

import. And probably for our absolute dependence in the case of some drugs it would be possible to substitute relative independence. As regards cinchona, why should we not transfer our trade directly to South America, instead of dealing with London and Amsterdam? There is enough *digitalis* growing wild in Oregon and Washington to supply the world.—*Medical Times*.

RECONSTRUCTION OF THE KIEL CANAL

In 1895, after eight years of hard work, the great canal running from the mouth of the Elbe, in the North Sea, to the Fjord of Kiel in the Baltic, a distance of about sixty miles, was thrown open to commerce. It had a normal width of 72 feet at the bottom and 220 at the water level, with a depth of 29½ feet. Although a sea-level canal, twin locks were built at each end, those at the western entrance to take care of the large tide variations, and those at the eastern end to take care of variations of water level, in the practically tideless Baltic, due to gales. The locks were 492 feet long, 82 feet wide, and 32 feet deep. The locks at Kiel remained open most of the time, while those at the mouth of the Elbe did not need to be used at certain tides.

The canal proved wonderfully valuable to commerce, because it saved the long, hazardous trip around the stormy coasts of Denmark. But its strategic value to the German navy was of even greater importance, as has been demonstrated in the present war.

Although the locks, when built, were large enough to take almost all vessels, they were outgrown in time, even by warships, and finally it was decided to reconstruct the canal, making it broader and providing locks that could take the largest vessel afloat, with plenty of room to spare. This work was completed in time to be of incalculable value to Germany in the present war.

The normal width of the canal is now 335 feet at the surface and 144 at the bottom, with a depth of 36 feet. New twin locks have been built alongside the old ones at each end. They have an available length of 1,082.6 feet and width of 147.6 feet. Intermediate gates may be used to cut off a chamber 328 feet long. The locks at Panama, it will be recalled, are only 1,000 feet long by 110 feet wide.

The work of reconstructing the canal cost \$55,000,000.—*Sc. Am.*