

THE "EVIL EYE"

Why This Superstition Is Still Supremely Strong.

As ancient as Pompeii and Herculaneum, which have lain in ashes these centuries, and as old as the days of the Latin poet Vergil, who wrote about it, is this strange and dread belief in the "evil eye" which not only persists to this day, but is supremely powerful among superstitions.

Just what that superstition knows as the "evil eye" is, Theophile Gautier sets forth in his classic, "Jettatura," which translated, means the "evil eye." In this book Gautier places his scenes in Naples, where belief in the superstition of the "evil eye" is said to amount to an obsession with the average inhabitant.

This strange power of striking fear into anyone by a look that flashes from a certain type of eye is supposed to be possessed, consciously or unconsciously, by persons who have the power to bring misfortune upon whoever falls their baleful gaze.

That dread of this supposedly uncanny power still holds thousands in its clutches is set forth by such a well-known and reliable authority as The New York Medical Journal, which says that "today doctors are not in favor of bewitchment, but mothers in New York are grayly asserting that their children have had the 'evil eye' cast on them."

It is the opinion of this medical writer that the belief in this crass superstition "will increase until the public hunger for the sensational is satisfied and that the idea will find good soil among a swarming alien population."

Charms and amulets are said to be gaining in favor among those who are continually haunted by the fear of falling under the gaze of the "evil eye."

The hand, held with the forefinger and little finger pointed out, as shown in the accompanying illustration, is supposed to be effective in warding off any curse cast on anyone by the glance of an "evil eye."

Many persons, no doubt, will laugh at the absurdity of charging anyone having such a power of evil in the glance of his eye, but as ample evidence that this ancient superstition is very much alive today take the Pennsylvania case known as "Witch of Ellwood City." An aged Italian woman, Mrs. Catarlo, was forced to appeal to a judge for protection. She said that the neighbors had threatened to burn her alive. They claimed she had cast spells on their children.

Fortunately, there are today laws to protect intended victims against an obsession growing out of an imaginary fear or an ancient superstition that 20th century enlightenment scorns as a relic of the Dark Ages.

In contrast to this, however, it is pointed out



The Hand, Held with the Forefinger and the Little Finger Outstretched, is Supposed to Ward Off the Influence of the "Evil Eye."

The Supernatural Power of Putting Anyone Under a Curse by a Glance Flashed from a Certain Type of Piercing Eye Is Supposed to Be Possessed by Some Persons Who Can Thus Bring Misfortune to Whoever Falls Beneath Their Baleful Gaze.

that the present is an age of revival and reform. Old women are called witches every once in a while. Law suits are frequent in which one person is accused of wielding uncanny power over another. Men commit murders which are called "psychic crimes," those prompted by a mind far off that works upon a helpless victim who must kill when told to do so.

Regarding these "psychic crimes" resulting from a belief in the superstition of the "evil eye" the writer in The New York Medical Journal makes this comment:

"It might easily be supposed that such a thing as witchcraft could not occur today, but we are living in a tense, nervous condition, which makes us see 'Stones in sermons, crooks in printed books and harm in everything.' Everyone has something to tell of his neighbor. A single case of anything unusual quoted in the papers sets imagination alert, and similar cases swarm and will continue to increase.

"Just now we are bewitched. The 'evil eye' is on us. It seems incredible, but think from how small a beginning the epidemic began.

"A clergyman had a little daughter of 9, a niece of 11, and a half-Indian, half-negro servant, Tituba. Four other young girls used to join in their games. Tituba used to practise tricks and incantations common among the natives at her home just to amuse the children, who learned to do all kinds of weird things and scared their parents. A doctor who was consulted privately, said they were bewitched. This became known, so, naturally, the children showed off more and enjoyed the popularity, but under threats they confessed that Tituba and two harmless old women had really bewitched them. In four months 250 people were in jail; 19 were hanged, two died in prison, one was tortured to death, all because a group of little girls were rather hysterical, good mimics, not very truthful and enjoyed scaring folks.

"In a law court during the war alienists had

to point out to the jury that a belief in witchcraft may be a sane belief, but coexisting persecutory delusions insane.

"A man said another negro on board was jealous and put crum or ju-ju on him by poisoning his comb. Using the comb made his skin shake. He believed he would die through having used the comb. Later, he developed persecution mania and attempted the lives of four shipmates, so was put in an asylum as dangerous because of his delusion of persecution.

"A baby dies after the supposed witch has looked at it, a 16-year-old girl is under the control of her friend, a girl of 17, and the mother brings the case into court.

"The writer recalls a sane and severe clergyman who, on being invited to the night nursery to see his sleeping godchild, said he would deem it an impertinence, if not dangerous, to look at her while she slept. And that in 1918.

"If adequate common sense and psychotherapy were not at hand to combat this modern outbreak, we should have harmless old women dragged off to jail and an excited mob swarming to a witch burning."

JUST HOW THE COLOR OF YOUR SKIN AFFECTS YOUR APPETITE

THE color of a man's skin has an important bearing on his comfort and food demands, says Dr. L. Figuras Ballester, a noted Spanish physician who has just written a report of his studies for a Madrid medical journal. The black man, says Dr. Ballester, requires fewer calories than the white man, and he can sustain life and do hard work on about half the "fuel" the white man requires.

Dr. Ballester pursued his studies of the question in Guinea, which has considerable heat in its climate. He argues that the pigmentation of the skin of the negro allows the utilization of the heat from without, which the white man has to supply by eating more food. For that reason the black-skinned man can sustain life on considerably less exertion to take purchase the required amount of fuel foods to keep his engine working up to his necessary capacity. Also the fact that he thus assimilates the heat makes him less liable to sun strokes.

Getting down to the actual figures, Dr. Ballester reports that he found that the negroes of Guinea thrived and grew fat on a diet of rice, fish and butter representing only 1843 calories a day. This despite the fact that they were doing hard labor. Under the same circumstances, even though not working at all, the white-skinned man required about twice as many calories to keep in good physical condition.

Dr. Ballester gives all the credit to this advantage held by the negroes to the color of the skin. His researches, the expert who has read his report says, tend to prove that the difference in the calories required is due to the dark skin, which acts something like the green coloring matter of plants, in drawing in the heat and transforming it into the health and strength giving calories. Thus, say the doctors, the necessities of the organisms of the black man are to a large extent supplied with heat units directly from without.

There is nothing new in the statement that the black man requires less food than the white man. This has been noted by physicians many times before. The researches of Dr. Ballester

were simply to find the reason for this known fact, and the experts are inclined to agree that he has found a solution. It will be interesting they say, to apply the same test to the other races, the yellow and brown, and it is believed by many that somewhat similar discoveries will be made.

Cooking by the Heat of the Sun

EVERY boy knows that with the aid of a magnifying glass a paper can be ignited and wood burned by focusing the rays of the sun upon it. That being so, why can't the sun's heat take the place of coal?

Dr. C. G. Abbot of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C., has attacked this problem, but in a purely experimental way. He knows that the day when the sun will take the place of coal is still far off.

In his apparatus, which is described in Popular Science Monthly, there is found the usual parabolic mirror that focuses the sun's rays on a boiler—in this case a blackened tube filled with oil. Dr. Abbot uses oil because it boils at over 400 degrees F. Water boils at 212 degrees. Hence the oil absorbs more heat.

The oil flows into the tube from an overhead reservoir and then back into the reservoir in a continuous stream. The oil transfers its heat to two cooking ovens. A few hours of sunshine are sufficient to heat the oil to such a temperature that cooking can be done all day. It does not matter if the morning is sunny and the afternoon cloudy. The ovens will still be hot enough for any purpose except frying.

Since the sun moves slowly across the sky, the mirror must follow it, so that the rays will always be concentrated on the tube. This is accomplished by means of clockwork.

Dr. Abbot did all his cooking last summer with this solar kitchen stove.

MAGIC of a MYSTIFYING COIN PROBLEM

A SCIENTIFIC coin problem by which some mysterious numerical effects can be produced is described as follows in the Scientific American by Theodore L. de Lamb:

In the accompanying design (Fig. 1) you will observe 56 circles, each the size of a one-cent coin. On each circle will be found four playing cards, the entire lot forming a combination that would be impossible for the human brain to remember. You can, however, place five one-cent coins in any section of the design, setting them according to either arrangement shown in Fig. 2 and perform an apparently impossible miracle.

Request some one to place the five coins at any part of the design just as they form a combina-

straight line in any direction to the fifth circle from this cent. Quickly total the number of spots on the four cards on the circle and to this total add 110. The grand total will be identi-

X	K	Q	T	G	X	K	T	G	
E	Q	I	U	M	E	Q	I	U	M
F	W	O	B	S	F	W	O	B	S
L	D	P	H	Y	L	D	P	H	Y
R	J	V	N	A	R	J	V	N	A
R	K	C	T	G	X	K	C	T	G
E	Q	I	U	M	E	Q	I	U	M
F	W	O	B	S	F	W	O	B	S
L	D	P	H	Y	L	D	P	H	Y
R	J	V	N	A	R	J	V	N	A

Fig. 3—The Magic Square.

cal with the number of spots on the cards under the six cents.

A one-cent coin placed on any circle also gives you a chance to demonstrate a peculiar effect. Count in any direction to the fifth circle from the cent and on this circle will be found the identical cards under the cent.

The method of laying out the design is simple enough.

First a square is formed composed of 100 units, each represented by one of the first 25 letters from the alphabet. Each letter appears four times, being so arranged that the repeated letters are five points apart, the four forming a square, as shown in Fig. 3. Commencing at A

the letters are given numbers in consecutive order beginning at 10 and ending at Y with 34. The object in commencing at 10 is that the lowest number formed by the pips on four different playing cards is 10.

We have then A = 10, B = 11, C = 12, D = 13, E = 14, F = 15, G = 16, H = 17, I = 18, J = 19, K = 20, L = 21, M = 22, N = 23, O = 24, P = 25, Q = 26, R = 27, S = 28, T = 29, U = 30, V = 31, W = 32, X = 33, Y = 34.

At one glance it is a self-evident fact that any five consecutive letters taken either vertical, horizontal or on the diagonal form an equation. For example, commence at X in the top row and R at the bottom:

$$X + K + O + P + T + G = R + J + V + N + A = 110$$

The playing cards are placed just so each circle is represented by cards whose total spots equal the required number.

If all of the 25 letters are used in certain series of five each, you get various combinations but each totals 110. Samples are

$$\begin{aligned} A + H + O + V + S &= 110 \\ B + I + K + W + T &= 110 \\ C + J + L + X + P &= 110 \\ D + F + M + Y + Q &= 110 \\ E + G + N + U + R &= 110 \end{aligned}$$

and the letters are so placed that either of the patterns of Fig. 3, placed anywhere on Fig. 1, will cover one of these combinations—and that is all there is to it!

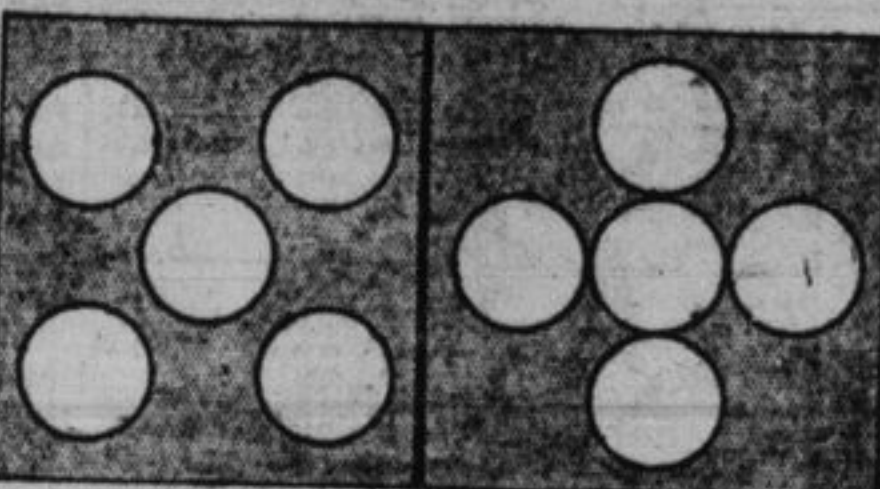


Fig. 2—Two Arrangements of the Coins.

tion like either one shown. You are out of the room while this is being done and without going through any mental calculation you can instantly name the total number of spots on the cards under the five coins. Strange as it may seem the result will invariably be 110 with either of the combinations in any section of the design.

Another good effect is to take six coins and have them placed in a straight line adjoining one another, in any part of the design, either vertical, horizontal or perpendicular. You are to name the number of spots on the cards under the six coins. To do this count from either end cent in a

Does the Daylight-Saving Plan Deprive Children of Sleep?

IS the daylight-saving plan detrimental to the health of children in that it may curtail their hours of sleep? The medical department of the British Board of Education has started an inquiry into the extent to which the operation of the daylight saving law may be responsible for such an effect. Investigators point out, however, that this is perhaps more important in the British Isles than in the United States, as the daylight is much longer there than here in the summer time, in northern Scotland there being several weeks in June and July when there is actual no total darkness, the morning twilight beginning before the evening has ended.

It seems, however, that it is not in the North but in the South, where the night is longer, that the children miss their sleep by being kept up too late. On which fact the London Lancet makes this comment:

"Southern parents must learn to understand that children of school age should not be kept out of bed until dawn. Educational authorities might usefully draw the attention of parents to the paramount necessity of sufficient rest in bed for young children. The mere fact of their not sleep-

ing at the beginning and end of bed rest is of no great importance.

"All young animals naturally sleep less in summer than in winter; there is less demand on metabolism in warm weather and consequently less need for sleep. Children have always been kept out of bed later in the summer than in the winter time, and the fact has been a source of lament to teachers for generations. But they are apt to forget this periodicity and to put down to the daylight saving act what is a yearly occurrence. Statistics show that more children die of winter than of summer ailments, and there can be little doubt that the prolonged sunlight of early summer is even more beneficial to growing children than it is to adults."

Have FISH a SENSE of SMELL?

DROP a prawn into a clear pool where salmon lie. At once the fish begin moving excitedly. Since a prawn is a strong smelling shellfish, the natural inference is that it is the smell which excites the salmon.

But it is quite easy to knock this argument on the head, for as a matter of fact the salmon show equal agitation whether the prawn is fresh or boiled, or whether it has been kept in glycerine or even in formalin.

Trout may have a sense of smell. At any rate no trout will take a dead worm. With "coarse" fish—the case is different. A well-known fisherman says that he always used rotten cheese for making up ground bait for roach and for chub. He said that the "higher" the cheese, the bigger his catch.

Many of the old Nottingham fishermen—and they are perhaps the cleverest in the world—have secrets of their own for preparing ground baits. They use greaves, cattle and poultry foods, biscuits, sugar and a great variety of various different substances. In most of these they mingle a proportion of strongly scented matter. One, for instance, mixes his bait with a patent spice largely advertised as a fattener for cattle.

These men possess the accumulated lore of generations of fishermen. They would not go to the expense and trouble of these scented ground baits unless they were worth while.

The French sardine fishermen use a kind of bait which they scatter upon the surface of the sea. This, too, is strongly scented. It is used to bring the sardine shoals into the area they propose to net.

Cat fish, common in all warm waters, are voracious feeders, and must be possessed of very strong powers of scent, and the same is true to some extent of the common eel.

OIL of a TREE as a CURE for LEPROSY

CULTIVATION of the chaulmoogra tree in the United States to assure a permanent supply of the oil for treatment of leprosy is planned as a result of a trip through Siam, Burma and Assam by Prof. J. F. Rock, formerly of the University of Hawaii.

Prof. Rock recently returned to Washington after exploration into the jungles for the department of agriculture's branch of foreign seed and plant introduction. He brought back with him several specimens of the "taraktogenos" tree, the seeds of which have been sent to various experimental stations of the department in Florida, Maryland and California for germination.

Within eight years, it is believed, enough fruit will be borne from these plants to begin a domestic source of supply of chaulmoogra oil. With the possible exception of a man named Kerr, an amateur botanist, Prof. Rock is said to be the first white man to invade the region of Siam where he got his specimens.

Natives of that country for many years had used the taraktogenos forests to obtain enough of the oil to meet their domestic needs, but they

made these trips only every three years, for fear of the beasts that inhabit the wild country.

While chaulmoogra oil has been used scientifically for only a few years, Prof. Rock says the natives of that part of Asia he visited have been using the curative properties of the taraktogenos tree for hundreds of years, but in such a crude way as to be unable to derive its complete benefits.

"In the Buddhist histories that date back 1000 years, there are mentions of this tree," Prof. Rock said, adding that "the crude oil of the tree was taken internally by the natives and the legends say it was effective."

It was not until 1899 that the active principles of the oil from the seeds of the taraktogenos tree were isolated with success. This was done by Dr. Frederick B. Powers, now connected with the department of agriculture, after many scientific experiments in England in 1886 had resulted in the discovery that the wrong tree was being used for extracting chaulmoogra oil.

Application of knowledge obtained in Dr. Powers' researches by Dr. A. L. Dean, president of the University of Hawaii, and others, has led to a widespread use of the oil in leprosy cases.