

R. A. C.—(1) Please answer the following questions in the REVIEW. Name the bird described as follows: In size nearly as large as a robin; the head and back a reddish-orange, while others are slaty, merely tinted with orange; the wings are slate color, striped. Large flocks frequent orchards on mild days in winter.

(2) What is meant by the chinook winds? If they blow through passes in the Rockies, how are they able to moderate the temperature of Alberta?

(3) What is the cause of the black knot found on plum and cherry trees?

(1) Probably the Pine Grosbeak, the description of which we give so that you may compare when next seen: Slaty gray, more or less strongly washed with rose-red, strongest on the crown, rump, upper tail coverts, and breast. Wings fuscous (brown or grayish black), their coverts edged with white; tail fuscous. In the females the red color is replaced by olive-yellow. The bird is rather slow and inactive when in a tree. In flying it has a loud whistle which is very characteristic. It has a general resemblance to the robin, but its short, thick beak and forked tail are striking differences.

(2) The Chinook is a warm, dry westerly wind, occurring several times each winter, and usually lasting two or three days. It brings a spring-like mildness to the temperature and is so dry that the snow and ice disappear without the visible production of water. It seems to absorb moisture like a sponge. These westerly winds blowing from the Pacific, whose waters are warmed by the Japan current, give a plentiful rainfall as they mount the slopes of British Columbia toward the Rockies. Climbing over these or through the passes they retain their warmth though they have lost their moisture, and hence moderate the temperature in the plains of Alberta and other portions of north western Canada and the United States. There are similar winds in Switzerland, New Zealand and other parts of the world. The wind is so called because it blows from the region of the Chinooks, tribes of Pacific coast Indians.

(3) The black knot is a kind of fungus very destructive to cherry and plum trees. Children should be taught to prune off the twigs on which it occurs and burn them.

"We Japanese," the Japanese minister at Paris is credited with saying, "have for many generations sent to Europe exquisite lacquer work, delicately carved figures, beautiful embroidery and many other commodities which showed how artistic we were; but the Europeans described us as 'uncivilized.' We have recently killed some seventy thousand Russians, and every European nation is wondering at the high condition of civilization which we have attained."

CURRENT EVENTS.

A contract has been made with the Allan line for a direct steamship service between this country and France.

For the Allan line service between Canada and the British Isles, two new turbine steamships have been built, the first of which is now on her trial trip, and will sail for Halifax on March 23rd. These ships will be able to make the run from Moville to Halifax in five days and twelve hours, or from Moville to Rimouski in six days.

A bill is now before parliament for the erection of two new provinces in the Northwest. Each will cover approximately half of the territory now occupied by the provisional territories of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Athabaska; and the division line between them is the 110th meridian. They are to be named respectively Saskatchewan and Alberta; and have a present population of about 250,000 each. Regina and Edmonton are to be the provisional capitals. The change will probably take effect on Dominion day, when there will be nine provinces in the Dominion, forming an unbroken line from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast.

While the Atlantic provinces of Canada are still under the deepest covering of snow that we have known for many years, spring has come in Alberta, and seed sowing has begun.

The Simplon tunnel is completed, and it will soon be open for traffic. From Briga, in Switzerland, to Iselle, on the Italian side of the mountain, it has a length of about twelve miles.

The Emperor of China has recently approved a memorial presented by a prominent official, advising the establishment of a council of officials, to meet at at the emperor's command. Such an official advisory board may be likened to the legislative council and executive council of a crown colony under our system of government, and is looked upon as a step towards parliamentary government.

The British government, which has for many years owned and controlled the telegraph service in the British Isles, in connection with the post office department, has decided to buy out the National Telephone Company, and conduct the telephone service in the same way.

Canada will take over the defences of Halifax and Esquimalt on the first of July, and maintain them as at present maintained by the British forces. The offer to do so was made three years ago, but was not accepted at the time. The imperial troops in the West Indies will not be withdrawn at present, as their presence there is needed in case of disorder among the blacks.

J. W. Tyrrell, the Canadian explorer, who has recently returned from the far north, is strongly impressed with the great value of the Hudson Bay route to Europe. He believes that Hudson's Strait will be found navigable for five months of the year. The bay, of course, is always navigable, for it never freezes over. The country around the shores of the bay is rich in game and minerals; and at Chesterfield Inlet a rich timber belt runs far westward into