

RADIUM AND LIFE.

The Experiments That Have Been Made and What They Show.

Does it appear that any one has prepared from sterilized bouillon by the action of radium or in any other way living organisms capable of multiplying either by repeated subdivision or by means of spores or capable of producing definite fermentive changes such as those which we associate with so many of the organisms hitherto investigated? The answer jumps straight to the lips. No such discovery has been recorded nor has anything been observed which would justify us in supposing that we are on the verge of making such a discovery at the present moment.

The fact is that, though much has been written and among other things quite a big book, very little has really been accomplished up to the present. A few preliminary experiments suggested by the marvelous qualities of radium have been made, and that is all. Those experiments and their results, which are not at all revolutionary, may be described in half a dozen sentences. Mr. Burke finds that when small quantities of radium bromide or chloride are scattered on the surface of carefully sterilized bouillon well protected from the air in closed vessels minute objects appear in the bouillon after one or two days.

These objects have been watched, and Mr. Burke reports that after their first appearance they develop into two dots, next present the appearance of dumbbells and subsequently of biscuits, afterward take on forms which remind an observer of frog's spawn and finally divide, lose their individuality and become transformed into minute crystals.

These bodies, which Mr. Burke very prematurely describes as "cultures," do not multiply, as living organisms should do, when they are transferred to fresh tubes of sterilized bouillon, though, as might be expected, they give some slight evidence that the activity of the radium salt is not quite exhausted by its first action, and they are soluble in water.

Now, it would be dogmatic to say that radium will not generate life in organic matter, but clearly Mr. Burke gives us little or no reason to suspect that it does so at present.—*Cornhill Magazine.*

For American Citizens.

When the visitor approached the diplomatic gallery of the senate chamber the doorkeeper informed him, says a writer in the Philadelphia Ledger, that the gallery was reserved for foreign representatives.

"It is, hey?" said the visitor. "Well, I want to tell you right now that this is a free country, and this is the senate of the United States, and I demand admission in the name of American citizenship."

"Oh!" said the doorkeeper. "Why didn't you say at first that you were an American citizen? Just step around to the second door from here. That gallery is reserved for American citizens."

With chest puffed up the stranger betook himself to the door indicated and was at once admitted to the public gallery.

Duration.

Knicker—How long did the new cook stay? Mrs. Knicker—I couldn't tell exactly. The clock stopped.—*Harper's Bazar.*

JUSTICE OF THE HEARTH.

A Standard That Might Well Be Adopted by All Society.

Over the dinner table a husband was telling his wife of the financial misdealings of one of their social acquaintances, a wealthy and popular man. He had contrived the ruin of a certain company and its subsequent reorganization, a process which had put money into his pocket and taken money from innocent stockholders.

The husband touched the facts lightly, because he thought that a woman could not be interested in them or understand them in detail. This woman's understanding throughout her husband's narrative was occupied with one or two simple questions.

"Is he to be punished?" she asked.

"Punished? How? His conscience won't punish him—indeed, he probably thinks he has obeyed the rules of business. The law technically is broad enough to cover his case, but it is hard to get evidence. You see, the district attorney must"

"Excuse me for interrupting, dear. Explain that to me later. I think we shall not dine there next Wednesday. I will write a note to Mrs. Berry."

"Not dine there? Why not?"

"Because he is not a fit man to receive in our house or for us to visit."

"But nonsense! He's just as good a fellow, just as respectable"

"One minute. By your own words you prove that he is a wicked man, taking what is not his. I listened to your story until there could be no doubt that you yourself condemned him by the facts, which I do not understand. If what you say is true he and I meet no more as equals."

"And her judgment stood. Of course her neighbors and friends pursued the usual course of accepting a man in social relations whom their husbands distrusted in business.

But the standard of the hearthstone—shall it not some day be the standard of all society?—*Youth's Companion.*

"Dead" Leaves Not Dead.

Leaves do not fall from the tree because they are "dead," which we may take as equivalent to saying because they are no longer receiving the constituents of their being from the sap and from the air, but as a consequence of a process of growth which develops just at the junction of the leaf stem with the more permanent portion of the tree, certain corklike cells which have very little adhesion, so that the leaf is very liable to be broken away by influences of wind and changes of temperature and of moisture.

A Lucky Escape.

During the Spanish war, while the battleships were on blockade at Santiago, it was customary to load the six pounder guns every evening to protect against possible torpedo boat attack. While the triggers were being eased down one of the guns on the Massachusetts was accidentally discharged, the shot passing over the quarter deck of the Texas, which was lying next in the blockading line. All the officers of the Texas were on deck smoking and talking when the shot passed a few feet above their heads. Almost before it struck the water a signal was started on the Texas from its commanding officer, Captain Jack Phillips, to the commanding officer of the Massachusetts. The signal was, "Good line, but a trifle high."—*Harper's Weekly.*

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