

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

The Great Auk.

About 70 specimens of the extinct great auk are now preserved in museums. A specimen recently sold in London brought £100.

A New Breakwater.

The floating breakwater under test at Torquay is a timber frame sinking to a depth of 40 feet and supported at the land end by pontoons, the structure being thus tilted toward the sea. The frame is moored on both sides by long chains. As storms have little effect below a depth of 12 or 15 feet, it is believed that the structure will effectually break the force of the sea, and experience with buoys and pontoons gives confidence that the chains will hold.

Membrane of Eggs in Surgery.

A simple agent in home surgery whose value seems to have been overlooked is the skin or membrane of eggs. Calling attention to this at a recent meeting of physicians in Paris, Dr. Amat cited two cases—a severe burn on a young girl's foot and a large ulcer on the leg of a man of forty—in which six or eight pieces of the egg membrane had been placed over a wound, which was then covered with tin-foil, fastened with dry antiseptic bandage. After four days the membrane had partially grown into the tissue, cicatrization being hastened and a good growth of new skin ensured.

A Destructive Insect.

The tiny tsetse-fly of Africa, so formidable as a destroyer of horses and cattle, is at last indicted for manslaughter. Col. David Bruce, who has been making investigations in Uganda, concludes that the parasite of "sleeping sickness," the mysterious and fatal brain disease that has depopulated a large area of rich country within ten years, has been brought from the Congo and is spread by the tsetse-fly. Where the fly does not exist there is no sleeping sickness. A very peculiar distribution of this disease is noticeable, as it is restricted to the numerous islands of the northern Victoria Nyanza and to a belt of shore a few miles wide, but only in localities of forest with high trees and luxuriant undergrowth.

Destruction of Penguins.

The penguins, of which about a dozen species still exist on the rocky islands and coasts of the southern hemisphere, are of unusual interest as the survivors of the great flightless birds. Human greed has been attracted to these rare creatures, and Dr. E. A. Wilson, an English naturalist, points out that within the last few years thousands of them have been slaughtered for oil on Macquarie Island and the Auckland Islands, not less than 100 tons of the oil having been recently placed on the market. A new scheme is to establish great oil caulkrons in the Auckland Islands. Thus far the 'rookeries' of these islands have suffered comparatively little from man, but the carrying out of the new project will bring speedy extinction to one of the most unique life forms of the world.

The Inventor of the Lightning Rod.

Almost everybody believes that Franklin was the inventor of the lightning rod, and in this one particular nearly everybody is mistaken. The first lightning conductor was not invented by the genius who is said to have 'caught the lightning wild and played with bolts of thunder,' but by a poor Bohemian monk who lived at Scuttenberg, who erected his lightning catcher on the palace of the curator of Preditz, Moravia, on June 15, 1754. The name of this inventive monk was Prohob Dilwisch. His apparatus was composed of a pole surmounted by an iron rod supporting twelve curved branches, and terminating in as many metallic boxes filled with iron ore and enclosed with a wooden box-like cover. This was traversed by 27 iron-pointed rods, the bases of which were connected with the ore boxes. This entire system of wires was united with the earth by a large chain.

Tell me not of diamond gems,
Set in regal diadems;
There's a priceless gem on earth,
Of richer and of purer worth.
'Tis priceless, and is known to fame,
And you, perhaps, may know its name,
For coughs and colds, the remedy sure,
Is known as WOODS' GREAT PEPPERMINT CURE.

The Home

By Maureen

Carrot Jam.

Now that the stock of jams is running low a good and wholesome substitute may be found in carrot jam, which both in flavor and color can hardly be distinguished from apricot. Boil some carrots till soft, strain, and pulp through a cullender, and to each pound of pulp add 1lb of sugar, the juice of 2 lemons and the grated rind of one, and six bitter almonds. Boil the whole for five minutes.

Orange Marmalade.

Take 3lb of Seville or poor man's oranges, 12 cups of water, and 9lb of sugar. Cut oranges, with peels, as thin as possible, rejecting the pips, soak in the water for 24 hours, then boil for 2 hours, add sugar and boil an hour longer.

Home-made Shoe Dressing.

A good home-made dressing for russet leather shoes, bags, or other articles is made as follows: Dissolve 2oz of soft soap in 8oz of water, and add 8oz of annatto solution (in oil form). Melt 3oz of beeswax in 3oz of linseed oil and 8oz of gum turpentine. Stir the two solutions together gradually until cold. The dressing can then be corked securely, and it will keep indefinitely.

The Care of Umbrellas.

Umbrellas will last much longer if, when they are wet, they are placed handle downward to dry. The moisture falls from the edges of the frame, and the fabric dries uniformly. If stood handle upward, which is commonly the case, the top of the umbrella holds the moisture, owing to the lining underneath the ring; it consequently takes a long time to dry, and injures the silk or other fabric with which it is covered. This is the main cause of the top of the umbrella wearing out sooner than the other parts. Umbrella cases are responsible for the wear of the silk. The constant friction causes tiny holes that appear so provokingly early. When not in use, the umbrella should be left loose, and when wet left loose to dry.

Cleaning Steel Fire-irons.

It may be useful to know that fire-irons, etc. which have become rusty or discolored, may be cleaned with ease, by rubbing them with a mixture of paraffin oil and emery knife polish. This should be applied with a piece of coarse flannel, and the steel afterwards rubbed with a wash-leather.

To Clean Smoked Lamp Globes.

Nothing looks more unsightly and untidy in a room, otherwise nicely appointed, than a smoked lamp glass, and yet how often do we see them, and if not actually smoked, they are so badly washed that the stain of the smoke is not absolutely obliterated, and so the glass appears thick and cloudy, and the brilliancy of the light is obscured. Now, if they were washed in warm soda and water and well brushed, and afterwards rinsed in warm water, in which a little powdered ammonia has been dissolved, brushing them again until the stains disappear, and afterwards rinsing them well in cold water, they will look beautifully white and clear.

To Keep Brass from Tarnishing.

To prevent brass from tarnishing dissolve half an ounce of shellac in half a pint of methylated spirit; cork tightly; leave tall next day; then pour off the clear liquid. Heat the brass slightly, and paint the solution over it with a camel-hair brush.

Paint for Outbuildings.

Three pounds of Milburn cement, one gallon of sour milk, half a pound of cream color or any tint to suit fancy. Stir well when using.

For Bronchial Coughs take Woods' Great Peppermint Cure. 1s 6d.

The Benicia Disc Plough makes a successful job in swamp and timber land. It passes over the roots without the least bother where other ploughs would stick fast. It pulverizes the soil to such an extent that it leaves the land ready for sowing without the aid of any other implement.—MORROW, BASSETT, & CO., DUNEDIN....