by No Means the Only Destructive Agent.

When the bureau of chemistry of the United States department of agriculture started investigations with the object of reducing fires and explosions caused by dust in the grain elevators and mills it was not long before the experts realized these fires and explosions were by no means confined to the grain business. These dust-explosion investigations are having a wide influence, which has extended to many industries. Aluminum dust, starch and even fish meal, a by-product of fish canneries, have all been found susceptible to the conditions which produce disastrous explosions.

The latest development goes to prove that the mysterious "blow sacks" so well known to firemen are in some cases caused by dust. With the knowledge of this fact as a guide many fatal accidents may be avoided. The firemen of America find the matter of sufficient importance to warrant their co-operation with the department of agriculture in a study of preventive methods.

The subject was taken up by the National Firemen's association at their twenty-second annual convention at Peoria, Ill. Engineers engaged in the dust-explosion investigations represented the department of agriculture at the meeting.

EYE HAS GREAT SENSITIVITY

Wonderful Human Organ Capable of Adapting Itself to Any Possible Circumstances.

On entering a dark room after a stay in the outside daylight the eye at once begins to increase in sensitivity. At first this increase appears to be slow, but after five minutes the increase is quite rapid, the eye acquiring a sensitivity several hundred times its initial value. After 30 minutes' sojourn in the dark the sensitivity still increases, but more slowly than before, and after 45 minutes or an hour the maximum sensitivity is reached. The final sensitivity varies slightly with different people, but in fully adapted condition the eye is easily 5,000 or 10,000 times more sensitive than it was at the beginning.

These facts are obtained from a study of the sensitiveness of the eye in the dark made by Selig Hecht of Creighton university, Omaha, and published in the Journal of General Physiology. Mr. Hecht's study goes to show that the increased sensitiveness is due to a reversible photochemical reaction within the retina, involving a photosensitive substance and its two products of decomposition.

No Time for Interruption.

"However deplorable the fact may be, playing two-handed pinochle at 25 cents a hand is one of the favorite diversions of commuters between this city, New York, Atlantic City, Cape May and other commercial outposts of Philadelphia. One man, who carries his pleasures as well as his worries home from work, was playing pinochle in his library the other evening with a cronie, when the butler entered and handed him a telegram. He returned it unopened. "I'll look at it later."

"But the messenger is waiting, sir," the butler respectfully remonstrated. The financier read the telegram. It said: "Struck 8,000-barrel gusher today. Everything fine."

"Confound you, Thomas, why did you spoil my game?" he cried. He didn't care nearly so much about the fortune he had made, as about the 25 cents he was in danger of losing.—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Found "News" Exaggerated.

Believing that the United States was in the throes of a railroad strike and not a wheel was turning, Frederick R. Bartlett, wealthy sugar dealer and engineer, of Easton, Md., arrived at New York on the steamship Maracaibo from Venezuela with a power-boiler and enough gasoline to run it to his home town. Reports received in the South American republic, he said, had indicated that he would have to make his way home without the aid of railroads or even automobiles, because of the gasoline shortage.

When Mr. Bartlett found railroads were operating he decided nevertheless to make a water trip to Boston. So the boat was along overboard and with his wife and daughter he chugged away for home.

Historic House a Factory.

Apparatus for the manufacture of insecticide soon will be installed in the old Billip house at Totterville, headquarters of General Howe during the British occupation of Staten Island in 1776 and since then a place of historic interest. Announcement of the sale of the property was made yesterday, and with it came the news that the old house will be converted into a factory.

All efforts to have the state purchase the house and preserve it and its dungeon and secret underground passageway as relics of the War for Independence were unsuccessful.—New York Times.

Marry in haste.

At a tea a number of ladies were discussing the best age at which to marry. Some championed thirty years, some twenty-eight, some twenty-seven. Then Miss Elsie De Wolfe, who has so brilliantly succeeded in so many fields, leapt up and said: "The best age to marry is while you're still too young to know better."

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CARRY INSIGNIA OF HONOR

War Department Has Decided That Planes Shall Retain Distinguishing Marks Earned in War.

Ruddy back on the farm is going to get an awful shock one of these days when he looks skyward during a lull in the plowing. A plane is going to appear overhead and he will instantly recognize the insignia painted on the fuselage of the stellar aero squadron that worked for his division at the time they were hoeing their way through the Argonne. In the Home Sector, Frederick J. Darle says: "The decision of the war department to retain the distinguishing insignia will in any event make the identification of the planes easy for civilians. More and more the army planes—old as they are—are undertaking long flights. They appear unexpectedly over cities far away from their stations and many a farmer these days sees a gargantuan propelled beetle settle down in his back pasture. When an army plane comes flying by or lands near us, we will soon look for the insignia, just as everybody once looked for the state automobile license tag when the tourist's dust covered auto passed. When the pedestrian sees a plane decorated with the painting of a kieling mule, a silhouetted, scythe-swinging skeleton or a witch a-straddle a broomstick, he may wonder what battle record the insignia stands for. He may guess rightly that the tiny winged elephant on a plane is a sarcastic commentary on the plane's speed, but he probably would like to know whether this plane is from a burden-bearer squadron that hauled tons of bombs over the lines to drop them on German railway junctions."

MADE FEAST FOR LOBSTERS

Crustaceans No Doubt Highly Appreciated Mackerel That Seemed to Be Provided for Them.

"Charlie" is well known in his home town of Rockland. While covering his route along the south shore, he got a trade on some nice lobsters and purchased six dandles. A fat mackerel also caught his fancy while speculating in sea food and he took along the handsome specimen. Charles put the mackerel in with his lobsters and, cranking up his truck, headed for home.

"I've got something here, all right," said Charles to his better half as he carried the big bundle into the house. He dumped a crawling mass of crustaceans on the table but nowhere could he find his mackerel. Back to the auto he went but the fish had disappeared. When the lobsters were boiled and served it was noticed there was a decided flavor of mackerel to them. The diners' suspicions were aroused and, seeking authority, Charles was told that he had guessed correctly—the lobsters had eaten his mackerel. The hungry shellfish, being brought up on salted herring in the traps, were not slow to realize that an epicurean dish was being served them on the long ride home. They made the most of it, too.—Brocton Enterprise.

Modern Morals.

Lady Duff Gordon said at a tea at the Ritz:

"There are young women who would rather be ultra-fashionable than anything else. In their eyes nothing matters but that."

"Two young women were lunching when a third young woman passed in the company of an elderly married pair."

"There goes Maud," murmured the first young woman. "They say that she and old Mr. Goldie spent the weekend at Atlantic City together."

"Oh!" said the second young woman in shocked tones. "Oh, what a libel on poor Maud! You know you couldn't drag her with wild horses to such a vulgar, common resort as Atlantic City."

Commercial Airlines.

The regular commercial air line has already come to stay. At present the longest passenger air service running, or rather flying, on regular air service is between London and Paris. The distance of 250 miles is flown in about three hours, often less. The fare is at the rate of a shilling a mile, or \$67 for the trip. Even today these air passengers enjoy all the luxuries of modern travel. Nearly a score of passengers are carried in a comfortable cabin, seated in upholstered chairs. The cabin is lighted with electric candles and decorated with gilded mirrors. Several transatlantic air lines are planned. It is calculated that they can be run at a profit by charging \$500 for an air passage.—Boys' Life.

Success and Failure.

Wiltu Root on his seventy-fifth birthday reception in New York, talked philosophically about success and failure.

"After all," said a poet, "it's no disgrace to fail if you have done your best."

"Maybe not," said Mr. Root, "but all the same it's pretty rough to have to admit that the best you can do is to fail."

China's Potential Armies.

If, in a war, an enemy started killing Chinese soldiers at a million men a year, and if China were using 10 per cent of her population in that war, it would take fifty years to destroy her first armies, and in that period two further Chinese forces of fifty million would grow up to confront their enemy.—Hasi Mathews in the British Review of Reviews.

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