

Science Siftings

By 'Volt'

The World's Greatest Tunnel.

What 'Le Matin' describes as the greatest tunnel in the world will be built to connect Marseilles with the Rhone. It will be a canal as well as a tunnel, and will have to pass under hills which will necessitate a tunnel four and three-eighths miles long. As the width will be over twenty-four yards and the height fifteen and a half yards, it means the removal of 2,136,000 cubic metres of material, as compared with 1,058,000 for the Simplon tunnel. The total cost of the canal and tunnel will be over £3,000,000, of which the expense for the tunnel will be £1,700,000.

Paper from Corn Stalks.

The problem of providing for the enormous consumption of paper caused by the immense number of newspapers and books published in our time, which cannot possibly be supplied much longer with the material manufactured from wood pulp, has practically been solved, it is declared, by a German engineer named Drewsen. He has invented a process through which all kinds of paper can be made out of corn stalks. The new process provides for the removal of the outside covering and the making of the marrow into a pulp, with which paper of the finest quality can be manufactured at a cost much lower than the wood pulp process at present in use. Owing to the large quantity of corn raised in every country, it is predicted that the new process will provide the world with all the paper it needs if the supply of wood should become exhausted.

Largest Building Stone.

The walls of the Acropolis at Baalbek are truly called Cyclopean. The famous Trilithon, the largest stones ever used in building, measure respectively 65, 64, and 63 feet in length, each block weighing about 750 tons. How these huge masses were accurately placed in position twenty feet above the ground is a problem which modern science, with all its appliances, leaves yet unsolved. Above them are Arab fortifications. The quarries whence these gigantic materials were obtained are among the most interesting features of Baalbek. Here may still be seen the method of work of the ancient quarrymen, stones vertically hewn lying almost ready to the hand of the builder. One of these stones, to which the Arabs give the name Hajar-el-Houbla, measures 69 feet in length and weighs 915 tons. It has been calculated that it would take the united efforts of 40,000 men to put this huge block in motion. This quarry is now used as a necropolis by the inhabitants of Baalbek.

Mirrors in the Middle Ages.

In the middle ages, when steel and silver mirrors were almost exclusively used, a method of backing glass for the same purpose with thin sheets of metal was known. Small convex mirrors of glass were made in Germany before the sixteenth century, and were in demand until comparatively modern times. They were produced by blowing small glass globes, into which while they were hot was passed through a pipe a mixture of tin, antimony, and resin. When the globe was coated inside it was allowed to cool and was afterwards cut into convex lenses, which formed small but well-defined images.

About Birds.

Birds belong to the vertebrates or backboneed animals. They are distinguished from the rest of the vertebrates by the graceful outlines of their bodies, by their clothing of feathers, toothless jaws, and the forelimbs or wings being adapted to flying. Nature has made many wonderful provisions in the bird, especially in the formation and arrangement of the bones. These are compact and in many cases hollow, thus combining lightness with strength. The first bone of the backbone is so feebly jointed to the skull that birds can turn their heads around and look directly back.

A 'cockey' out west named McLure
Had suffered from coughing and chills,
He saved up his money like bees getting honey,
And never would spend on his ills.
At last in despair and much pain,
He opened his purse did McLure,
Some 'hawbees' went bang, but the praises he sang
Of Woods' Great Peppermint Cure.

Intercolonial

The Most Rev. Dr. Dunne, Archbishop of Brisbane, entered upon his 77th year on September 5.

The parish priest of Burrowa, the Rev. Father J. J. Fogarty, has successfully undergone an operation at Dr. O'Hara's private hospital, Melbourne.

A preliminary meeting was held recently in Melbourne for the purpose of starting a fund for the assistance of Mrs. Kevin O'Doherty ('Eva' of the 'Nabourne for the purpose of starting a fund for the assistance'), 'who is in very poor circumstances.

At the annual meeting of the Melbourne Catholic Club it was reported that the membership totalled 267. The receipts for the year were £211 5s, and the expenditure £163 odd.

The Institute of the Blessed Virgin, Mary's Mount, Ballarat, suffered a severe loss recently in the death of Mother Mary Berchmans. The deceased nun, although only 54 at the time of her death, was one of the first batch of Sisters who came out with Mother Gonzaga to found the Institute in Australia.

The dedication, opening, and blessing of the new church at Donald (Ballarat) took place on September 6, the ceremony being performed by the Right Rev. Dr. Higgins. The new church is built of brick, and has seating accommodation for over 300 persons. The total cost was about £2720.

I am still of the same passionate conviction (said Mr. Justice Higgins at the Melbourne Celtic Club social the other day), that the country from which you have sprung, and I have sprung, is to be put right by giving to the people some share of the self-government which we in Australia enjoy to-day.

On the occasion of a recent visit to Bathurst his Eminence Cardinal Moran blessed the newly erected additions to St. Joseph's Convent, Perth. The Order was established in the diocese 36 years ago from South Adelaide, and since then foundations have been sent out from Perth to Wilcannia, Wanganui, Goulburn, Maitland, and other places.

In Victoria (says the 'Catholic Press') wealthy Catholics seem to realise their responsibilities much more thoroughly than the wealthy Catholics of New South Wales. The late Mrs. Jane Elizabeth Kinsella, of Hawthorn, who died on August 16, is another example. Out of an estate of £25,370 she left bequests amounting to £2000 to Catholic institutions.

In accordance with the announcement made by him on the occasion of the recent celebration of his silver jubilee, his Grace the Archbishop of Melbourne is organising a strong school committee, consisting of clerical and lay members of his flock representing the four dioceses within the State of Victoria. The principal object of the committee will be to safeguard the interests of Catholic primary schools, and to provide the necessary means whereby a succession of trained teachers will be provided for Catholic schools. This is a revival of a committee which was called into existence over thirty years ago, when Catholics had to provide combined religious and secular education for their scholars, consequent on the introduction of the secular State school system.

The Right Rev. Dr. Reville, Bishop of Sandhurst, has completely recovered from a severe illness which confined him to his palace for over two months. On Sunday, September 6, his Lordship was able to celebrate Mass for the first time for many weeks. That day 40 years ago (1867), on the Feast of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin, Dr. Reville was ordained to the priesthood at St. Peter's College, in his native town of Wexford, Ireland. His Lordship was consecrated Coadjutor-Bishop of Sandhurst, cum jure successione, in St. Killan's Pro-Cathedral, on Palm Sunday, 1885; and on October 21, 1901, the Right Rev. prelate succeeded the late Most Rev. Dr. Crane, O.S.A., as Bishop of Sandhurst.

His Eminence Cardinal Moran was not able to preside at the celebrations of the golden jubilee of Mother Stanislaus, of the Convent of Mercy, Bathurst, on September 6, owing to illness (says the 'Catholic Press'). He wrote to Mother Gonzaga, Rectress of St. Vincent's Hospital, formerly a pupil of the jubilarian in Ireland, who went to the City of the Plains to assist at the ceremonies, asking her to present to Mother Stanislaus a Pontifical Medal, which bears the best likeness of his Holiness, and on the reverse represents the consecration of the French Bishops. He also requested Mother Gonzaga to be the interpreter of his good wishes to the jubilarian and the whole community.

DEAR ME!

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