

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

Slow Pulse.

The case of a healthy man of 61 whose heart beats only 30 times a minute, the normal rate being from 70 to 80, has been recorded by Dr. Seiffert, of Berlin. In another case reported the beats numbered only 22, but the patient was suffering from heart disease.

Origin of Gums.

Gums are a botanical puzzle. Dr. Greig Smith, of Sydney, has now shown that some are due to bacteria, and he has isolated some species—like that of 'arabin'—and made them produce their gums in the laboratory. He suggests that all other gums are bacterial products, and that the world's supply might be increased by judicious selection of susceptible trees.

Maturity of Trees.

Though there are oaks living which are known to be more than a thousand years old, the average oak does not live more than 75 years. That is to say, its growth extends over that period. The same is true of the ash, larch, and elm. The spruce and fir reach maturity after about 80 years. At the end of that time their growth remains stationary for some time, and then decay begins.

Colored Rain.

The curious phenomenon of colored rain, which occurs in various parts of the world, has at last been explained. In some cases the coloring matter is found to be nothing but the pollen dust shaken out of flowers on certain trees at such times as a strong wind was blowing over them. Fir trees and cypress trees when grouped together in large forests at certain seasons of the year give off enormous quantities of pollen, and this vegetable dust is often carried many miles through the atmosphere by the wind, and frequently falls to the earth in a shower of rain. The microscope clearly reveals the origin of such colored rain, which has on more than one occasion puzzled and mystified the inexperienced.

Discovery of the Banana.

A correspondent of the 'Liverpool Courier' states that it is precisely 340 years since the banana was discovered by English 'merchant adventurers'—at all events, 1565 is the earliest record of such. The reference is to be found in Captain Landonmiere's second 'Voyage unto Florida' in that year and the year following. Here is the passage, and it will be observed the word is spelt 'ananas':—'Dominica is one of the fayrest islands of the West, full of hills, and of very good smell. Whose singularities desiring to know as we passed, and seeking also to refresh ourselves with fresh water, I made the mariners cast anchor, after we had sayled about halfe along the coast thereof. As soon as we had cast anchor, two Indians (inhabitants of that place) sayled towards us in two canoes full of fruite of great excellencie, which they called ananas.'

Animals at their Toilet.

Many who have watched animals rolling joyously in the dust have probably not regarded the exercise as one of a cleansing nature. And yet the animals so engaged may be said to have been at their toilet. The dust baths of some of them are taken to rid them of parasites; in other cases the process is gone through to cleanse their coats from grease. Rats, for instance, are enthusiastic dust bathers, and so are those quaint little animals the jerboas. When kept in cages the jerboas are supplied with sand to roll in, and thus keep their coats glossy. Even the animals who love bathing in water find it necessary to powder themselves with dust occasionally. Elephants, after a dip in the water, roll in the dust, and take earth in their trunk and powder their bodies carefully with it. The buffalo, the eland, the hippopotamus, and the rhinoceros take mud baths occasionally, whilst amongst the other dust bathers are counted the horse, the ox, the donkey, the camel, and the dog. Amongst the birds, chickens are very fond of a dust bath. Digging a hole in the ground, the chicken rolls over on its back and throws up dust vigorously with beak and claws. After that it runs about with outstretched wings to shake the dust off, the whole process, no doubt, keeping its feathers clean and bright.

The Home

By Maureen

A Hint for the Cook.

A pinch of cream of tartar added to the half-beaten whites of eggs and then the beating continued will keep the whites from falling back again before being used.

Cleaning a Musty Teapot.

A musty metal teapot should be filled with boiling water, and then have a red-hot cinder dropped into it. Close the lid and leave for a few minutes, and afterwards rinse with clear water.

A Hint for Sick Nurses.

Sprinkle a spoonful of ground coffee upon a fire shovel upon which two or three live coals have been placed (says a medical journal), and immediately the sick room will be filled with a pleasant odor, which cannot be anything but refreshing to the invalid.

Date Custard.

Stone and slice about a pound of dates, and stew them gently to a pulp, with the strained juice of half a lemon and half a pint of water. Then rub them through a hair sieve, and add three well beaten eggs. Line some patty-pans with short pastry, fill them about two-thirds full with the date puree, and bake in a hot oven for a quarter of an hour.

Removing Ink Marks from Paper.

A weak solution of oxalic acid, applied with a camel-hair brush, will generally remove ink marks. A solution of chloride of lime will also do this, but if the paper be tinted it will also take out the color. However perfectly the stain on writing be apparently erased, it will always reappear upon a photograph of the document. 'This curious phenomenon is a great safeguard against forgery.'

An Economical Curry.

Shin of beef makes a very delicious curry. Cut the meat into small pieces, then place it in a stewpan with a piece of butter and an onion or two, according to taste, curry-powder, pepper and salt. When nicely browned add water, according to the quantity of meat. Let it come to a boil; then simmer gently for two or three hours. Make a thickening of flour and a little more curry-powder, and serve on a very hot dish, garnished with rice.

To Strengthen the Hair.

The hair becoming weak and dry shows that there is nourishment needed at the roots. The following wash is simple and good.—Boil one handful of rosemary leaves and box leaves in one quart of water till it is one pint. Strain, and when cold add a wineglassful of rum and the same quantity of glycerine. Pour into bottles and keep well corked. Use occasionally. This pomade is also excellent: Get from the butcher ½ lb of fresh marrow, or, better still, take it from the bones yourself. Render it down in the oven. Let it stand till about half cold, and then, with a fork, beat in one tablespoonful of glycerine and 10 or 15 drops of liquid ammonia. Beat all well together, pour into a jar, and keep well covered.

Tired Man and Tactful Woman.

An experienced and observant woman declares that the most important moment of the day to a man's peace of mind is the ten minutes that follow his return from business. At that time one word may change his whole state of feeling. The most important thing for the tactful woman to do is to wait until she sees some signs of his temper before she makes any decided move. Don't, above all things, tell him that the plumber has just sent in a terrible bill merely for making that little alteration. Don't talk too much in the beginning on any subject. The woman who follows this advice will find her evenings pleasanter than if she jumped at once into the heart of things—especially disagreeable things.

Maureen

The pronounced excellence of the McCormick harvesting machines is due to their superiority of design, perfection of manufacture, and uniformity of quality; and the unprecedented success attained by McCormick machines is due to the world-wide recognition of their general utility by progressive agriculturists in all grain and grass-growing countries....