

**NEW AND CURIOUS.**

A writer in "Knowledge" describes the great belt of clouds, some three hundred miles in breadth, which surrounds the earth a little north of the equator. Within this belt rain incessantly falls, sometimes in sheets, and the wind seldom stirs. Before the invention of steamships, vessels becalmed in the cloud-belt sometimes drifted helpless for weeks. Even now the crossing of this belt, where everything is surcharged with moisture, is a disagreeable experience for voyagers. The belt can be traced across equatorial Africa and the American isthmus, and the great rivers, Amazon, Orinoco, Niger, Nile and Congo, arise in these rain-soaked regions, which are like exhaustless reservoirs. The cause of the equatorial cloud-belt is connected with the trade winds, and in the course of a year it oscillates north and south over a distance equal to about three times its own breadth.

The cochineal insects furnish the most gorgeous carmine, crimson, scarlet and carmine lakes; the cuttle fish gives sepia, which is the inky fluid which the fish discharges when attacked. Indian yellow comes from the camel; ivory chips produce the ivory black and bone black; the exquisite Prussian blue comes from fusing horses' hoofs and other animal matter with impure potassium carbonate; various lakes are derived from roots, barks and gums; blue-black comes from the charcoal of the vine stock. Turkey red is made from the madder plant, which grows in Hindostan; the yellow sap of a Siam tree produces gamboge, while raw sienna is the natural earth from the neighborhood of Sienna, Italy, and raw umber is an earth from near Umbria. India ink is made from the burnt camphor; mastic is made from the gum of the mastic tree, which grows in the Grecian Archipelago. Bistre is the soot of wood ashes; very little ultramarine as obtained from the precious lapis lazuli, is found in the market; it is made artificially. Chinese white is zinc, scarlet iodide of mercury and vermilion is from quicksilver ore.

Says Prof. Jordan in the Popular Science Monthly: The influence of all drugs which affect the nervous system must be in the direction of disintegration. The healthy mind stands in clear and normal relations with nature. It feels pain as pain. It feels action as pleasure. The drug which conceals pain or gives false pleasure when pleasure does not exist, forces a lie upon the nervous system. The drug which disposes to reverie rather than to work, which makes us feel well when we are not well, destroys the sanity of life. All stimulants, nar-

cotics, tonics which affect the nervous system in whatever way, reduce the truthfulness of sensation, thought and action. Toward insanity all such influences lead; and their effect, slight though it be, is of the same nature as mania. The man who would see clearly, think truthfully and act effectively must avoid them all. Emergency aside, he cannot safely force upon his nervous system even the smallest falsehood. And here lies the one great unanswerable argument for total abstinence; not abstinence from alcohol alone, but from all nerve poisons and emotional excesses.

Since it is believed that the rays of the sun do not penetrate beyond a depth of two hundred fathoms, it follows that fishes living below that depth must possess special organs in order to pursue and capture their prey. Thus we find many deep-sea fishes with luminous glands or plates situated on the head, tail and gill-covers. One species has a brilliant headlight extending along the side of the upper jaw, and nearly to the eye. Another species of the same genus has a lantern on its tail; and in some forms there exists two veritable sidelights located on the gill-covers. These fishes have been taken from depths ranging from thirty-three hundred to nearly ten thousand feet, and both species have been found off the coasts of the United States. Other species have their bodies covered with phosphorescent spots, by which the water below them is illuminated. Others have eyes on the top of the head, and are called star-gazers. In many fishes that live only at a depth of about five hundred feet, the eye is larger than in those living near the surface. The eye appears to increase in size in proportion to the depth of the fish's habitat.

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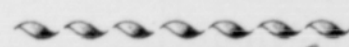
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