

The last German census, taken on December 1st, 1890, shows a great increase in population. According to the preliminary statistics, just issued, the population of Germany included on that day 49,422,928 souls. Leaving out of the enumeration the 2,086 inhabitants of Heligoland, acquired last year, the population of Germany has increased since the last census (1885) by 2,565,128, or, on the average, by 324,329, or 1.07 per cent. per annum. The growth in the previous quinquennial period (1890-85) was considerably lower, only 329,329, or 0.7 per cent. per annum. In 1875-80, on the other hand, it amounted to 501,338, or 1.14 per cent; and in 1870-75 to 417,142, or exactly 1 per cent. There were, on December 1, 1890, 150 cities and towns with more than 20,000 inhabitants, the total being 10,494,345. The increase of the population in those 150 towns was far larger than the average of the whole empire, being 2.86 per cent. per annum in 1885-90, 2.23 per cent. in 1880-85, 2.39 per cent. in 1875-80, and 3.05 per cent. in 1870-75. For the capital of the empire, Berlin, the annual average growth was even larger, being, in the quinquennial periods, 3.65, 3.17, 2.93, and 3.92 per cent. respectively.

In a paper recently read before the Australasian Association of Science, Mr. J. T. Meeson takes the ground that while there is an intimate connection of cause and effect between rainfall and forest, it is a mistake to suppose that forests increase the rainfall to any appreciable extent, but rather that the growth of forests is an effect of rainfall—citing several instances to prove his theory, which is quite as reasonable as the generally accepted one. The fact that in many South American countries, notable Chili, vast forests exist on the mountain sides, and rain is seldom known,—while not exactly an argument for Mr. Meeson's contention is damaging to the theory that the presence of forests causes rain. These matters are not much within the control of man, and although it is a commendable thing to plant trees with the idea of reforestation and a hoped for increase of the rainfall in such localities, the promoters of such schemes—according to statistics—have had in the past little to reward them for their labor, save when the soil was of a suitable nature that the trees have been a source of pleasure in themselves. Where the rainfall is copious, trees flourish as a matter of course, and it is a mistaking cause for effect to ascribe the former to the presence of the latter.

England may thank her lucky stars that the eight-hour labor demonstration in Hyde Park on May 4th was of a quiet and orderly character, wholly unlike the affairs of the same kind on the continent of Europe on May-day. This moderation will do more to bring about the desired end than the rioting in which laborers in France, Belgium and Italy have been engaged. We quite hold that all work and no play will make Jack a dull boy, but whether a compulsory and universal working day of eight hours is a desirable consummation at this time, we are not so sure. The laborers desire to work less, and still receive the same wages as in days of greater work, and so benefit the unemployed at the expense of the employers. Many businesses would not stand such a strain, but there are doubtless a large number of great concerns where the profits are enormous, and it would be but just and equitable that the working class should benefit by some such arrangement as the eight-hour day. One of the greatest benefits which we look for to flow from the acquisition of a certain amount of leisure time by laborers, is that they will use it for the improvement of their mental faculties, and unless this should tend to give them a distaste for the necessary work of earning their bread in the calling most suited to them, it would be a great benefit. The idea of the dignity of labor must be preserved, and when intelligence instead of main strength and stupidity is brought to bear on all kinds of work it is certain that it will be regarded in a higher light.

Our Society, in advocating female suffrage, might have done more for the cause had it announced as a reason for its advocacy one slightly higher than the following:—"We suppose that the majority of the readers of this paper are ladies, and therefore we think we ought to advocate the cause of the women as regards their obtaining the right to vote in Local and Dominion elections." We are glad to see another champion of woman's rights appearing, but unless the championship is on the highest grounds it is scarcely worth while. Women should be allowed to vote because they are in every way as well qualified to do so as men are; and even if they were not, on the principle of government by the people, they should be allowed to do so. We look for a great improvement in politics when women shall obtain the rights of intelligent human beings, and not be classed, as they virtually are at present, with idiots and children. We regret that Mr. Hemeon's bill suffered defeat. The experiment of giving women possessing the necessary property qualifications a vote in civic elections has proved in every way satisfactory. The number of women who avail themselves of their right has nothing to do with the right itself, although it would be interesting to know if the right is valued by a majority of women. The idea that any woman with intelligence enough to exercise her franchise would become less of a woman by doing so is preposterous. The sexes should be placed on an equality in this respect. Women are just as much subject to the laws of the land as are men, but at present they are allowed no voice whatever in framing them. This is not fair, and we trust that the time is not far distant when things will be changed for the better. No fear need be entertained that it will take women out of their sphere, and that men will be overwhelmed by their numbers. To woman, the dearest spot on earth will ever be Home, Sweet Home, and the fact that she may have a voice in saying how that home shall be protected will not be likely to lessen her love for it.

The committee of management of the Montreal general hospital, which refused Miss Abbott a ticket of admission to clinics, has relented, and granted the desired permission to that young lady. The committee, however, wishes it to be distinctly understood that no more tickets will be issued to lady students until the Governors have definitely settled the question.

The mountainous character of Switzerland would naturally seem to preclude the extensive building of railways, but such is not the case. It is surprising to be told that railroad-building is going on at a great rate, sparing no mountain and no valley. Switzerland possesses relatively more railways than the New England States. In the latter there is one kilometer of railways to every seventeen square kilometers of land; in Switzerland one to every thirteen square kilometers; in other words, the New England States are four and a half times larger than Switzerland, and have but three times more railways, although in Switzerland one half the country is occupied by the highest mountain ranges of Europe. The receipts average in the New England States about \$3,000 a year per kilometer; in Switzerland, \$5,500, which difference is mainly due to summer travel.

It has often occurred to us that some of the time which it takes to bring the mails across the ocean—Atlantic or any other ocean—might well be employed in sorting the letters and getting them ready for delivery immediately on landing at their destination. We see by London *Public Opinion* that this very experiment has recently been made under the sea postal agreement between the United States and Germany. The mail carried was sorted on board ship, so as to be ready for distribution on entering the New York Post Office. The result of this was that the mail for city delivery was in the hands of the carriers five minutes after it was received, and it was found that a not saving of six hours' work at the Post Office had been a gain of from six to twenty four hours, according to the destination of the letters. The time is probably not far distant when our present method will look to us as old-fashioned as travelling by stage coach does beside the modern railway.

A curiously sensational experiment in railway traction has been tried in Russia. With the view of throwing light on the accident which befel the Imperial train a year or two ago, the Directors of the Kursk-Kieff line fitted up a train, as nearly as possible a *fac simile* of the one to which the accident happened, and despatched it, drawn by two powerful engines, at the rate of 20 miles an hour. To avoid another catastrophe sandbags were substituted for passengers. When rounding a curve the train parted in the middle, the brake was applied to the front half, and the momentum of the hind part carried it at full speed into the rear of the half which had been brought to a stand still, telescoping and smashing into splinters eight of the carriages. The line itself was uninjured. Whether the result was in accordance with the theory formed is not stated, and no information as to the sharpness of the curve is afforded. In at least one respect there is a want of accordance between the two accidents. When the Imperial train came to grief it was the permanent way that was injured; in the experimental trip it was merely shown that the couplings were inadequate. It appears to have been expected that when the curve was reached the train would leave the line, which it did not. The experiment must have been an expensive one, and the sight attractive, but it was irrational, because no two railway accidents are ever alike. The only thing proved was that the permanent way of the Kursk-Kieff line at the curve was better than at Borki, where the accident to the Imperial train occurred. No doubt the Czar has indemnified the Kursk-Kieff Company for the experiment.

Canadians cannot complain that our literary men, and especially our poets, are not animated by a commendable *esprit de corps*. In proof of this we often find laudatory reviews of our poets' work written by a brother poet. In the *Canadian Presbyterian*, of recent date, Archibald Lampman takes for his subject "Two Canadian Poets," C. G. D. Roberts, and the late Frederick Cameron. His praise is judiciously mingled with criticisms, and is by no means fulsome or exaggerated. Mr. Lampman is himself no mean poet, and is well qualified to speak of the merits of the work of others. He devotes the greater part of the article to Cameron, giving a number of extracts from his poems. "The following lines called 'Amoris Finis,'" says Lampman, "are touched with Cameron's rare gift of expression, that largeness of utterance, that great way of saying things that is characteristic only of the master poets"—

"And now I go with the departing sun,
My day is dead, and all my work is done.
No more for me the pleasant moon shall rise
To show the splendour of my dear one's eyes.
No more the stars shall see us meet; we part
Without a hope, or hope of hope, at heart;
For love lies dead, and at his altar, lo,
Stands in his room, self crowned—woo!"

Mr. Lampman concludes as follows:—"With George Frederic Cameron and Professor Charles Roberts, Canada has, so to speak, taken a place in the poetic literature of the world, and I believe that the work of these two authors is well worthy of our attention. It is our duty also, not only as Canadians, but as lovers of all literature, to see that a man like the late Mr. Cameron is not forgotten. That a body of writing, instinct with so true a poetic energy, should have been produced by a native of our own soil, is a matter for national pride and encouragement!"

K. D. C. has proved itself
to be the Greatest Cure

of the Age.
Sample Package of the

Wonder Working K. D. C.
sent to any Address.

K. D. C. COMPANY,
New Glasgow, N. S.