

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

Connecting Four Continents.

By the construction of three short tunnels (says 'Civil Engineering'), one from Gibraltar to the Moroccan coast, another beneath the Behring Strait, also the Channel tunnel which is at present being projected, and by linking up these tunnels with existing railway systems, London would be in direct communication with the four continents—Europe, Asia, Africa, and America.

Wireless Telegraphy.

It is announced in Berlin from New York that the North German Lloyd's steamer 'Bremen' received from the station of Nauen, near Berlin, clearly transmitted news telegrams by wireless telegraphy every day for four days after her departure from Bremen, the messages successfully reaching her even at a distance of about 1550 miles.

Match Statistics.

It is estimated that the United Kingdom manages to consume 500,000,000 a day, which comes out at about twelve for every man, woman, and child. Smokers probably account for the greater number, so that they will be interested to know that about ninety tons of wood are used up in the form of matches every day, or about 30,000 tons a year. If one day's consumption of matches were placed end to end, they would extend for a distance of about 15,000 miles. Sweden and Norway, where matches are made in enormous quantities, export over 25,000 tons of wooden matches every year. In France, where the tax on matches averages fourpence per inhabitant, the consumption is comparatively small.

Early Advertisements.

The first newspaper advertisement appeared in Great Britain in 1642. In Greece, advertising was done by criers. The ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans were the first to use billposters, some of which were found on the walls and buildings of Pompeii. It was not until the eighteenth century that magazine and newspaper advertisements became a recognised medium between manufacturer and buyer.

The First Coal in England.

It was to supply the wants of smiths and lime burners that English coal began to be systematically dug about A.D. 1200. This mineral fuel suited the requirements of their crafts even better than wood. An unwonted and widespread demand for fuel for these purposes sprang up at this period in connection with the numerous feudal castles and ecclesiastical buildings which were being erected throughout the kingdom. Not only were the smiths and lime burners the sole patrons of coal at this early stage, but for a long time subsequently they continued to be its principal consumers.

Lava from Vesuvius.

Lava from the recent eruption of Vesuvius has been carefully examined by T. Tommasina. The samples examined included a piece taken warm from the summit of the crater and four pieces from the Valle d'Inferno, each containing a coin or medal. The lumps produced a dissipation of charge amounting to forty-two volts per hour.

Getting Out of a Difficulty.

To build a ship and not be able to get her out to sea is a somewhat unlucky experience. A firm of Amsterdam shipbuilders have just narrowly escaped that misfortune. The correspondent of the London 'Daily Telegraph' in the Dutch port, states that a new liner built for the Java trade, when launched, a few days ago, proved too lig for the available depth of water, and stuck fast after she left the ways. Fortunately it was that the mishap occurred in Holland. That country, as most people know, lies for the most part below the level of the sea, and this depressed condition in the present instance enabled the shipbuilders to solve the difficult situation of peace, just as in former days it enabled the hardy Hollanders to solve some difficult problems of war. The simple expedient was adopted of opening the sea sluices at Ymuiden, and allowing the water to rise sufficiently to float the stranded liner. It was a mere detail that in floating the ship a number of houses in the lower-lying parts of the town were partly submerged. One wonders what would have been said on the Clyde if Messrs. Brown had been obliged to ask the corporation to allow them to inundate Glasgow in order to get the 'Lusitania' afloat.

Intercolonial

Mr. Brendan Gavan Duffy, who was recently appointed associate to Mr. Justice Higgins, is the third son of Mr. Frank Gavan Duffy, K.C.

Rev. Father Reidy, of Albany (West Australia), the other day received a sick call which necessitated a journey on horseback of over 250 miles.

The gold yield of Victoria for November was 63,409 ounces gross, or 58,265 ounces fine, valued at £237,493, being a decrease of 15,071 ounces as compared with the return for the previous November. For the eleven months of the year the gold amounted to 748,627 ounces gross, or 691,839 ounces fine, valued at £2,928,706, being an increase of 23,656 ounces, as compared with the corresponding period of last year.

Rev. M. J. Daly, formerly of the clerical branch of the Victorian railways, was on December 8 ordained priest at St. Patrick's Cathedral, Melbourne, by the Bishop of Ballarat. There was a large congregation, and subsequently a breakfast was held at St. Patrick's Hall. The new priest is a son of Mr. John Daly, who was for many years a sergeant in the Victorian police force.

The Right Rev. Dr. J. H. Norton was consecrated Bishop of Port Augusta, South Australia, in St. Francis Xavier's Cathedral on Sunday, December 9. His Grace the Archbishop of Adelaide, Most Rev. Dr. O'Reilly, presided, and the consecrating prelate was the Most Rev. Dr. Kelly, Coadjutor-Archbishop of Sydney. He was assisted by Right Rev. Dr. Dunne, Bishop of Wilcannia, and Right Rev. Dr. Dwyer, Coadjutor-Bishop of Maitland.

Mr. J. J. Callaghan, who for the past twenty-four years has been principal of the Hamilton Superior Public School, received a flattering local valedictory on the occasion of his retirement from the public service through ill-health (says the Sydney 'Freeman'). The Mayor of Hamilton (Mr. J. L. Cram) presided. Several presentations were made, the chief being a silver hot-water kettle to Mr. and Mrs. Callaghan from the teachers, and a silver teapot from the pupils. Mr. Callaghan was presented by the staff of the infants' department with a silver pen and stamp box. Mr. Callaghan, who has been over 34 years in the Education Department, held a very high position in the estimation of his fellow-teachers, and has been president of the Teachers' Association. As a Catholic citizen he has acquitted himself worthily. Mr. Callaghan is an old boy and an old teacher of the formative days of St. Stanislaus' College, Bathurst, and prior to his joining the Education Department was on the staff of the 'Freeman.'

The Hon. John Meagher, who was reported to be on his way back to Sydney (says the 'Catholic Press'), has changed his mind, and decided to spend his Christmas among the old folk at home. His present intention is to leave Ireland on the 28th December. For a man who is over seventy years of age, Mr. Meagher has had a wonderful holiday. He was received by the Pope on his arrival in Italy; then he toured Spain, and, having letters from the most influential quarters in Rome, all doors were open to him, and he attended most exclusive State ceremonies in Madrid, and was received by the young King. He visited France, Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, and has been in Ireland for many months, crossing over to the Continent with a pilgrimage to Lourdes. The other day he was one of the speakers at a great meeting in Dublin of the Catholic Truth Society, presided over by Cardinal Logue.

The Rev. Father L. O'Keefe was presented recently by the people of Orange with an address and purse of sovereigns, prior to his departure on an extended trip to his native land. The purse contained 550 sovereigns. Father O'Keefe has been in Orange for upwards of seventeen years. Writing of the presentation, the 'Orange Leader' says:—It has never been our lot to attend a more magnificent meeting. It was indeed a marvellous manifestation of the very sincere regard, the truly deep affection which lay in the hearts of the people of this district, with whom the rev. gentleman had come into contact. The greatest honor, perhaps, of that wonderful demonstration was the fact that a large percentage of the audience, and a big share of the magnificent purse of sovereigns presented to Father O'Keefe, represented the feelings of sincere regard felt for him by representatives of other Churches and denominations. The meeting was a boundless and immortal testimony to a very sterling character—and we use that last word in its fullest, broadest, and noblest meaning.