

SCIENCE SIFTINGS

By "VOLT."

Tallest Building.

The recently completed Woolworth building in New York can claim the distinction of being the tallest, heaviest, and most costly single office building in the world. It towers 785 feet above the pavement, and boasts of some 57 stories. It took two and a-half years to erect, and cost, with its furnishings, £2,400,000. The building contains no less than 27 acres of floor space, yet it only covers a plot measuring 155 feet by 200 feet. Over 20,000 tons of steel were used in its erection, as well as 17,000,000 common bricks. There are no fewer than 34 elevators in this single building. They are divided into "locals," which stop at every floor, and "expresses," which stop at certain stories. Under the dome is a powerful search-light, the rays of which can be seen 50 miles away, while from its upper windows one has a view right out to sea.

A Priest's Wireless.

Rev. Joseph Murgas, Rector of the Sacred Heart of Jesus Slovak Church, Wilkes-Barre, U.S.A., the inventor of a system of wireless telegraphy, which he has covered and protected by twelve patents, is now at work experimenting with a tower twenty-two feet in height, from which he expects to get greater results than is now secured at the Government station at Arlington, near Washington, which is five hundred feet in height. In this connection it may be stated that Father Murgas is not actuated by any selfish motive. After being patented, his ideas become the property of Philadelphia capitalists, and from the sale of these patents Father Murgas erected a church for his congregation at a cost of 60,000 dollars. This simple Slovak priest is also a sincere patriot, for he has publicly declared that should the United States require his wireless station or the benefit of his knowledge they are at the Government's service.

Jesuit Meteorologists.

Rev. Walter Drum, S.J., of Woodstock College, Maryland, has been giving the true facts regarding meteorological hurricane warnings, in reply to a recent report of the Chief of the United States Weather Bureau, which stated that the people were hitherto unaccustomed to such monitions. Father Drum proves that this report was most unfair to the Jesuit Observatory of Belen, Havana; for Father Vines, of its staff, was the first to discover the laws by which cyclones move, the very first to locate a cyclone before its approach. He taught the world how to track the dreadful trajectory of the storm, and to be forewarned against its approach. From 1870 to 1875 this painstaking meteorologist took his observations on the declinometer, bifilar, thermometer, and barometer, and noted the various meteorological elements of the atmosphere and the clouds. And, at last, after six years of hard work, he gave to the world its first scientific knowledge about hurricanes. From 1875 till 1893 Father Vines warned the people of Cuba in time to save hundreds of ships and thousands of lives that might otherwise have been lost in the down swoop of the cyclone. The successor of Father Vines, Father Gangoiti, located the Galveston storm eight days before its destructive work of September 8, 1900, tracked its trajectory, located the cyclone day after day. If the United States Weather Bureau had given heed to Father Gangoiti's warnings, and not to the absurdities of its own observers in Havana—who reported that the

cyclone was moving N.N.E. of Cuba, and would spend itself in the Atlantic,—the people of Galveston might have escaped their loss of life and all.

"FREEMAN" LIBELS ON A BISHOP

SCATHING EXPOSURE BY MOST REV. DR. O'DWYER.

The following letter from the Most Rev. Dr. O'Dwyer appeared in the *Cork Examiner* recently.

"Sir,—It is hardly worth one's while to contradict anything that may be published in the *Freeman's Journal*. That newspaper has established its own reputation so thoroughly that there is, *prima facie*, a strong presumption that any statement which it makes about a political opponent is a falsehood. In its issue of the 25th inst. it states roundly that I met Mr. Balfour at Lord Emly's residence at Tervoe, and there discussed Irish politics with him, and then goes on to enumerate a number of crimes committed by Mr. Balfour and his Government, suggesting that in some way or other I was responsible for them.

"Betrayal of Ireland.

"1. No need to inform the people of Limerick that that statement is a falsehood, and I believe that it is a lie. I never met Mr. Balfour in all my life, either at Tervoe or anywhere else. But that makes no difference to the *Freeman's Journal*. It thinks it necessary in support of its own and the Irish Party's betrayal of Ireland to defame one who expresses his contempt and loathing for them, and does not stick at inventing a falsehood for this honorable purpose.

"Throwing Dirt.

"2. This reputable journal says that I began my career as a 'Whig curate.' That is another falsehood, and, as I believe, a deliberate lie.

"I began my career in 1870, as a supporter of Isaac Butt, and as an illustration of the recklessness of the *Freeman's* libeller, I may mention that I was the only priest in the diocese of Limerick to stand on the hustings when the standard of Home Rule was raised by Isaac Butt, and, furthermore, that I was honored by the friendship of that great man up to his death.

"But all that makes no difference to the *Freeman*. It thinks that by throwing dirt it can injure a man's character and destroy his influence. But it is mistaken. A lie, with a start of twenty-four hours, has an advantage, but, like the swindlers of the world, it is generally run to ground.

"Drivelling Bottle-Holder.

"3. It makes it an accusation against me that I opposed the Plan of Campaign and boycotting. So I did. But I was in good company. Leo XIII., by a formal decision of the Holy Office, confirmed my judgment on these methods, and although the *Freeman's Journal's* master, Mr. John Dillon, was not ashamed to denounce that great and illustrious Pontiff to the English House of Commons as a corrupt and dishonest Pope (God forgive me for writing it!). I think history will know how to judge between one of the greatest of the successors of the Fisherman and this poor drivelling bottle-holder of the English Liberals."

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