

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

Useful Sawdust.

The sawdust of fine hardwoods brings good prices. There are about twelve varieties of it, and each has its appropriate use. Boxwood sawdust, the most expensive of all, is used by manufacturers to burnish silver-plate and jewellery. Sandalwood is used for scent bags and for the preservation of furs.

The World's Cables.

There are at the present time about 225,000 miles of electric cables lying on the bottom of the sea. About 6,000,000 messages are transmitted by cable every year. The working speed averages up to 100 words per minute. The average useful life of a submarine cable, under present conditions, may be anywhere from thirty to forty years.

Concerning Lightning.

The Etruscans of old believed that there were three kinds of lightning—one incapable of doing any injury; another more mischievous in its character, and consequently only to be issued with the consent of a quorum of twelve gods, and a third carrying mischief in its train, and for which a regular decree was required from the highest divinities in the Etruscan skies. Curiously enough, modern scientific men agree with the view that there are three kinds of lightning, but their varieties differ from the Etruscans. The first is known as forked lightning, and runs in zigzag lines; the second as sheet lightning, because it is seen in a body; and the third as globe lightning, as it sometimes runs in the shape of a ball. The latter variety is rather slow in moving.

Money in Seaweed.

On the south-west coast of Norway a profitable industry is found in the burning of seaweed. The weed grows in veritable forests—not merely of small plants, but trees 5ft or 6ft in height. The crop is harvested every year, and then stacked in bundles for burning, so that during the season thousands of bonfires burn like beacons along the coast. The ashes are then collected and shipped abroad (mainly to Great Britain), where their valuable chemical properties—amongst which iodine is the most important—are utilised in manufactures. So profitable is the industry that the agricultural population have been made prosperous by it, and are able to improve their farms and practise scientific cultivation, so that the seaweed crop provided by Neptune has been of double benefit to them.

The Czar's Remarkable Watch.

There is in the possession of the Czar a remarkable watch which had a curious origin. It was made by a Polish mechanic named Jules Curzon. The late Czar had heard some wonderful tales about the inventive ability of this man. Wishing to test his skill, he sent him a parcel containing a few copper nails, some wood chippings, a piece of broken glass, an old cracked china cup, some wire, and a few cribbage-board pegs. Accompanying this was a command to make them into a timepiece. Within a remarkably short time the Czar received them back in the shape of a watch. The case was made of china, and the works of the other odds and ends. Several distinctions and a pension formed the reward of the ingenious mechanic.

Modern War.

In Homeric days (says the "Scientific American") a battle was a conflict of armed mobs. The nearer you got to your assailant, the better was your chance of killing or being killed. The bigger the man the better were his chances in the strife. In these piping times of mechanical warfare the situation is reversed. Battles are fought at ranges of a mile or so. The smaller a man the less are his chances of being hit. An ingenious mathematician has figured out that perhaps the casualties on the Japanese side must have been considerably less than those of the Russian in the recent war, if it be assumed that the marksmanship of each was equally good. The advantage of the Japanese was inversely as the cubes of their height and breadth. The average targets offered by each to the enemy are as the cubes of 1585 and 1642, or as 106 to 118, an advantage in favor of the Japanese of about 12 per cent.

For Colds in the Head and Influenza, WOODS' GREAT PEPPERMINT CURE, 1/6 and 2/6 per Bottle.

Intercolonial

Mother Mary Raymond Lundberry, Prioress of St. Dominic's Priory, North Adelaide, celebrated her golden jubilee on August 28.

The Rev. Father D. F. O'Callaghan, Rector of Heideberg (Vic.), is leaving on a holiday of some months' duration. He has been associated with the district for close on a quarter of a century.

Rev. Father Mulreevy has been transferred from Tatura to Numurkah, Father Lawless, from Shepparton, being his successor at Tatura. These parishes are in the dioceses of Sandhurst.

The Convents of Mercy at Coolgardie and Menzies (says the Adelaide "Southern Cross") took about 83 per cent. of the total musical results in the recent examinations held in W.A. in connection with the Royal Academy of Music.

Sister M. Estelle, one of the Sisters of St. Joseph, died in the convent, Zeehan recently. She was a Tasmanian, of a very highly-respected family. The deceased was beloved by all who knew her, her gentleness and piety winning her many friends.

During the illness of the late Anglican Bishop of Bendigo, Dr. A. H. Langley, his Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Reville (Bishop of Sandhurst) and his Lordship the Right Rev. Dr. Higgins (Bishop of Ballarat) made personal calls at his residence.

Brother Victor, who was formerly Director at St. Benedict's School (says the Sydney "Catholic Press"), is now Provincial of the Marist Brothers in Australia and New Zealand. He succeeds Brother Stanislaus, who has been appointed head of the novitiate, which will shortly be transferred to Mittagong.

Mr. Cecil Healy, of Sydney, the Irish-Australian swimmer, won the 100 metres championship of France at Charenton, in the record time of 68 seconds. He also put up a record in the 200 metres handicap at the same place, the time being 2min 31sec. The handicap, however, was too much for him, as he got but second place.

At a meeting of the executive of the United Irish League of Victoria, held on August 6, it was decided to remit a draft for £3000 to Mr. John Redmond. This amount constitutes the first instalment of the collections taken up in Victoria in connection with the visit of Messrs. Devlin and Donovan. When the final returns came in it is expected that another £1500 will be available.

The estate of the late Mr. John Lalor, of Yarrowonga, has been realised, and the following amounts are now available:—Sisters of Mercy, Yarrowonga, £284 7s 9d; Little Sisters of the Poor, Northcote, £568 15s 5d; St. Vincent's Hospital, Melbourne, £94 15s 11s; Sisters of St. Joseph, Surrey Hills, £568 15s 5d; Foundling Hospital, Broadmeadows, £189 11s 10d; Nuns of the Good Shepherd, Abbotsford, £189 11s 10d.

Sister Mary Clement, of St. Mary's Good Samaritan Convent, Wollongong, died suddenly on August 11. She appeared to be in her usual health in the morning, and had been preparing some of the pupils for a concert, which it was intended to give in the afternoon. While passing through the chapel she suddenly collapsed, and immediately expired, death being due to heart failure. Sister M. Clement, whose name in the world was Miss Mary C. Donovan, was a native of County Cork, Ireland, was 52 years of age, and had been professed for 25 years.

The following clerical changes in the diocese of Sandhurst are announced: Rev. Father Ryan has been appointed to the parish of Beechworth, with Rev. Father Ellis, of Chiltern, as curate. Rev. Father Rooney, who was officiating at Beechworth pending Father Ryan's appointment, has been transferred to the parish of Numurkah. Father Rooney was made the recipient of a handsome travelling rug by the members of the H.A.C.B. Society prior to his departure. Rev. Father Tobin will replace Rev. Father Ryan at Wodonga.

The Catholics of the parish of Oberon gave practical expression to their esteem and goodwill for their pastor, Rev. Father Doran, the other day, when they presented him with a beautifully illuminated address, accompanied by a substantial purse of sovereigns. The presentation took place at the residence of Mrs. M. Mahoney, who entertained the assembled company. The testimonial was intended as a surprise for Father Doran, and that purpose was attained. The committee pushed matters along during Father Doran's absence on a short vacation.