

please. Heretofore the peasants, who form a very large proportion of the inhabitants of Russia, were not free to go from district to district in search of employment; but each was obliged to remain in his own community, unless he went to foreign parts or engaged in some other pursuit than that of agriculture. There was a sort of alien labour law for each community. Now the protection or restriction is removed, and an agricultural labourer can go wherever his labour is in most demand.

An edict has been issued in China forbidding the cultivation of the poppy and the importation and use of opium after a period of ten years. Imperial sanction has also been given to the plans for introducing a system of constitutional government in China. Each of the eighteen provinces into which the empire is at present divided is to have a constitution and a legislative assembly of its own.

The forecast of political events in Cuba is not reassuring. A new fight for Cuban independence is threatened, should the United States take permanent possession. On the other hand, there is a conspiracy to bring about an uprising whenever the United States forces are to be withdrawn, and so compel them to remain. The matter is largely one of class interest, the wealthy Cubans and foreigners who are interested in Cuban investments thinking that their property will be safer under United States protection, and the populace wishing to have the government of the country in their own hands, and hoping to improve their own condition at the expense of the large property holders and men of business. And so, it would seem, the natural resources of one of the richest countries in the world must still remain undeveloped for want of a settled government.

Japan's new battleship, the "Satsuma," is the largest battleship in the world. It excels the British ship "Dreadnought," both in speed and in power; and, as in the case of the latter, its construction has been very rapid.

Captain Amundsen, the Norwegian explorer who has sailed through the Northwest Passage, is now returning to his home in Norway, where a great reception is awaiting him. It will take two or three years to work up the results of his observations, which are believed to be of great scientific value.

The return of Commander Peary from his Arctic voyage was announced from Newfoundland on November 2nd. He had failed to reach the North Pole; but had gone a few miles farther north than any previous explorer.

The Keewatin conference at Ottawa has not resulted in an agreement for the partition of the territory among the adjacent provinces. The Province of Ontario asks that the eastern boundary of Manitoba be extended northward to Churchill River, and follow that stream to its mouth, where is situated the only good harbour on Hudson Bay; and that all the Keewatin territory east and south of that line

be added to Ontario. Saskatchewan asks that the territories of that province and of Manitoba be extended eastward to Hudson Bay, and that the Nelson River be made the boundary between them; thus giving to Saskatchewan the good harbour at Fort Churchill, and half the inferior harbour at York Factory. So each of these two provinces is willing to take a part of the District of Keewatin, and to give Manitoba the rest. But Manitoba claims the whole. A decision will be given later.

Armorial bearings have been assigned to the Province of Saskatchewan by royal warrant. They are described as follows: Vert, three garbs in fesse, or; on a chief of the last, a lion passant guardant, gules. This, being interpreted, means that the shield shall be green, with three golden sheaves of wheat in a line across it; and that the chief, or upper third of the shield, shall be of gold, with a red lion, like the chief in the arms of the Province of New Brunswick, but with the colours reversed.

The soldiers in the British army are being taught to sing, and regimental choral societies will be formed. The idea is taken from the German army.

The flow of the Colorado River into the Salton valley, in Southern California, has been stopped, by building a dam nine miles in length. This was a great engineering feat, and was supposed by many to be impossible. The river is now, however, flowing in its old channel, and the new Salton Sea will probably soon be a thing of the past.

The world's supply of platinum is so much less than the demand that the price has increased four-fold. It is now much more valuable than gold. The mines of Russia have heretofore been the chief source of supply; but the metal is found in several places in the Rocky Mountain region, and search is being made there for deposits that may be profitably mined.

Part of the city of Toronto is now lighted with electricity from Niagara.

Recent improvements in the wireless telephone seem to promise that it will ultimately be of more importance than the wireless telegraph. A French electrician has succeeded in sending a wireless telephone message from Toulon to Ajaccio, a distance of one hundred and eighty miles.

It is no longer a question whether an airship can fly without being lighter than the air. Recent experiments in France have been so successful that a flying machine for practical use is regarded as one of the possibilities of the near future. It is predicted that air ships will be faster, safer and cheaper than automobiles.

Commander Peary, of the steamer "Roosevelt," arrived at Sydney, Saturday, November 24, after sixteen months exploration and battling with the rigours of the Arctic regions. The Commander and his crew, after undergoing many dangers in his trip to and from the north, reached the highest point yet attained by explorers—87 degrees 6 minutes north latitude.