

CURRENT EVENTS.

Germany expended last year on her army and navy two hundred and thirty-three millions of dollars; Great Britain, three hundred and forty-five millions; the United States, four hundred and seventy millions.

Preparations are being made for a suitable celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the introduction of steamboat travel on the St. Lawrence. The first successful trip was made by a little steamboat called the "Accommodation," which left Montreal for Quebec on the first day of November, 1809; and, though late in the season for river navigation, in due time arrived safely at the city of Quebec.

A British cruiser has sailed up the Amazon to Iquitos, Peru, a distance of two thousand three hundred miles, and found an ample depth of water all the way. Iquitos is less than five hundred miles from the Pacific coast. The return voyage to Para, at the mouth of the river, was made in two weeks, including a stay of five days at Manaos. This voyage, in connection with the recent cruise of another vessel up the Madeira to Bolivia, will have the important result of proving that the upper waters of these rivers, though as yet uncharted, are navigable for large vessels, and will be of great use in the future development of trade.

Dr. W. A. R. Mitchell, a Canadian, was the surgeon and biologist of the British Antarctic expedition under Lieut. Shackleton, which succeeded in approaching nearer to the South Pole than any one we know of has yet been to the North Pole.

A million acres of forest land in the Rainy River district has been set aside as a forest reservation and game preserve. An equal area has been set apart for a like purpose on the Minnesota side of the boundary line.

Canada will build vessels for coast defence, and take such other steps as are needed in the interests of the Empire, acting under the advice of the imperial naval authorities. There seems to be a general feeling that before long defence will be needed. It is expected that Lord Kitchener will be sent to Canada to examine the local defence forces and report to the authorities what steps should be taken to improve their organization. The vote in parliament pledging Canada's willing contribution to the national defence was unanimous.

Lord Strathcona has given ten thousand dollars a year for the promotion of military training in Canadian schools.

Both in parliament and by public meetings, the attention of the British government has been drawn to the fact that other nations are building dirigible air ships, and it is urged that the construction of a British air fleet should be taken up with energy. Already the British navy has a gun especially designed for the destruction of air ships.

Terrible massacres are reported from Persia and

from Asia Minor, where local insurrections have got beyond control. In Arabia, at last accounts, the disorders had subsided, and everybody looked to parliamentary government as the remedy for all political wrongs. It has not proved efficient throughout the dominions of the Sultan and the Shah.

Wireless messages from Cape Breton have been received at Paris, France, several times within the last month.

A telephone receiver having no diaphragm is a new invention. It reproduces the voice distinctly, without the disturbances from the instrument which are so unpleasant a feature of the older machine.

The REVIEW seldom has to correct a statement of fact in its notes of Current Events; but a correction is needed in respect to the alleged discovery of an Egyptian account of the circumnavigation of the continent of Africa. The inscriptions which gave a pretended account of the voyage have proved to be forgeries.

A process of making rubber from naphtha is said to be under test on a large scale in the Caucasus.

Individual drinking cups are used on a railway in the United States. They are of tough waterproof paper, to be used once only, and then thrown away.

Cipriano Castro, ex-President of Venezuela, who has taken passage for that country on a French steamer, was landed at Martinique, by order of the French government; and later compelled to return to Europe on another steamship. The British government refused to let him land at Trinidad, where, no doubt, he intended to organize a Venezuelan revolution in his favour.

An Australian statesman suggests the formation of a body to be called the Grand Assembly of the Empire, to which each self-governing British colony should elect five members. No recommendation of this Grand Assembly, according to his proposals, would have the force of law until adopted by the legislature of the represented country. If the plan is adopted, he believes it will lead in time to an Imperial Parliament having full legislative powers. Some such plan may be brought before the Imperial Conference, which meets again in 1911.

Civilization is responsible for the spread of the sleeping sickness in Central Africa, by which the country around the west coast of Lake Tanganyika has been almost entirely depopulated within the last six years. The disease is invariably fatal. It has been known in Africa for more than a century; but in the old days, when a tribe had no intercourse with its neighbours except in the way of warfare, it was of local occurrence. Now, with the suppression of native warfare and the increase of travel, it is found exceedingly difficult to check its spread, the prevention of which is by far the most serious problem confronting Europeans in Africa at the present time. It prevails, as yet, only along the banks of rivers and lakes that lie within fifteen degrees of