

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

A New Disinfectant.

Soap to which from one to five per cent. of naphtha acids have been added is recommended by a German chemist as a ready destroyer of virulent disease germs.

Roller Bearings for Street Cars.

A street car equipped with roller bearings, first adjusted and graphited, has been run in Hanover without further attention for six months. The bearings have shown no perceptible wear, and tests indicate an economy in power of 23 per cent., while the actual saving includes the usual cost of oiling and attendance.

A Medicinal Spring.

A singular spring lately discovered in New Mexico discharges a saturated solution of sodium sulphate at a temperature of 110 F. The weight of the liquid is 10 two-thirds pounds per gallon, that of distilled water being only 8 one-third pounds. The overflow from the spring has solidified into a perfectly level, snow-white bed of sodium salts, miles in extent.

Hard and Soft Wood.

Soft wood becomes stronger than hard wood under pressure. The case of a block of Oregon pine, taken from the middle of an upright which formed a part of the timber support in the Comstock mines for twelve years, gives an example of the effect of heavy pressure on wood fibre. It is so hard that it cannot be cut with a knife; and one of its sides is polished from the squeezing it has undergone. Yellow pine from the lower levels of the Comstock has been so compressed by the enormous weight that its density exceeds that of lignum-vitæ.

Greenland's Glory.

The largest mass of ice in the world is probably the one which fills up nearly the whole of the interior of Greenland, where it has accumulated since before the dawn of history. It is believed now to form a block about 600,000 square miles in area, and averaging a mile and a half in thickness. According to these statistics the lump of ice is larger in volume than the whole body of water in the Mediterranean, and there is enough of it to cover the whole of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland with a layer about seven miles thick.

The Origin of the Diamond.

The origin of the diamond has been long in dispute. When the stones of South Africa were traced from the river gravels to the 'blue ground'—an agglomerate filling of pipes of old volcanoes—it was supposed that the real matrix had been discovered, but it has since appeared that the diamonds were picked up by this rock from an older rock pierced by the volcanic eruptions. The Government Geologist of New South Wales has now described a small diamond, from a dolerite dyke, finding the assumption justified that the crystal was actually formed in this igneous rock as it cooled or solidified from a molten state.

Night and Disease.

Medical treatment almost wholly confined to the daytime is thought by Dr. Lauder, a French physician, to be a serious mistake. Disease is most active at night—asthma, epilepsy, and other attacks coming then almost entirely—and observations have shown that medicine administered in the night hours, or both night and day, acts better and with greater effect than an equal dose all given in the daytime. It is explained that in the nocturnal fasting state the body absorbs remedies with greater energy, while they are eliminated less quickly. In many instances disease has resisted all medication by day, but has yielded to night treatment.

A Novel Timepiece.

The latest novelty in timekeepers will probably appeal to lazy and forgetful people. It consists of a watch which does not require any winding. All that is necessary for its owner to do, in order to have the time with him always, is to walk half a mile a day. The watch does the rest. The winding mechanism consists of an ingenious contrivance by which a small weight is raised and lowered by the jar of walking. The motion of the weight works a small ratchet arrangement, which winds the spring to its full tension, and then is automatically held until more winding is necessary. A course of shaking up and down for a few minutes will answer the same purpose as a stroll abroad, while all the jolts and jars of ordinary existence are likewise made useful as a means of winding.

Intercolonial

Mr. Alexander Juett, the 1905 Rhodes Scholar for West Australia, an ex-pupil of the Christian Brothers, left the other day for Oxford University.

When Mr. Donovan, the Irish envoy, was entering the hall at a Home Rule meeting in a country town he was tapped on the shoulder by a seedy-looking individual (says the 'Gundagai Independent'). A few minutes' conversation disclosed the man's identity—he was the professor in classics at the college which Donovan attended some years ago. A brilliant scholar and an only son, he suddenly disappeared from his position a few years ago, and nothing had been heard of him till he accosted one of his old pupils in a small Australian country town the other day. He has spent his time in Australia working at odd jobs, and is now off to a big western shearing-shed to take a pen.

Under the will of the late John Lalor, of Yarrawonga (Vic.), the following charitable institutions are entitled to claim bequests:—Sisters of Mercy, Yarrawonga, £284 7s 9d; Little Sisters of the Poor, Northcote, £568 15s 5d; Wangaratta Hospital, £189 11s 10d; St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, £94 15s 11d; Sisters of St. Joseph, Surrey Hills, £568 15s 5d; Foundling Hospital, Broadmeadows, £189 11s 10d; Nuns of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford, £189 11s 10d; Corowa Hospital, £47 8s; Mansfield Hospital, £95 15s 11d; Beechworth Hospital, £189 11s 10d.

On the evening of August 27 the Rev. Father Hearn was presented with an illuminated address and a purse of sovereigns in the Town Hall, Tenterfield, on the occasion of his departure from the district, owing to failing health. The Mayor (Ald. Juergens), on behalf of the Protestant community, expressed regret at the departure of Father Hearn from Tenterfield. He was a man whom all liberal-minded Protestants respected. They would miss his genial smile and happy greetings in the street, for no matter what a man's creed he would always hold out to him the hand of friendship.

The Irish envoys, Messrs. Devlin, M.P., and Donovan, arrived in Brisbane from Sydney on Monday, August 27, and were accorded a civic reception by the Mayor and citizens. In the afternoon the delegates visited Nudgee College, where they were presented with an address and £50 towards the Home Rule Fund by the pupils. A meeting was held in the Exhibition Building in the evening, which was very largely attended. Addresses were delivered by Messrs. Devlin, and Donovan, and Mr. Blair, the Attorney-General, in the absence of the Premier, moved the following resolution:—That this meeting, in welcoming Messrs. Devlin and Donovan, pledges itself to give both moral and financial support to the Irish Parliamentary Party in their magnificent efforts to secure that long delayed measure of justice—self-government for Ireland, the granting of which we are convinced would result as in Canada and Australasia, in strengthening and consolidating the British Empire. Mr. John Leahy, M.L.A., seconded the resolution, which was carried unanimously. A subscription list was opened, and the sum of over £400 was handed in.

In the course of an interview with a 'S. M. Herald' reporter his Eminence Cardinal Moran referred to the local attacks on Home Rule in letters to the press. His Eminence said that what amused him was the way some few people seemed to regard the Home Rule movement as a disloyal one calculated to tear the Empire asunder. A writer in one of the newspapers recently had dealt with a speech delivered by Mr. Devlin, the Irish envoy, in America, as if it were an evidence of the gentleman's determination to take by force what it was really hoped would come about by peaceful and constitutional means. It should be remembered that Mr. Devlin's speech was delivered on a peculiar occasion, and to an audience composed largely of what he might call the fighting element in the American Home Rule movement. That element thought perhaps they might gain by force of arms what they desired, but no sensible man in Ireland, and, least of all, Mr. Devlin, had any such ideas or cherished such sentiments. Mr. Devlin's speech was aimed at disarming that element, not encouraging it. He had merely tried to lead them right, and make them understand the constitutional method of getting what they desired. His Eminence reviewed the change in sentiment in favor of Home Rule of late years, and said that no sensible man believed that the cause of Home Rule could be won by fighting.