

Science Siftings

By 'VOLT.'

A Monster Elevator.

The new 1,100,000 bushel grain elevator at Philadelphia is now in use. It cost £240,000 to erect, was built of concrete and steel, and is considered the most rapid plant ever built for transferring grain from rail to shipboard. It stands back 500ft from a pier 9000ft long, on both sides of which vessels can dock, a conveying gallery extending out to the end of the pier. The elevator can unload 240 trucks per day of ten hours, and the gallery can load at the rate of 60,000 bushels per hour. The plant has a machine which cleans 20,000 bushels per hour.

Can Hear, But Not See.

When people read that armies are engaging each other at 2000 yards distance, they think the combatants can see each other, but they cannot. At that distance it is impossible to distinguish between a man and a horse, and at 1200 yards, especially where there is any dust, it requires the best kind of eyes to tell infantry from cavalry. At 900 yards the movements become clearer, although it is not until they get within 750 yards of each other that the heads of the columns can be made out with anything like certainty. Infantry can be seen in the sunlight much more easily than cavalry or artillery because less dust is raised. Besides, infantry are distinguished by the glitter of their muskets. At 2000 yards, however, everything is unsatisfactory, even with the aid of field-glasses, for a marching column in dry weather raises a great deal of dust.

Boots Made From Seaweed.

According to experts who have closely studied the matter, we are neglecting a valuable asset by not making more use of the tons of seaweed which are thrown upon our shores every day (says a Home paper). If the experience of the Japanese and the dwellers on the western shore of Norway, Scotland, and Ireland is to be accepted, there are huge fortunes to be made from seaweed. The Japanese, for instance, employ some 600,000 persons in the seaweed industries. These are mainly engaged in preparing edible products. China alone, it appears, consumes £120,000 worth of gelatinous articles made from seaweed every year. Furthermore, the Japanese use seaweed in the manufacture of such diverse objects as policemen's boots, picture frames, marbled floors, and electric switchboards. In France seaweed finds utility as a stiffener for mattresses and as size for straw hats.

Preventing Gun-deafness.

The huge power of modern guns is responsible for a deafening uproar the whole time they are in action. This din results in hundreds of soldiers being deafened for life, owing to injuries to the eardrum. Sailors are the most unfortunate in this respect, for, unlike soldiers, they cannot stand at a distance of twelve paces behind their guns, as is the rule in the army. The sailor remains at the breech the whole time that the gun is carrying on its work. As a preventive of deafness the sailors on many ships are provided with a small stick of indiarubber, which they grip between their teeth when the guns are at work. This prevents the concussion of the great volume of sound being so injurious to the nerves of the ears, and also stops that vibration of the jaw which results in chronic headache. If these preventives are not provided the sailor is advised to keep his mouth open when gun-firing is going on, as this stops, to some extent, the unpleasant consequences set up by violent concussion. Naval officers invariably chew toothpicks when gunners are at work, for the great preventive of deafness on such occasions is to keep the mouth open somehow or other.

Ye men that go shooting, if you require a Gun that will shoot straight and some ammunition that will kill, consult Smith and Laing's stock, Invercargill.

Intercolonial

His Excellency the Apostolic Delegate, Archbishop Cerretti, has now taken up his residence at 'Rockleigh,' Edward street, North Sydney.

A few Sundays ago the Right Rev. Dr Higgins, Bishop of Ballarat, blessed and opened a new church at Redan, which had been erected at a cost of £3500.

Rev. Brother Fogarty, who has been for many years in charge of the Christian Brothers' College, Gregory terrace (writes a Brisbane correspondent), has been transferred to Perth, Western Australia. Brother Egan, who has been in Brisbane for some time, returns to Adelaide. Brother O'Donoghue, of Perth, succeeds Brother Fogarty.

At the Irish National Foresters' annual Communion breakfast in Sydney on Sunday, March 28, High Chief Ranger Byrnes was presented by the Archbishop of Sydney, on behalf of the society, with a handsome gold medal as an appreciation of the excellent manner in which the recipient had carried out his duties during the year. His Grace heartily congratulated the High Chief Ranger, who suitably responded.

A private cable message reports that Captain Allan O'Halloran Wright, who was well known in Adelaide, was killed in action recently whilst fighting with his regiment in Northern France (says the *Southern Cross*). This news will be received by his many friends in Adelaide with deep regret. Captain Wright had been at the front since early in the war. He was adjutant of the Royal Irish Rifles, and was promoted to the rank of captain at the front in January.

At his request, Sir Timothy Coghlan will retire from the position of Agent-General for New South Wales at the end of the present month. Arrangements have been made for the Agent-General for Victoria (Mr McBride) to act in a like capacity for New South Wales until a permanent successor to Sir Timothy Coghlan has been appointed. Sir Timothy will retire on a pension of about £600 per annum. It is understood that he will remain in London and engage in commercial pursuits.

Among the bequests for charitable institutions included in the will of the late Mr. T. R. Scarfe are the following to Catholic institutions, free of duty (says the Adelaide *Southern Cross*):—St. Vincent de Paul's Orphanage, Goodwood, £400; Catholic Female Refuge, Fullarton, £400; St. Joseph's Orphanage, Largs Bay, £400; Father Healy's Boys' Shelter, £400; St. Ignatius' Branch of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, Queen street, Norwood, £400. The following other institutions likewise benefit:—Orphans' Home, Adelaide, Incorporated, Mitcham, £400; Children's Home, Incorporated, Walkerville, £400; Convalescent Hospital (St. Margaret), Semaphore, £400; Home for Incurables, Fullarton, £400; South Australian Institute for the Blind, Deaf, and Dumb, Brighton, Incorporated, £500; Minda Home, Incorporated, £500.

His Grace the Archbishop of Sydney has received the following acknowledgment from Bishop De Wachter of the £500 cabled some time ago for Cardinal Mercier's Fund:—Allow me to express my heartiest thanks to your Grace for the £500 draft in favor of Cardinal Mercier's fund for the relief of the poor nuns and orphans. His Eminence will be most happy to accept this proof of brotherly sympathy with him and with his country. We ask Almighty God's blessing upon our benefactors who so generously stand by us in our distress. Many of our poor nuns especially saw their convents and schools utterly destroyed, and it will be a difficult task to rebuild and restore them. But we trust the numerous friends of Belgium will come to our assistance. Australia has shown herself so exceedingly charitable that we rely on her to do what her highly appreciated and much valued sympathy will induce her to do. We will keep as a monument for future ages the generous assistance and sympathetic addresses of the Irish and American and Australian as well as the English Archbishops and Bishops, priests, and faithful.'

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