

# POPULAR SCIENCE

According to a French scientific paper there were only 50,000 deaths from consumption in England during the year 1900, whereas in France, where the climate is much drier, there were 150,000 deaths from the same disease in the same year.

A vocal teacher says that it is her observation and experience that chocolate confections, partaken of too freely, roughen the voice. It is known that nuts have this tendency, and the clubwoman who must speak at a breakfast or luncheon invariably declines the salted almonds in order to preserve a clear voice.

Excavations made by explorers in and about Chama, Guatemala, have resulted in the discovery of coins and jewels valued at more than \$50,000. Idols, crowns and tablets of fine gold decorated by the Aztecs centuries ago have been found by workmen on the Chama plantations, and hundreds of natives, it is said, have abandoned their usual employment to join the searching parties.

A site for the new building for the accommodation of the Bureau of Standardization has been agreed upon. It is a tract of land of eight acres, and is located on what is known as Pierce's Mill Road, about twenty minutes' ride from the centre of the city of Washington, D. C., in a northwesterly direction. It is said to be admirably adapted for the purpose for which it is to be used. The plans for the buildings are now being prepared, and the work of construction will soon be well under way.

There are two larval eels in the National Museum that are not only transparent, but are irregularly marked on the two sides of the body. In all ordinary animals and fishes the color-markings are symmetrical on the two sides, but this is not so with the eels referred to. Each of them, when looked at from one side, seems to have seven black spots arranged at nearly regular intervals along the length of the body, but when closely examined they are found to have three spots on the left side and four on the right, and irregularly spaced, but in such a manner that when looked at through the body all seven spots appear in a symmetrical row.

Admiral Melville, of the United States Navy, has designed some specially strong casks, which will shortly be sent to the Bering Sea by the Revenue Marine Service, and placed in the highest parts of the ice packs there. It is expected that by tracing their future course it may be possible to determine the direction of the currents that cross the polar regions. It is not definitely known now whether the ice packs drift from the Arctic westward or south and east to the Atlantic. There are fifty of the casks, which are twenty-eight inches in length and sixteen inches in diameter, with pointed ends. They are painted black, so as to be easily seen. Inside of each cask are directions printed in several different languages, asking the finder to write to the nearest United States Consul, giving the latitude and longitude in which the cask was found, and the date.

Generally the bee stays at home when rain is in the air. When the sky is simply dark and cloudy, these busy workers do not leave their dwellings all at once. A few go out first, as though the queen had sent out messengers to study the state of the atmosphere. The greater number remain on observation until the clouds begin to dissipate, and it is only then that the battalions entire rush out in search of their nectar. A bee never goes out in a fog, because it is well aware that dampness and cold are two fearsome, redoubtable enemies. We do not mean, however, that the bee is a meteorologist in the absolute sense of the word. Its cleverness consists in its never being taken unawares, for it possesses untiring vigilance. Often one may observe the sudden entrance of bees into the hive when a dense cloud hides the sun, and even though the rain is not in evidence.

**Italy's New Stamps.**  
The postage stamps of twenty cents, twenty-five cents, and forty cents for the new issue of Victor Emmanuel II., of which 6,000,000 have been already printed, bear the king's head. The printing of the stamps of smaller value is proceeding rapidly. These will bear an eagle of varying size instead of the king's head. The designs were made by Signor Colletti, a Venetian artist. The engraving is in steel by Alberto Repetetti, who has also been chosen to cut the new dies for the coupons of the public debt. They will differ only in minor particulars from the old ones, as they are still to bear the portrait of the late king.—London Pall Mall Gazette.

**A Curious Old Passage.**  
A curious old subterranean passage has just been discovered underneath the courtyard of the Gobelins factory, says the Paris Messenger. It is over twenty feet high and carefully walled with blocks of stones symmetrically cut. It has fallen in about fifty feet from the opening, but it is proposed to clear the way and seek the outlet at the other end. One authority, M. Seller, is of opinion that it runs all the way from the Boulevard St. Marcel to the convent of the Cordeliers St. Marcel, where now stands the Hospital of Louche. It is said to date back to the sixteenth century.

## CHINESE LAUNDRYMEN

Steam Work at Lower Prices is Driving Them Out.  
"Steam and the Chinamen seem to be eternally at variance," said a Chicago laundryman, "and steam is winning. Not only is it gradually encroaching on the Chinaman's home country, but here in Chicago it is driving him out of his favorite occupation. Steam laundries are everywhere taking the white man's washing out of the hands of the celestials and are rapidly forcing them out of the washing business."  
A reference to the business directory of Chicago for a score of years past verified the statement. In 1889 there were but 275 laundries in Chicago, and of these but sixty-six were run by Chinamen. John caught the popular fancy right then, however, and, as he was beginning to come into Chicago in large numbers he began to drive out of business the hard workers of Caucasian blood. In a decade, while the number of laundries were a little more than doubling, the Chinese washermen increased fourfold, so that in 1899 there were 633 laundries in the city, of which 263 were conducted by Asiatics. In 1902 there were 278 of the latter, and in the world's fair year and the year immediately following they increased rapidly to 333.

That was the limit, however. Steam machinery displayed at the world's fair made a great impression on Chicagoans, and there were many new enterprises started as a direct result of the influence of some exhibit on the spectators. In no branch was this more marked than in the laundry machinery, and after the fair steam laundries began to be started. Popular prejudice was against them for a time. The steam machines were said to tear the garments, to do rough work, to wear things out faster, and to rub the buttons off. They were even said to be used with chemicals which injured the fiber, and the public was slow to patronize them. When the various laundries began to fight for trade, however, and cut the price of washing a white shirt down to four cents, and to deliver the next day after collection, the people came to their doors in flocks and more new laundries were started. As a result, John Chinaman's trade fell off. One by one the Celestials took in the red signs that had kept the devils away from their front doors, and either moved into Chinatown or went back to the flowery kingdom to spend their old age in affluence worshipping at the tombs of their forefathers.

So rapidly have their numbers fallen off that in the new directory, while there are shown 459 laundries conducted by white people, most of which are steam, of a total of 707 but 249 are conducted by Chinese, a number smaller in itself and in proportion than that of ten years ago and greatly less than that of half a decade ago.

It is figured by laundrymen that if the Chinese recede as fast as they gained they will in another ten years have practically disappeared, and the white laundry will again be doing all the washing. The shop of the mysterious yellow man will be only a tradition. And a strange tradition it will be for even now, when everybody goes past a Chinese laundry some time during the day, there is much that is unknown and little that is known about them. When does John Chinaman sleep? That is a question many ask and few can answer. Go by his door at any time of day or night and you will see him busy over tub or washing board, or seated on the front steps gazing at the same stars he used to gaze at in his home 10,000 miles away.

What do the marks on a Chinese laundry ticket mean? It is doubtful if John himself can answer that. Tradition asserts that the only requisite for the checks is that they be red, and that the hieroglyphics on each half be alike. Meaning is unnecessary. But it may be that John has a way of describing in his own language the peculiarities of each of his customers in this way, and knows when a man presents a check just what sort of a man he is and whether there is already a grudge against him outstanding.

And are all of the workers in the Chinese laundries Johns, or are some of them Mrs. Johns? And this will never be answered unless some law be devised to require that John wear a label which will enable the Caucasian to distinguish between the two when they are clad in the same style of suits of loose blue stuff.  
With all the questions, however, John is doomed. Already the bulk of the business is handled by the big steam machines, and soon they will have it all. And then Chicago may have a run of Chinese cooks, or may take to patronizing Chinese restaurants—or may lose her Chinese population altogether.—Chicago Tribune.

**Fatality Among Presidents.**  
The Republican Party, in its Presidents elected by the people, may be called a party of martyrs. There is no other political party in the history of the constitutional government that has paid so heavy a cost in the murder of its chosen leaders. Every President elevated by the Republicans, or who formerly succeeded to office by death, has passed away. Of the Vice-Presidents elected, only Morton and Roosevelt survive. Yet the Republican Party is less than fifty years old. The extent to which its Presidents have suffered from assassination is startling, whatever the analysis of the causes may be.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

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