

Science Siftings

BY 'VOLT

India Rubber Tree Fruit.

The fruit of the India rubber tree is somewhat similar to that of the *Ricinus communis*, the castor oil plant, though somewhat larger. The seeds have a not disagreeable taste and yield a purplish oil. It is a fairly good substitute for linseed oil, though it dries less rapidly. Mixed with copal blue and turpentine, it makes a good varnish. The oil may be also used in the manufacture of soaps, and lithographic inks. The seeds are somewhat like tiny chestnuts, although darker in color. The Indian girls are fond of wearing bracelets and necklets made of them.

Man's Temperature.

Man is the coldest blooded animal there is. Man's low temperature is responsible for more than half his ailments. Your normal temperature is 98½ degrees Fahr. It is only when you have a bad temperature that you get as warm as any of the lower animals—that is to say, when you are in a high fever, with a temperature of 102, you are at the normal heat of the cat, the dog, the ox, the rat, and so on. In the coldest of seas the porpoise is never cooler than 100 degrees. The bat, the rabbit, the guinea pig, the hare, and the elephant likewise are all cool at 100 degrees. The hen has the highest temperature of all the lower creatures, and it is a good deal warmer, too, when a chicken. Its temperature then is as high as 111, but age and experience cool its blood by three degrees.

Building the Pyramids.

An English engineer says that no one has been able to decide how the enormous stones in the Pyramids were handled. Even after allowing for a great army of men, some sort of mechanical contrivance must have been used. One theory is that as each course of stone was laid, a sand embankment was built around it with long, easy slopes, so that the stones for the next course could be pushed up on rollers and slipped into place. A pyramid thus would be buried as fast as it was built, until the top was reached, when the stupendous job of removing the sand embankment was begun. This might account for the great number of laborers used. It is said that in building the Pyramid of Cheops 100,000 men were employed for thirty years, although the quarry from which the stone was obtained was only 3000ft from the pyramid.

Growth of Coral.

Coral is a calcareous deposit secreted by many kinds of zoophytes, which are links between the animal and vegetable worlds. Those which produce coral are compound animals, which increase by a process of budding. From one polyp another buds forth, contributes its portion of lime, which remains firmly fixed, and then produces a mud in its turn. Thus the beautiful corals are built up by a natural process, one layer surrounding or crowning another, and the whole branching out as a crop, a fan, a shrub, or a mushroom. The lime framework is strengthened by an admixture of horny animal matter. Light has been thrown upon the rapidity of the growth of coral by the fact that a French man-of-war on passing a reef in the South Pacific picked up a young fungus, which adhered to the vessel, and in nine weeks was found to have grown to a diameter of nine inches and a weight of two pounds and a half.

Making Shoes in Four Minutes.

How long would it take you to make a pair of boots, do you think? (says the *Chicago Daily News*). You probably had better not begin it, especially if you need them soon. Even a cobbler in the old days, working with his assistant, would spend a day and a half making a pair of boots, and the cost would be about four dollars. But now, of course, shoes are made by machinery, and it is astonishing to hear how quickly they are made. It takes just four minutes to make a pair of boots! And the labor cost is about 35 cents. Of course, no one makes the whole boot nowadays. There are a hundred different men making different parts of it, and each one does the same thing over and over again, and each man learns to do his particular work especially well and quickly. And you should see the buttons sewed on! A boy takes the part of the shoes where the buttons are to go, and fits it into a machine; throws in a handful of buttons quite carelessly, turns the machine, and in no time out comes the piece of leather with all the buttons exactly in the right place. No wonder some factories turn out 10,000 pairs of shoes in a day.

Binks tried to cure a nasty cold
By sampling whisky strong and old,
And when for home he made retreat,
His legs went zigzag up the street;
And then a motor knocked down Binks,
And squeezed out all those nasty drinks,
So warning take, strong drink abjure—
Cure coughs and colds with Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.

Intercolonial

Sister Margaret Mary, of the Brigidine Convent, Coonamble, passed to her eternal reward on August 10, in the 29th year of her age.

Rev. Brother Miller, who has been for over twenty years a member of the Christian Brothers; died recently at St. Augustine's Orphanage, Geelong.

The foundation-stone of a convent for the Sisters of St. Joseph was laid at Molong on Sunday, August 1, by the Rev. Father Gilmartin, O.M., of St. Stanislaus' College, who represented the Right Rev. Dr. Dunne at the ceremony.

In the evening of his life, Mr. William Connelly, of Pyree, aged 92 years, went 92 miles to attend the funeral of his son, and stood at the grave till the last sad rites were over. The veteran Irishman retains his faculties to an extraordinary degree. He speaks Irish fluently, and retains a marvellous memory.

The golden jubilee of Mount Carmel Church, Waterloo, Sydney, was celebrated a few Sundays ago. The foundation stone of the church was laid 50 years ago by Archbishop Polding. The Ven. Archpriest Sheehy, who was present at the jubilee ceremonies, was also present 50 years ago at the laying of the foundation stone.

The Rev. Brother McCarthy (Superior of St. Patrick's College, Ballarat) has been on a visit to the Archbishop of Hobart (says the *Freeman's Journal*). The object of his visit was to complete arrangements for the extension of St. Virgilius' College, Hobart, by the addition of another wing, and the laying out of the grounds in preparation for the opening of the college by the Christian Brothers.

Ex-Judge Foster, of New South Wales, who died on August 16, was an Irishman, and claimed to be the head of an Irish family distinguished in the law, which included the Right Hon. John Foster, last Speaker of the Irish House of Commons. The late Judge Foster had been drawing a pension of £1800 a year during the past fifteen years. And he had served only six years on the bench, for which he was paid £2600 a year.

The new convent of the Sisters of Mercy at Morpeth, a fine two-storey brick building, costing £1500, was opened and blessed on Sunday, August 15, by Dr. Dwyer (Bishop of Maitland). Among those present were Dr. Dunne (Bishop of Bathurst) and Dr. Gallagher (Bishop of Goulburn). At the conclusion of the ceremony a subscription list was opened, and £466 was subscribed, of which the Very Rev. Father Corcoran, the parish priest, gave £100.

The death occurred at his residence, Brisbane Field, near Morpeth, on August 13, of Mr. Timothy McCarthy, an old and highly-respected resident and a Crimean veteran. Deceased was a native of Mitchelstown, County Limerick, Ireland, and was 86 years of age. In 1845 he enlisted in the British army, and joined the regiment of the 3rd Buffs at Kilworth, and saw active service in the Crimean war, when he fought in the battles of Sebastopol and Inkerman, and received a medal and clasp, together with two good-conduct badges with pay.

The Rev. S. McDonnell, of Kempsey, has left on a trip to Ireland for the benefit of his health, having recently passed through a severe illness. On the eve of his departure Father McDonnell was the centre of a splendid demonstration of affection on the part of his people. The parishioners presented him with an address and a purse of over 100 sovereigns, and testimonials were also presented by the Children of Mary and the school children. A projected banquet by the townspeople was abandoned in consideration of Father McDonnell's health.

A Sydney newspaper, in referring to the late Mr. Samuel Hordern, as 'easily the wealthiest man in Australia,' states that, according to an intimate friend, his fortune amounted to between £3,000,000 and £4,000,000. The business of Hordern's in Sydney has expanded enormously since 1877, when Mr. Anthony Hordern, father of Mr. Samuel Hordern, died, leaving his two sons to succeed him in the control of a great enterprise. He left an estate valued at somewhere between £40,000 and £50,000, which was divided among his two sons and two daughters.

There was a sound of agony by night

Of sneezing, wheezing, groaning, and of tears;

It woke adjacent slumberers in a fright,

And made them quake with superstitious fears;

Yet 'twas no spook that rent the midnight air,

Or ghost, or goblin 'scaped from sepulchre,

'Twas only Binks, declaiming in despair—

His cold was worse, and he'd no Woods' Peppermint Cure.

WANTED KNOWN—That Bill-heads, Circulars, Cards, Programmes, and General Printing of every description are executed at the *Tablet* Office. Moderate rates.

DEAR ME! Forgotten that SYMINGTON'S COFFEE ESSENCE! Whatever shall I do? Call at the nearest Store and ask. They all keep it.