

Between the years 1783 and 1857 six great earthquakes took place in Naples, which lost thereby 1,500 inhabitants per year of that period.

Philadelphia and New York are connected by more telegraph wires than any other two cities in the world, the number being 110.

The false pearls manufactured so largely in Paris are lined with fish scales and wax. The scales of the roach and dace are chiefly employed. They have to be stripped from the flesh while the fish is alive, or the glistening hue so much admired in the real pearl could not be imitated.

The surface of our bodies is covered with scales like a fish; a single grain of sand would cover 150 of these scales, and yet a scale covers 500 pores. Through these narrow openings the perspiration forces itself like water through a sieve.

In education, as in most other respects, British Burmah appears to be the most progressive province of India. With a population of under 4,000,000, it had during 1880-1 forty-eight Government schools, 3,219 aided and private schools, with an aggregate of 88,807 scholars. The year, compared with the previous one, shows an increase of 8,261 scholars.

Judge Fornander, for 34 years a resident of one of the Hawaiian Islands, believes that the natives are not of American descent, as originally supposed, nor Malay or Mongolian, as most authorities have agreed, but Aryan; and he sustains this view by arguments derived from philology, traditions, and physical resemblances.

Richard Wagner is living with his family in retirement at Palermo. According to a correspondent of the *Cologne Gazette*, he intends after he has finished the "Parsifal" to take up his quarters in Greece, for the purpose of making studies on the spot for a new opera drawn from the Greek mythology.

The new Consuls of the Republic of San Marino were duly installed on Jan. 1. In their inaugural they said they were proud to belong to "our model republic." Said model republic has only one foreign ambassador (at Paris), one bank, one railway, and one thousand dollars of debt. A wealthy admirer in Marseilles recently made the republic a present of \$5,000.

Shells of a peculiar kind, in which the convolutions are from left to right, are regarded by the Hindoos as talismans, ensuring their possessor perpetual prosperity. One of these shells was recently sold in Calcutta for seven pounds, the owner having mortgaged it and subsequently got into difficulties, owing to having parted with his fetish, according to Hindoo belief. Larger shells, with the same virtues, have been sold for over eight hundred pounds.

A well-known antiquary has discovered in an Athenian monastery a papyrus, which is nothing less than a MS. of the *Iliad* written about the year 308 B.C. The writer of this treasure was an Athenian named Theophrastus, Andronikus, the nephew of the last Byzantine Emperor,

Constantine Palæologus, took it with him to Mount Athos, when he went there to end his days.

M. Macagno, in *Les Mondes*, states that he has been making experiments on the influence of electricity upon the growth of the vine. An electric circuit was formed by copper wire between the extremity of a branch bearing fruit and its origin near the soil. More wood was formed in the branch, which contained less potash than the other parts, and the grapes ripened more readily, containing an excess of sugar.—*Montreal Star*.

An Italian has invented a process for solidifying wine. From a small quantity of this extract may be obtained a bottle of generous wine of good taste and beautiful color. The object is to victual ships and supply armies. A chemist in Marseilles has found a chemical combination by which he can solidify and even crystalize brandy. The brandy in its new form looks like alum. It entirely loses its smell. The facility with which it can be transported is of course the main recommendation of the new invention.

The many unlikely methods by which the seeds of plants are diffused over land and sea until they at length find a congenial spot for development, form an interesting and curious study. It is well known that bees carry pollen from flower to flower, and thus act not only as sowers of seed but also as fertilizers of the female plants. A curious instance of this kind has been given by a scientific man, who states that attached to the skin of a panther recently shot in India he found numerous seeds, each of which had two perfect hooks, appearing as if designed to attach themselves to foreign bodies. As the panther moved about it collected the seeds on the skin and carried them wherever it went, but when it rubbed against the shrubs the seeds were brushed off, and thus distributed.

Dr. Richardson has in a late lecture described the principles which should guide architects and others in designing and constructing hospitals for the reception and treatment of persons suffering from small-pox and other infectious diseases. He states, on well considered grounds: 1. That each hospital should not be larger than is sufficient to accommodate twenty-four persons at one time. 2. That every hospital should be constructed on the separate system for the patients. 3. That the material of construction should be iron, in order that the hospital may at any time be absolutely purified by fire throughout with the least possible cost. 4. To secure direct ventilation and lighting from the roof, the hospitals proper should occupy the top stories of buildings. 5. All the air which passes out of the wards should have an escape only through a vent so heated as to destroy all deleterious substances. 6. Each patient should be carried into the hospital by a valved elevator passing through a shaft so as to draw up air during its ascent, and to be capable of flushing the hospital with air, as occasion may require.