

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

A book-worm of the paper-eating sort is a creature seldom seen, despite its extensive and most destructive borings among book treasures. It is described as a white wax-like grub, exactly resembling the little white maggots of cheese. Three specimens were lately found in the act of tunneling through a bundle of paper in a London establishment.

The value of services rendered by skilled workmen should not be calculated by the time it takes to perform the task. Allowance should be made for the weeks and months spent by thorough workmen in learning how to do their work well. This knowledge has its money value.

While Judge Tracy was on the circuit, going from court, his trace broke. The judge spent over a half hour trying to mend it, but to no purpose. His patience was exhausted, and he expressed his vexation in words. A negro came along, and the judge told him of his trouble. The negro let out the trace, cut a hole in it, and the job was done.

"Why," said the judge, "could I not have thought of that?"

"Well, marster," said the negro, "don't you know some folks is jest naturally smarter than t'others!"

"That's so," said the judge. "What shall I pay you for fixing my trace?"

"Well, marster, fifty cents will do, said the negro.

"Fifty cents?" said the judge. "You were not five minutes at it."

"I do not charge you fifty cents for doing it," said the negro. "I charge you twenty-five cents for doing it and twenty-five cents for knowing how to do it.—*Savannah News.*

A New York scientist says that the earth's polar ice is penetrating the interior of the globe, like a wedge, and that as soon as it reaches the furnace there will be an explosion that will split the world into pieces too small for truck patches.

Mr. Ivan Levinstein, the President of the Manchester Section of the Society of Chemical Industry, calls attention to a new substance which is extracted from coal tar, and possesses sweetening properties far stronger than the best cane or beet root sugar. This substance, he said, seemed likely to enter into daily consumption. According to Mr. Levinstein, one part of it will give a very sweet taste to 10,000 parts of water, for it is 230 times sweeter than the best sugar, and taken in the quantities added to food as sweetening material, has no injurious effects whatever on the human system. Patients suffering from diabetes have been treated for the last few months in one of the principal hospitals in Berlin with saccharin, without feeling in the least inconvenienced by its use. The use of saccharine would, therefore, Mr. Levinstein said, be not merely a probable substitute for sugar, but it might even be applied to medicinal purposes where sugar was not permissible.

Dr. Wolf, a German explorer in the service of the Congo State, has made an important geographical discovery in demonstrating the navigability of the Sankuru, a river hitherto scarcely known, which opens a direct route into the Katanga country, famous for its copper mines, and the Mahgema land, whose fertility and mineral wealth Livingstone has praised. Dr. Wolf proceeded on board the Congo steamer *En Arant* up the Sankuru and its affluent, the Lomami, a distance of 430 miles, into the interior of Central Africa. The total length of the navigable rivers in the Congo region is about 5,000 miles.

You have seen "contortionists" who shut themselves up like a single bladed pocket knife in order to worry their doubled up bodies through a ring. Well, the Japanese carpenter also requires an exceedingly flexible hinge to his back to reach the attitude necessary in using the saw. All other work he performs sitting down, but to saw he must hold the wood in place with his left foot, then bend over until his face almost touches the floor, then he saws away with a saw that resembles a meat chopper with nicks in it. In planing he draws the plane towards him instead of pushing it as we do. In fact the "Jap" seems to take the contrary way in doing many things.

A. W. Allen, of New Bedford, Mass., manufactures paper which is used for carpet lining, sheathing, etc., from the barks of the cone-bearing trees, preferring the white cedar because the bark of that class of trees is fibrous all the way through; but the very best, Mr. Allen says, in point of strength and felting properties, is the inner bark of the pine, which has vast capabilities in the way of an extra fine and strong note paper. Next to that is the inner bark of the spruce. Both of these are strongly impregnated with resin, and from their strength would make an excellent paper with resin retained or partially so. Then, he says, comes the cedar, in his estimation about third class, while below that are the Virginia cypress and the California red wood.

Some people may envy Bishop Taylor's African experiences, as he writes that he has seen no mosquitoes in Liberia and only two flies.

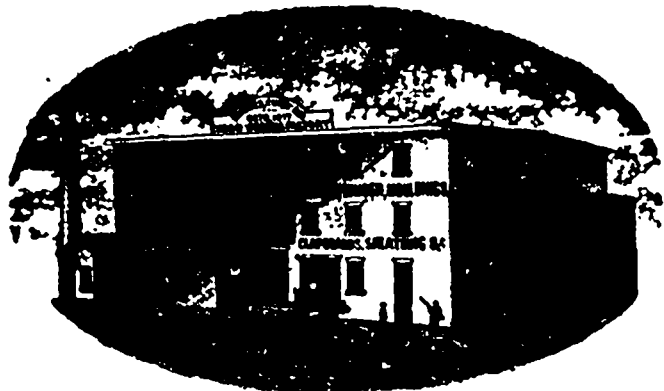
Dr. Murray Mitchell, of England, recently expressed the thought that by the end of this century no foreign missionaries would be needed to carry on the work in Japan.

The new Mayor of Shanghai is a native Christian. This is, indeed, a significant promise of his coming. A very few years ago and Chinese prejudices would not have permitted such an honor to be conferred on a Christian.

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