

Railroads in Every Land.

By the completion last month of the railroad from Cape Town to the South African diamond mines at Kimberley, steam cars have supplanted the tiresome stages and great ox wagons of the Dutch and British traders for about 700 miles along the direct route toward the Zambesi. The advent of the locomotive into the very region where MOFFATT and LIVINGSTONE lived among benighted savages is not only an evidence of the substantial progress of South Africa, but also illustrates the impulse that is now moving civilized nations to penetrate new fields of commerce with railroads.

These enterprises seem to be justified by similar ventures already completed. South Africa's 1,562 miles of lines, all owned by Cape Colony, paid all working expenses and maintenance during the first six months this year, and three and a half per cent, to apply on the interest account. The British Burmah railroads returned six per cent. dividends last year, and have paid good interest since the day they were opened. Gen. Strachey, the greatest authority on Indian railroads, estimates that the benefits accruing from her railways to India amount to over £80,000,000 per annum.

It is found also that immense and promising regions will continue to be isolated until they are tapped by railroads. Mr. Holt Hallett has shown that the cost of caravan traffic in Indo-China is from fifty to one hundred times as much as by railroads. The Glasgow Chamber of Commerce has declared that railroads are indispensable to open new markets for British commerce in Burmah, Siam, and western China. Gen. Gordon wrote in 1882: "A belt of arid sand of 280 miles separates the Egyptian Soudan from civilization, and till this is spanned no real progress can be made. The route from Suakim to Berber is the natural route to be opened. When that railway is completed an entire change will take place in the whole of this country." What Gordon said of the Soudan the International Association now says of the Congo—that the populous and fertile up-river regions will not be worth a penny to commerce until the worthless district of the lower river is spanned by rail.

The fact also that railroads are needed to further the political purposes of some great nations is giving a remarkable impulse to certain large enterprises. Had Khart-um been placed within easy reach of Europe by the completion of Ismail's railroad from Wady Halfa past the Nile cataracts, England would have been spared the waste of

treasure and blood that her failure in the Soudan involved. No fresh war cloud between England and Russia on the Afghan border will catch them with railroads projected but unbuilt. England's iron route from the Arabian Sea to Afghanistan has this month reached the Quetta plateau through the Bolan Pass. The work on Russia's transcaspien road is advancing day and night. It is now approaching Merv, and Russia expects to carry it on to Bokhara and Tashkend. For the purpose of giving facilities to her troops, England loaned the money to Cape Colony with which the railroad to Kimberley has just been completed.

From all corners of the world we are hearing of railroads projected, surveyed, or in course of building. In Venezuela, for instance, eight or nine different lines of greater or less extent are under contract, surveys are in progress, grading and track laying are considerably advanced on two lines, and are soon to commence on others. Portugal has granted a concession for a railroad from Delagoa Bay in East Africa to the Transvaal border to connect with the Transvaal railroad which it is reported will be built by German capital. The more progressive among the Boers say they must have railroad connection with the sea. To its railroads is largely due to fact that South Africa now stands tenth on the list of the chief foreign nations dealing with England.

It is in the Oriental world, however, that new railroad schemes are most rapidly advancing. The King of Siam is eager to connect his capital with the Chinese frontier by rail, and has promised to build this road if the Indian Government will build a road through Burmah to meet the Siamese system at the frontier. The leading Chambers of Commerce in Great Britain sent agents to report upon the feasibility of this project, and Messrs. Hallett and Colquhoun have returned home with enthusiastic endorsements of the scheme. In China the powerful Viceroy, Li Hung Chang, has for some time been urging the need of railroads and telegraphs. His influence, aided by the support of other able statesmen, has already given to China over 3,000 miles of telegraphs, manned by Chinese operators, and the little nine-mile railroad near Tientsin, and is paving the way for railroad schemes that, it is believed, will in the course of time reach a large development in China. The railroad that is to connect the chief towns of Siberia is slowly advancing eastward, and surveys for projected lines are in progress in Asia Minor, the Euphrates valley, and Persia.

The development of some of these projects

will be the work of many years, and some of them will doubtless utterly fail. Yet it is one of the most significant signs of the times that these schemes have entered so largely into the purposes and ambitions of the commercial world. It may yet be one of the chief glories of this century that it introduced on a large scale among the less progressive races those inventions and facilities which have assisted Western civilization to outstrip all others.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

The immigration from Ireland is at a perfect standstill. The people there are in hopes since the election.

The new British man-of-war Camperdown, built of steel, at a cost of \$2,375,000, is the heaviest ship ever launched in England. It will be three years before she is ready for sea.

A new pretender has turned up in Paris, a young man of intelligence, claiming to be the ex-Prince Imperial, escaped from captivity among the Zulus. He resembles the Prince slightly, but is insane.

A man appeared on the streets of Denver recently driving a team of fully developed elk, worth \$1,500, and capable of travelling 100 miles a day. The children thought Santa Claus had come to town.

The coal mines near Egypt, N. C., are to be reopened next summer. One of these mines has a shaft 480 feet in depth. It was this coal that was used on blockade runners at Wilmington during the war.

The Chemist and Druggist tells how an astute rascal has been playing "what the Americans would call the disinfecting racket." He appears with a charcoal furnace and some brimstone, saying that the Health Board has sent him to disinfect the house. Then he blows up his furnace and creates so outrageous a stink that the servants leave the house, and he soon follows them with everything he can lay his hands on.

Referring to the decision of the Roman Church declaring the operation of craniotomy to constitute homicide, Dr. Mielziner writes to the *Medical Record* that according to the Mishna—the earliest collection of rabbinical decisions—"It is justifiable to kill the unborn infant in order to save the mother, as her life precedes his life. If the child be partially born, however, the rule does not apply, as one human life must not be set aside on account of another."

Notice to Prize-Winners.

Successful competitors, in applying for their prizes, must, in every case, state the number of the competition in which they have been successful, and also the number and nature of the prize won. Attention to these particulars will facilitate matters, and save a good deal of time and trouble. As many of the prize-winners neglect to send our charges for packing, postage, &c., we would remind those interested that the following sums must accompany applications for the prizes:—Pianos, \$10; Cabinet Organs, \$5; Sewing Machines, \$2; Tea Services, \$1.50; Gold Watches, and Silver Watches, 75c; other Watches, 50c; Silk Dresses, \$1; other Dress Goods, 50c; Cake Baskets, 50c; Rings, 30c; Books, Spoons, Brooches, and other Small Prizes, 20c.

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The late Marshal Serrano of Spain during his political career saw eighty-four changes of Ministry in that country, forty rebellions, and twelve changes in the head of the State.

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A BUSINESS VIEW.

Aunt: DO YOU SAY YOUR PRAYERS IN THE MORNING TOO, JOHNNY?
Johnny, scornfully: OF COURSE I DON'T. ANYBODY CAN TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF IN THE DAY TIME.

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