

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

The Green of the Sea

The green color of ocean water depends upon the number of medusae and other minute animal forms which inhabit it. The deep green northern seas literally swarm with these miniature creatures. In some places, as many as 128 of them have been found in a single cubic inch of water. From soundings made in the districts where these creatures are found in such immense numbers, it is probable that the waters will average a mile in depth. Whether these forms occupy the whole depth is uncertain. Provided, however, the depth to which they extend is but 250 fathoms, an immense number of one species may occur within a space of one square mile.

The Crawfish's Tail

The tail of a crawfish serves that animal as an oar. By a peculiar jerk of the tail, the animal can retire from a dangerous object with almost incredible swiftness. The tail is much more effective in moving the animal backward than forward, a singular instance of adaptation to its situation, for by means of its tail it can withdraw into its hole with such swiftness, as in an instant to place it out of danger.

Lasting Qualities of Wood

Some interesting experiments have been made to ascertain which wood lasts the longest. It was found that birch and aspen decayed in three years, maple and red beech in five years, and elm and ash in seven years. Oak, Scottish fir, and Weymouth pine decayed to the depth of half an inch in seven years. In situations so free from moisture that they may be practically called dry, the durability of timber is unlimited. The roof of Westminster Hall is more than four hundred and fifty years old.

A Spider's Web

Rightly considered, a spider's web is a most curious as well as a most beautiful thing. The majority of children suppose that the spider's web is pulled out of his mouth and that the little insect has a large reel of the stuff in his stomach, and that he could almost instantly add feet, yards, or rods to the roll. The facts are that the spiders have a regular spinning machine, a set of tiny tubes, at the far end of the body, and that the threads are nothing more nor less than a white sticky fluid, which hardens as soon as it comes in contact with the air.

Formation of Rainbows

A fine rain and a strong sun are necessary for the formation of white rainbows. The phenomenon is due to the optical principle known as interference. If the drops of water be very small, the interference of the rays causes a complete overlapping of the color and the bow appears white. The various prismatic colors, instead of being thrown out separately, as in the ordinary prism, are thrown one on top of the other, and the light is cast by the sun on a sheet of rain. The result is still more noticeable where a fog takes the place of the rain.

An Electric Tree

A German authority has recently announced the discovery of a tree in the forests of Central India which has most curious characteristics. The leaves of the tree are of a highly sensitive nature, and so full of electricity that whoever touches one of them receives an electric shock. It has a very singular effect upon a magnetic needle, and will influence it at a distance of even seventy feet. The electrical strength of the tree varies according to the time of day, it being strongest at midday and weakest at midnight. In wet weather its powers disappear altogether. Birds never approach the tree, nor have insects ever been seen upon it.

A Remarkable Cave

Two gold prospectors recently discovered in the Santa Susanna Mountains, about fifty miles from Los Angeles, California, the largest and most remarkable cave in Western America. While looking for indications of gold, they found an opening, which they entered. The opening led to a great cavern, consisting of many passages, some of them wide, but most of them narrow and lofty. The passages lead into great halls, some containing an acre, studded with stalagmites and stalactites, in some cases so thickly that it is difficult to get through. The walls of one of these halls are covered with rude drawings of the chase, some almost obliterated, but others still clear.

Intercolonial

The 'Advocate' states that His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne intends to leave on his visit 'ad limina' to Rome about Easter next.

The entertainment given recently in Sydney in aid of the fund being raised for 'Eva' of the 'Nation' netted about £100.

The Very Rev. G. O'Farrell, O.P., of North Adelaide, who recently met with a severe accident near Molong, is progressing favorably in St. Vincent's Hospital.

A new Cathedral is to be built in Geraldton (W.A.), which is estimated to cost £10,000, £2,000 of which is in hand. The Catholics of the town held a bazaar recently, which netted considerably over £200.

Miss Dolly Castles, formerly of Mr. J. C. Williamson's Comic Opera Company in Australia, has appeared at the Gaiety Theatre, London, in 'The Girls of Gotterberg.' Miss Castles scored a success.

The Rev. Father Denis Mitchell, C.S.S.R., a native of Ballarat, who has been nine months in Europe completing his studies, returned to Australia a couple of weeks ago. It is understood he will be attached to the Waratah mission.

Arrangements are being made for building a residence for Bishop Murray at St. Monica's Cairns. The new building will be completed so as to be ready for episcopal occupation on the return of the Bishop from the old world.

The Rev. Father Benezeth, S.M., who recently arrived from France, accompanied by several Brothers, left Sydney last week for mission work in Samoa. Father Benezeth, was compelled to serve as a soldier for twelve months in the French army, in accordance with that Republic's drastic law against the Church.

In the recent primary examinations of Adelaide University, the Catholic schools of West Australia secured more than one-third of the entire passes of the State. This must be regarded as eminently satisfactory, seeing that in that State, Catholics are not more than one in five of the population.

His Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne has appointed Rev. J. Barry (St. Kilda East) to the charge of the Mansfield parish. The former pastor, Rev. J. J. Egan, owing to ill-health, has been transferred to Williams-town as assistant priest.

The death on November 2, of the Rev. Mary Stanislaus Nolan, Mother Superior of the Brigidine Convent, Beechworth (Vic.) was not altogether unexpected, as she had suffered from a long illness. She was sixty-two years of age. She made her vows at the Brigidine Convent, Abbotsleigh, Queen's County, of which her sister, who predeceased her by two years, was Mother Superior.

It was announced at a meeting presided over by the Bishop of Ballarat, held at St. Patrick's Cathedral on November 8, that the profits of the recent Commonwealth Bazaar had been allocated. The sum of £900 has been applied to the liquidation of the debt in St. Patrick's Cathedral, £811 to St. Alipius' Church, Ballarat East, and £333 to the Christian Brothers' School at Redan. Each of these three buildings is now free of debt. The balance in hand will be devoted to retelling St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In the Catholic Churches of Hobart on Sunday, November 3, references were made to the death of Lord Gormanston and the 'Dead March' was played morning and evening. On Monday morning a solemn Requiem Mass for his lordship was celebrated at St. Mary's Cathedral. Very Rev. P. R. Hennebry was celebrant, Revs. M. O. Carroll and J. Barry deacons, and Rev. M. W. Gilleran master of ceremonies. The nave of the Cathedral was well filled by a congregation of the friends of the deceased and the children from the Catholic schools.

Major T. M. McInerney, who has been created a C.M.G., is a Victorian officer with a distinguished career in South Africa. He is a brother of the Rev. J. McInerney, S.J., (Richmond, Vic.). He went as lieutenant with a contingent to South Africa. He was wounded and taken prisoner. Shortly after his release he was appointed Queen's Advocate and Chief Magistrate of Pretoria. He was afterwards appointed Vice-President of the Commission which dealt with the settlement of war claims. He returned to Victoria quite recently.

DEAR ME!

Forgotten that SYMINGTON'S COFFEE ESSENCE! Whatever shall I do? Call at the nearest Store and ask. THEY ALL KEEP IT