

the classes of substances used stand as follows: (1) bitters; (2) acids; (3) saline substances; (4) sweets; (5) alkalies.

3. The sense of taste is as a rule more delicate in women than in men (in the case of all substances tried excepting salt). The number of persons experimented upon was hardly sufficient, considering the very striking individual peculiarities met with in the course of our investigation, to permit us to lay great stress upon the relative averages obtained for the two sexes. We are not inclined, however, to regard the higher degree of sensitiveness shown in the averages for female observers as accidental, and our confidence in the approximate value of the results is strengthened by the fact that in the two portions into which our data naturally divided themselves, about half the tests having been made at a different time and under different circumstances from the remainder, the averages for each set agreed very well, not only as to the relative sensitiveness to the various substances employed, but also to the relatively higher degree of delicacy exhibited by women.

4. The ability to detect a dilute bitter is very generally accompanied by inability to detect a dilute sweet, and *vice versa*.

5. The long-continued habitual use of a substance does not seem to influence in any marked way the delicacy of the sense of taste for that substance. Our tests with quinine afforded an excellent opportunity for the investigation of this point, as some of the persons experimented upon had made long continued use of that drug as a medicine. The results obtained were entirely of a negative character. We could discover neither increase nor decrease in the ability to taste the drug on the part of those habituated to its use.

Several other questions have been raised but not answered by our experiments. How many, for instance, of these substances, each being diluted in proportion to its effect upon the organs of taste, can be detected if mixed together? If so mixed, in what order will they be recognized, and will it always be in the same order by different persons? Again, what is the influence of the temperature of the solution upon our ability to taste its ingredients?

We deplore the fact that the above tests have not been extended to a much larger number of persons, but a careful study of the results of the limited number of experiments made leads us to believe that they do not differ widely from the probable averages of a much more extended series.

E. H. S. BAILEY,
University of Kansas, July 1887. E. L. NICHOLS.

The Salt Industry in the United States.

HAVING occasion not long since to look up the statistics of the salt industry, I naturally turned to the latest edition of the "Encyclopædia Britannica" (vol. xxi.), where the following statement met my eye:—"The deposits of salt in the United States are unimportant. The country possesses no really considerable salt industry, but is supplied so far as interior consumption is concerned to a small extent by brine springs."

As this did not at all correspond with the knowledge I had gained by a somewhat casual glance over the field, I took pains to look up the subject more thoroughly, and find the above statement so radically wrong that I venture to call your attention to it; though this I should scarcely have troubled myself to do had it appeared in any publication of less acknowledged authority. To be sure, we have no means of knowing just how great an industry must be to be classed as "really considerable," but by comparing the annual product of the United States with that of other countries we may claim, at least, an attempt at an approximation.

But first as to the character of the beds in the United States. It is true there are as yet known no beds comparable in depth and extent with those of Barcelona or Galicia, but nevertheless they are amply sufficient to supply all demands for ages. As long ago as 1869, Dr. Sterry Hunt published, in the Reports of the Geological Survey of Canada, results of borings at Goderich, Canada, in which, in a total depth of 1382 feet, six successive beds of salt were passed through, varying in thickness from 6 to 34 feet, and aggregating a total thickness of 126 feet. What area is covered by these deposits is yet to be ascertained; but they are known to extend over Central and Western New York, Northern Pennsylvania, North-Western Ohio, and Southern Ontario. At Warsaw, in New York State, one of the beds has a thickness of 80 feet. The extent of the deposit at Petite Anse, Louisiana, has also yet to be determined, but a vertical shaft 165 feet in depth lies all the way in solid salt, and does not

penetrate it. The above, although but two out of many, I mention since they have been known for years, and it would seem Mr. Lyte could have informed himself regarding them had he so attempted. Concerning the many extensive beds in the region of the Great Basin, ignorance is more excusable. Statistics showing the annual output of both rock and sea salt will best show the extent of the industry. I give below statistics for 1883, 1884, and 1885, taken from "Mineral Resources of the United States," p. 474. One barrel equals 280 lbs.

	1883. Barrels.	1884. Barrels.	1885. Barrels.
Michigan	2,894,672	3,161,806	3,297,403
New York	1,619,486	1,788,434	3,304,787
Ohio	350,000	320,000	306,847
West Virginia	320,000	310,000	223,184
Louisiana	265,215	223,964	229,271
California	214,286	178,571	221,428
Utah	107,143	114,285	107,140
Nevada	21,429	17,857	28,593
All other States and Territories	400,000	400,000	250,000
Totals	6,192,231	6,514,937	7,038,653

Complete statistics for all countries are not available, and I have to rely to a considerable extent on Encyclopædias, whose accuracy I now have reason to question. They are as follow:—

England (1881)	1,854,000 tons.
France	300,000 "
Spain	300,000 "
Portugal	250,000 "
Italy	165,000 "
Austria	400,000 "

	1881.	1882.
United States	834,548 tons.	897,732 tons.

In regard to the above figures, I confess to feeling sceptical save with reference to those of the United States and England. Nevertheless, granting that they do not give the full amounts by one-half, even then the United States stands second in the list of salt-producing countries.

What, then, constitutes a really considerable industry?

GEORGE P. MERRILL.

U. S. National Museum, Washington, D. C.,
December 3, 1887.

Force, and Newton's Third Law.

THE point mentioned by "Nemo" in your issue of March 29 (p. 511) is undoubtedly one that troubles most students at some stage or other, but there is no room for discussion about it; the matter lies in a nutshell: *a body does not exert force upon itself.* Think, for instance, of a horse and cart. The horse pulls the cart, and the cart pulls back the horse equally; how, then, can the cart move? The only puzzle lies in the false implication that the cart's pull-back is exerted upon the *cart*. Directly it is perceived that there is only one force acting on the cart, viz. the pull of the horse, no difficulty is felt as to why it moves. The "action" of A is not exerted upon A, but upon B. The "reaction" of B is not exerted upon B, but upon A. The time-rate of change of momentum of each and every body is equal to the total force acting upon it. OLIVER J. LODGE.

Grasmere, March 31.

The New Photographic Objective.

THE letter of Sir Howard Grubb in your issue of March 8 (p. 439) appears to make some further explanation desirable on my part. The invention of the new form of photographic objective seems to have been made about the same time in America and in England. An experimental lens of this kind was constructed by the Messrs. Clark, after consultation with me, in May 1887. The 13-inch lens which they subsequently made upon the same plan was completed on July 8 of that year. My absence during the summer in Colorado, with the intention of selecting a place for the new instrument upon some mountain of considerable height, caused me to overlook the account of the English invention in the *Observatory*. Since my return, the telescope has been mounted in Cambridge, on the grounds of