

Acre, Tyre, Saida and Beyrouth to terminate at Tripoli in Syria and later to be connected with the line from the Persian Gulf projected through Alep, Biredjik and Bagdad. The length of the line connecting Egypt and Syria is to be about 370 English miles.—*Railway Review*.

OLD BIRDS. — Among birds, the swan lives to be the oldest, in extreme cases reaching 300 years; the falcon has been known to live 162 years. An eagle died in 1819 which had been caught 104 years before, and was then quite old. A white-headed vulture, which was caught in 1706, died in the aviary at Schonbrun, near Vienna, in 1824. Parrots live more than a century. Water birds have a long life, exceeding that of several generations of men. Ravens also live over a hundred years. In captivity magpies live from 20 to 25 years, and still longer in freedom. The common hen attains the age of from 15 to 20 years. Doves live 10 years, and the little singing birds from 8 to 17 years. The nightingale's life is the shortest, 10 years being the longest, and next comes the blackbird, which never lives longer than 15 years.—*Translated for Public Opinion from the Belletristisches Journal*.

CAPTAIN GEORGE VANCOUVER'S MAPS.—In the office of the Surveyor-General, at the Government Buildings, there are some splendid old maps and charts of the north-west coast of this continent, drafted in the careful and elegant manner peculiar to all such publications issued towards the end of the last century.

George Vancouver, from whom the island on which we live takes its name, must have been a man gifted with exceptional talents, even in those exceptional days, when to be a commander in the British navy meant the possession of many and rare

accomplishments. Two of the charts are principally the work of his pen, made from surveys taken in the years 1792, 1793 and 1794, when he was commanding the Northwest Coast expedition, consisting of King George's sloop of war "Discovery," and the armed tender "Chatham."

An inspection of these maps sets one thinking about the marvellous changes that have taken place in the country from California up, since Vancouver sailed along the coast on his hazardous journey. The old names, as they appear on his drawings, are all changed now. What is to-day the State of California he christened "New Albion." The country taken up by Oregon and Washington he called "New Georgia," after his King, and where Westminster district now is, was put down by him as "New Hanover," another compliment to his royal master. On his way north, he encountered the rugged shore line and high promontories of the coast, facing Queen Charlotte Islands, and called it "New Cornwall" in consequence. Many travellers since his time have noticed a most marvellous resemblance between that coast and the cliffs and rocks of Cornwall. Farther north still, he came to an altogether different kind of scenery, and named the long stretch of what is now Alaska "New Norfolk."

The track taken by his vessel is marked on these maps, so that one is able to see at a glance where the voyager landed and at what points he touched. The only spot on Vancouver Island that he visited on this journey was Nootka Sound. When on his way into Puget Sound, to which locality he sailed through what is termed on the chart, "Supposed Straits of Juan de Fuca," he passed very close to where our city now stands, and which appears on the map, "Point de St. Gonzalo."