

NOTES AND NEWS.

and the right to go on with its construction—a consummation which would bring many advantages to the Panamanians—was only the match to the kindling. On November 3rd, the secession of the Isthmians occurred, without bloodshed, being probably due to the fact that United States warships, with explicit directions to prevent the landing of Colombian troops in Panama, were stationed at the scene of action, near Colon. That the United States Government knew that the rebellion was coming is certain. That its connivance was of as questionable a character as Senator Hoar has affirmed, remains to be seen. At all events, the treaty concluded between the Panamanians and the American Republic is eminently satisfactory to Uncle Sam's interests. The Republic of Panama was officially recognized by the British Government on the 25th of December.

The newspapers still exploit the wonders of radium, and men of science still stand astonished before it. Monsieur and Madame Curie themselves, perhaps, little knew of the world-disturber which they were launching in the announcement of their discovery of radium. First, it appeared simply as a wondrous element, shining with a pale, glowing light that never diminished, sending forth heat that never lessened, and emitting rays whose activity burned the skin and blinded the eyes, were not the utmost caution exercised. Edison began experiments with it, but, for the time, gave them up because of the danger of handling it. Astronomers had their direction turned to it, and were led to look to its presence in comets and the sun as a solution of the "pale luminosity," as Prof. Boyer calls it, of the one, and the age-continuing heat of the other. Medical men, too, began to look to it as a benefactor in surgery and medicine, and are making judicial experiments along these lines. As yet, the price of radium is far beyond that of rubies. A single pound of it, pure, is to-day worth \$60,000,000. This tremendous value is due to the fact that tons and tons of pitchblende are required for the extraction of each pound, that the process is tedious and intricate, and that, so far, the only source of this pitchblende has been a certain spot in Bohemia, from which exports are now forbidden by the Austrian Government. It is not likely that radium may command such a figure in the near future. Prof. Alexander H. Phillips, Professor of Mineralogy in Princeton University, has discovered a radium salt in carnotite taken from Utah. It is also stated that pitchblende whose marketable qualities may be developed has been found in several parts of the United States. For the past seventy years, a firm of analytical chemists in London, England, have been using quantities of pitchblende for the extraction of oxide of uranium, which, until lately, was used extensively in the coloring of expensive glassware. The refuse was carted away and used for street ballast. So that, as a matter of fact, the firm actually paid carters to dump away matter containing radium to-day worth over \$1,000 a grain. It has been estimated that a fortune of \$5,000,000 has been thus thrown away.

A Chance for Well-doing.

Perhaps no organization in Ontario is accomplishing more for suffering humanity than is the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto. In it, every disease or deformity which can make life a burden to any little one is treated, and the success with which these efforts have been attended is surely the best recommendation of the efficiency of the hospital. Last year alone, of 868 children who entered it, 493 were entirely cured and 247 improved. The hospital is not local, but Provincial. Every suffering child in Ontario, whether its parents are able to pay for its treatment or not, is entitled to its benefits. Yet, since so many have, of necessity, to be treated gratuitously, there is a continual need for more money. The hospital cannot get along without funds, and its managers will be most grateful for any contributions that may be sent in to help on its work. A dollar means but little to the majority of people, but it may mean a great deal to some poor child. Contributions may be sent to J. Ross Robertson, Chairman, or to Douglas Davidson, Secretary-Treasurer of the Hospital for Sick Children, College St., Toronto.

Death of John Watson.

In the recent death of Mr. John Watson, of Ayr, Ont., Canada lost one of her oldest and worthiest citizens, and a pioneer in the manufacture of agricultural implements. He was born at Glasgow, Scotland, in 1820, and after learning moulding came to America, reaching Galt about 1845, finally locating at Ayr, where he established a large, widely known and successful enterprise. He was a man of commanding influence because of his probity, intelligence and strength of views, being well entitled to rank as one of the makers of industrial Canada. He leaves a family of three sons and two daughters. John George is postmaster of Ayr; William D. is at the head of the firm; Alfred is also associated with the business. James, the third son, died at college in the United States. Of the daughters, one is head of the Domestic Science Department at the Ontario Agricultural College, and the other is at home.

Parties of Finlanders are settling in the Lake St. John district, Northern Quebec.

A white deer was shot recently in Northern Ontario.

Building improvements in Calgary during 1903 are estimated at \$700,000.

A rich strike of gold has been found near Webbwood, B. C., on the line of the C. P. R. A discovery of rich ore has also been made in the Atlin shaft, Ymhr.

The practicability of the navigation of Hudson's Bay and its adjoining straits by ocean vessels, to form an outlet for the northern part of the West, is now being investigated by an expedition sent out by the Dominion Government.

The Grand Trunk Pacific will be the "open sesame" to the great Peace River district.

On the general tide of prosperity in Canada, Newfoundland has come to the fore. Its lumber resources are being exploited, and pulp mills being built, and a new cold storage company is making arrangements for going into immediate business. "Winnipeggers," in the near future, may be privileged to eat "fresh" fish caught off Cape Race, as a change from "home caught."

Lumbering is booming in N. B. Donald Fraser & Sons, of Fredericton, have now over 2,000 men at work in the woods in the Tobique and other districts. Scott Brothers, also of Fredericton, are also pushing forward extensive operations in the timber districts.

On account of the boll-weevil, the cotton-raising industry of Texas seems doomed. It is held, however, that the State is suited for the raising of grain and cattle, as well as sugar-cane, tobacco and rice.

An edible mushroom weighing upwards of five pounds was found last season in the Forest of Fontainebleau, France. The wet season in France was very conducive to the growth of all sorts of fungi, also to snails, which are there used extensively for food, being called the "poor man's oyster." The finest of these edible snails are reared by Capuchin Monks in an especial snail-park.

The work of forestry is being rapidly pushed forward in the U. S. The total area in national forest reserve is now 63,000,000 acres.

Large quantities of eggs, put up in bottles in liquid form, whites and yolks separate, are exported from Germany. The greater quantities of these bottles go to New Zealand.

At the Ontario Beekeepers' Convention, Trenton, Ont., Prof. James said that there is an unlimited market for first-class honey, but that too little of the first-class article and too much second and third is offered for sale in Canada.

"You should have studied the time-table," said the gateman to the belated traveller, "then you wouldn't have missed your train."

"You talk like a \$1.98 phonograph," replied the angry left-over. "The train pulled out while I was trying to translate the time-table."

There are now 19,398 rural delivery routes in the United States. When shall we have one in Canada?

Principal Reichel, of University College, Wales, who came with the Moseley Educational Commission to Canada, says the Guelph Agricultural College is the best in America.

Wood shavings, which used to be thrown away, are now compressed into fuel, which burns slowly and produces a heat like coal. Sawdust, compressed into bricks with tar, is used as a "carbide" for making gas.

"She came up to the country

But a week or so ago,

This city maid who ne'er had seen

The fields where wild flowers grow.

And when she saw the cat-tails,

She cried, "Oh, do look, quick!

Who ever heard of sausages

A-growing on a stick!"

Siberia, so long the land of mines and convicts, bids fair to come forward as an important dairying country. There are already about 2,000 butter manufacturing establishments in the country. Though not of A1 grade as yet, the quality improves every year.

In a recent lecture at the R. I. Agr. College, Mr. R. S. Handy, of Cataumet, Mass., in which vicinity cranberries are extensively raised, said that \$175 per acre should be the net profit from a cranberry bog in which conditions and care are favorable.

Five hundred boxes of B. C. apples, grown in the Kelowna district, and shipped to Scotland, have arrived in good condition. The Chilliwack Progress says: "As this is believed to be the first shipment as a commercial venture from this Province to the Old Country . . . the success of the experiment will very clearly demonstrate the enormous possibilities for fruit-growing for profit in B. C."

Fruits and vegetables are canned annually in the U. S. to the value of more than \$45,000,000.

A beet-sugar factory, which is to have an annual output of 11,000,000 lbs. of sugar, is being built in Turkestan, Russian Asia.

Statistics for the past year show the rapidity with which Manitoba and the Territories are being settled. During ten months of 1903 the homestead entries amounted to 29,764, as contrasted with 18,417 during the corresponding ten months of 1902. C. P. R. land sales in 1903, up to Nov. 30th, show a total of 1,684,600 acres; while, during the same period, 110 new post offices were recorded.

An interesting exhibit at the World's Fair, St. Louis, this year, will be that of a quantity of catalpa timber, grown from seed so as to be a source of profit in twenty years.

In November of 1903, the potato imports of Great Britain aggregated between one and two million cwt., valued at about £380,000. In 1901, the imports were only about 200,000 cwt., valued at £33,000. The difference is chiefly due to potato rot.

Mr. Fred Bodfish, King, Ont., upon two acres of sugar beets last season realized a profit of \$103.45.

All new schools in Switzerland have baths attached. Each child is compelled to "use soap" regularly.

The tallest building on earth is to be erected in New York soon. The height of the new building will be 615 feet, and its cost, including the site, \$10,000,000.

The C. P. R. people are preparing to develop the anthracite coal bed recently discovered near Banff. The seam of coal, which is said to be of excellent quality, is about ten miles long and from six to ten feet thick.

Numerous deposits of gold, silver and copper ores have been discovered at Chetecamp, Cape Breton. Dr. Gilpin, head of the Provincial Mines Department, says that from present indications the ledge of ore is among the largest in the world.

The Exhibition Executive, City Council, and Board of Trade, Winnipeg, are decidedly enthusiastic over the prospects of holding a Dominion Exhibition in Winnipeg next summer.

Two hundred students have been attending the short course in stock-judging at the O. A. C., Guelph, Ont. John Dryden, Mr. John Gosling, Kansas City, Mo., and Mr. A. W. Smith, Maple Lodge, Ont., assisting the professors.

Hon. John Dryden announces that the work of cheese-factory inspection and instruction will be extended and improved in 1904.

South Perth, Ont.

The golden weather of autumn has been succeeded by continuous, but moderate, winter weather, with gradual snowfall, which has increased the depth of "the beautiful" to several feet on our roads, and made sleighing permanent. But while the farmer appreciates good sleighing, we think that few of them would object to a thorough melting of the snow if such would increase the depth of water in the wells. The scarcity of water is a serious matter with most farmers in this section at the present time, and artesian-well drillers are kept very busy. The sinking of these wells to the rock water seems the only permanent solution of the problem; but the remedy, like all permanent and valuable improvements, is a relatively costly one. In this district, except within a few hundred rods of the river, the depth of soil on the rock averages somewhere about a hundred feet, and the depth to suitable springs in the rock will usually average fifty to one hundred feet more, making a well which necessitates power pumps, and if (as should be) the water is forced into house and barn, the total cost may run up to four or five hundred dollars. But if the first cost seems great, the ultimate advantage is probably well worth the outlay. Abundance of pure water is almost certain to save several large doctor bills in the course of one's life, besides the great advantage to stabled stock always having before them abundance of pure water at suitable temperature, and last, but not least, the immense saving of labor in pumping. Labor takes time, and time is money.

Since the commutation of statute labor in the various townships, we have watched with interest the effect upon our roads, and if our observation is correct, we are bound to say that the ideal of the advocates of the new system has not yet been reached. We believe that for general traffic the surface has been greatly improved. A system of general repair rather than indiscriminate building up has been followed, producing less inconvenience from new gravel and a better apportionment of the material. The more liberal use of the grader has also greatly benefited in smoothing the surface and allowing opportunity for water to escape. But we cannot help an uneasy impression that this is largely being done at the expense of past labor. Good roads cannot be made without material, and plenty of it. There is a constant and heavy wearing, due largely to narrow tires, and this must be replaced by large quantities of material, and for this work the statute labor system was generally superior in getting a maximum amount of material with a minimum of cost to the taxpayer. Apparently, for fear of arousing hostility to the new system of direct taxation, many townships have been scrimping the supply of material, but cannot do so long with impunity. We think that if this objection were overcome, and the pathmaster's duties more clearly defined and enforced, we would much prefer the present system to the former. But under any system, never expect to see really good roads till the gravel is screened and wide tires adopted. J.H.B.