

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

An American Train.

The New York Central Railway Company's 'Twentieth Century Limited' express, which travels 960 miles in 18 hours, supplies the stock and market reports to its passengers. A shorthand writer is on the staff, which includes a barber, valet, and ladies' maid. Fresh and salt water baths are among the luxuries of this the fastest long-distance train in the world.

New Uses of Paper.

Paper bricks are used in Berlin for paving; many telegraph poles are now made of rolled sheets of paper; paper coffins are used in the United States. Some straw hats, into which enters not an atom of straw, consist of narrow paper strips dyed yellow. Artificial sponges can be made of paper pulp. There also exists a device for paper thread to be used in sewing shoes, and Chardonnet's artificial silk is made on a basis of paper pulp. In Norway there is a church, seating a thousand persons, built entirely of paper, belfry and all; while paper bullets may soon see the light.

A Large Flower.

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Can you imagine a blossom as large as a carriage wheel? On the island of Mindano, one of the Philippine group, was found by some explorers such a flower. Far up on the mountain of Parag, 2000 feet above the sea level, some explorers were wandering when they came across great buds larger than a cabbage head. Greatly astonished they searched further, and presently discovered a full-grown blossom, five-petalled, and three feet in diameter. It was carried in low lying luxuriant vines. The natives call it bolo. It was found impossible to preserve it fresh. So they photographed it and kept several petals to press, and by improvised scales found that a single flower weighed twenty-two pounds. It was afterwards found to be a species of *Rafflesia*, first found in Sumatra, and named after Sir Stamford Raffles. The new flower was called *Rafflesia Schadenburgia*, in honor of its discoverer, Dr. Schadenburg.

Stored Acetylene.

Acetylene is now carefully purified, washed and dried and stored in cylinders in dissolved form, safety in using the compressed gas being thus ensured. Cylinders of any desired size are filled with such porous absorbent as asbestos or a special charcoal cement, making explosion in the cylinder impossible, and the porous material is then soaked with a fixed quantity of acetone, a volatile organic liquid having the peculiar property of absorbing 25 times its own volume of acetylene at atmospheric pressure and 60 degrees F., and a greater proportion at increased pressure. In practice, the acetone, is so regulated in quantity that the cylinders contain ten times their own volume of acetylene for every atmosphere of pressure. The compression being ten atmospheres, the cylinders contain 100 times their own volume of acetylene, or ten times more than when the undissolved gas is compressed in the ordinary way.

A Sound Deflector.

A device has recently been patented whose aim is to deflect the sound of the piano so as to prevent its diffusion toward the ceiling of a room or its muffling by the case of the instrument. The deflector is a very simple device of light construction, comprising two end boards connected by a curved back of such form as properly to direct the sound into the room. The end boards are formed with cushioned flanges adapted to rest on the side walls of the piano case, while the curved back is formed with cushioned extension, which fits between the side wall and thus prevents lateral displacement. In consequence, the deflector does not need to be fastened in place, but may be readily set in position or removed without operating any fastening means. By its use the full volume of sound passes in concentrated form into the room without being diffused.

- A stands for Asthma, the patient may fret;
- B for the Breath he hardly can get;
- C for the Cold and the terrible Croup;
- D for the Dollars the doctor will scoop;
- E for the Ease that one longs for in vain;
- F for the "Floo," it is at one again;
- G for the Giant—Great Peppermint Cure—
- H for the Health that follows it sure.

Intercolonial

Additional stained glass windows, at a cost of £1000, for St. Patrick's Cathedral, will be delivered in Melbourne shortly.

This year will bring the age of Cardinal Moran to 77, and that of Dr. Murray, Bishop of Maitland, to 82; yet neither has occasion to use spectacles.

In the juvenile choir competition at the Eight Hours' celebration, Bendigo, the Marist Brothers' boys got first place, and St. Kilian's school (girls) second.

The Church of St. John the Baptist, Clifton Hill, Melbourne, was solemnly blessed and re-opened on Sunday, April 28, by his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne. The cost of this fine church up to date is £32,000, of which sum Mr. Thomas E. Verga has contributed about £12,000.

The Bank of New South Wales celebrated its nineteenth anniversary last month. Three years after its foundation the cashier walked off with the whole of its capital without any word of adieu. This would be rather a difficult task nowadays.

The duplication of the railway line between Melbourne and Sydney has been mooted by Mr. Chapman. The telegraph line is to be duplicated at once between the two capitals. The convenience of two daily express trains would be greatly appreciated by the travelling public.

At a meeting in Melbourne recently, at which his Grace the Archbishop presided, it was decided to hold a bazaar in October next for the purpose of wiping off the debt on the Cathedral Hall, which now stands at £3700. A short time ago a generous benefactor made a gift of £1000 towards this object. His Grace the Archbishop is anxious to see the hall free of debt before his departure for Rome next year.

The prosperity of Victoria, no less than that of the sister States, was adverted to by the Acting-Prime Minister (Sir John Forrest), when opening a flower show at Footscray. Sir John said the total external trade for 1906, putting exports and imports together, amounted to £114,060,000, as against £95,000,000 the year before. The imports increased by £6,000,000, and the exports by £13,000,000. There were three items which swelled the exports last year—£3,250,000 worth of butter was turned out in addition to what was used locally; grain and flour, £6,000,000; and wool, £22,000,000.

Another of the pioneer priests has gone (says the Sydney 'Catholic Press'). One by one their ranks are thinning, until only a very few remain. This time a venerable man of 83 years has left us—Archdeacon D'Arcy, of Wellington, whose long term of useful and meritorious labor closed on April 17 at his presbytery. The end was not unexpected, as the Archdeacon had been in indifferent health for some time. Archdeacon D'Arcy was a native of Clonmel, County Tipperary, and came of a well-known family. He was a nephew of Archdeacon McIlhroe, the eminent pioneer priest of Queensland and New South Wales, who was instrumental in bringing him to Australia. He was ordained in Carlow College, and came to this State in 1859. He was engaged on the mission at Shoalhaven, Perth, Bathurst and Wellington, as well as being vice-president of St. John's College. He also labored for some years in Queensland. Archdeacon D'Arcy returned to the diocese of Bathurst, but was again in Queensland in 1882, having been invited by Bishop O'Quinn shortly before his death to preach the jubilee in the northern State. The Archdeacon took charge of Wellington in 1882 and since then the progress of the Church has been very rapid. Convent schools and churches have been built at Dripstone, Bodangora, Stuart Town, and Euchareena. The funeral of the late Archdeacon D'Arcy was the largest ever seen in the district. His Lordship Bishop Dunne, assisted by a large number of priests, officiated at the cemetery.

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