

to £558,403; total capital engaged £5,783,815, so that the return for the year averaged 9.69 per cent. The quantity of coal used by all the companies was 848,979 tons.

#### Indian Railway.

A great public work has been brought to a successful termination in the completion of the Bombay, Baroda, and Central India Railway. On the 1st of June this line of railway was to be opened without interruption from Bombay to Ahmedabad, for passenger traffic; and immediately after the rain, for goods traffic. The most fertile province of India is thus brought in speedy communication with India's chief sea-port and emporium of trade.

#### French Locomotives.

According to a recent official document, the number of locomotives in France is 2,751, not including those belonging to the Orleans Railway Company, which possesses 400.

## Miscellaneous.

#### New Method of taking Portraits.

A new era in portraiture is predicted from the discovery of a Mr. Swan, who presents a solid, life-like likeness of any one, inclosed in a cube of crystal. The effect of the new process is to exhibit the subject of the portraiture with life-like verisimilitude, in natural relief. You take up a small case, and look through what appears to be a little window, and there stands or sits before you, in a pleasantly-lighted chamber, a marvelous effigy of a lady or gentleman, as the case may be. The projection of the nose, the molding of lips, and all the gradations of contour, are as distinct as if an able sculptor had exercised his skill; but the hair and the flesh are of their proper tint, and the whole thing has a singularly vital and comfortable look. Indeed, were it not for the reduction in size, it would be difficult to avoid the belief that an actual man or woman, in ordinary dress, and with characteristic expression, was presented to your eye. The "Swan system" is about to be introduced into this country.—*Scientific American.*

#### An Oil Lake in Trinidad.

There is in Trinidad, only a mile from the coast, a basin of ninety-acres, filled with asphalt, yielding seventy gallons of crude oil per tun. There are also springs of asphaltic oil in the neighborhood, and large pitch banks off the shore. It is estimated that the lake is capable of producing three hundred million gallons of oil, and forty or fifty gallons are considered equal to a tun of coal. The *Trinidad Colonist* publishes a *memoire* by Mr. Stollmeyer, of Port of Spain, proposing the use of this liquid fuel for oceanic steam navigation: and he states that he has been, at various times, for these three years, suggesting this employment of a distillate from the pitch lake of Trinidad. To oil a ship would not take above a tenth of the time it takes to coal her, if pipes were employed, and the oil would not take above a fourth of the space

occupied by coals. He recommends that it be applied at once as auxiliary to coal, by throwing jets over the burning mass, but contemplates, eventually, upright tubular boilers, the liquid fuel to be supplied as fast as it can be converted into flame. Of course, the North American oil springs are another source of supply.—*London Times.*

#### Oil Springs, C. W.

This place may now be considered to be fairly starting on the high road to prosperity. The clouds which have gathered so thickly around us for the past few months are now beginning to disperse, and the bright bow of promise and hope begins to appear. Hitherto every discouragement has beset us, every difficulty surrounded us, and to the minds of many all hope was cut off; so that for a time all energy was paralyzed, and all enterprise discouraged. But a new impetus has been given to the oil trade and we now confidently look forward to the time, not far distant, when it will assume the high position which was once promised. Government has at last lent an ear to our wants, and granted us its assistance. This alone is a matter of great importance and encouragement; but however much governmental assistance we may have, if we do not help ourselves, the assistance of government will not avail us anything. This the oil men very well understand and are acting on that principle. They are determined to leave nothing undone which may be necessary to secure a large supply of oil. Being fully satisfied that oil exists in immense quantities below any depth yet reached, it was only necessary to receive that encouragement in the way of protection which we have so long sought after, to stimulate them to renewed exertions in the prosecution of their search for oil. That protection being now granted, operations on a large scale will at once be commenced. Indeed they have already commenced. Besides the "test well" which is about to be sunk by the Joint Stock Company we hear of several private enterprises which will be conducted on a scale of equal magnitude. Prominent amongst these is the well which Col. Elliott has already commenced. He intends to drill until he gets oil, however deep that may be. Another company from Pennsylvania have already commenced operations on a large scale and design to sink a well deep enough to thoroughly test their land. Besides these there are numerous wells going down in various localities, the depth of which will probably be determined by the success which attends what is known as the "test wells."

Another encouraging feature of our affairs is, that the yield of oil is constantly on the increase.

The prospect of remunerative prices induces many, who would not otherwise work their wells, to resume operations. There are many old wells here that will pay to work at present prices, which have been lying idle during the late dull season. These will soon be in active operation.

On the whole, prospects are brighter at this moment for the future of Oil Springs, than they have been for the last ten months, and we confidently look for a season of prosperity such as has never before been witnessed in the Oil Trade of Canada.—*Oil Springs Chronicle.*