

Table of British Colonies, with the date of their acquisition.

South Australia.....	obtained by settlement in	1836
Western Australia.....	“ “	1829
Antigua	“ “	1682
Ascension	“ “	1827
Barbadoes	“ “	1609
Bermuda	“ “	1609
Bahamas	“ “	1629
Ceylon	capture	1795
Canada (E. and W.) ...	“ “	1759
Cape of Good Hope ...	“ “	1806
Columbia	settlement	1858
St. Christopher	“ “	1628
Dominica	cession	1803
Gambia	settlement	1631
Gibraltar (Military) ...	capture	1704
Gold Coast	settlement	1661
Granada	cession	1768
St. Helena.....	“ “	1673
Heligoland	“ “	1814
Honduras	“ “	1670
.....	settlement	1742
Hong Kong.....	cession	1842
Indian Presidencies ...	“ “	1859
Ionian Islands	“ “	1814
Jamaica	capture	1655
Labuan	cession	1846
St. Lucia.....	capture	1803
Malta	“ “	1800
Mauritius	“ “	1810
Montserrat.....	“ “	1632
Natal	settlement	1824
New Brunswick.....	separated from Nova Scotia	1784
Nova Scotia.....	obtained by settlement and capture	
Newfoundland	obtained by settlement in	1608
Nevis	“ “	1628
New South Wales	“ “	1728
New Zealand	“ “	1839
Prince Edward's Island	“ “	
Queensland ...	separated from New South Wales	1859
Sierra Leone.....	obtained by settlement in	1787
Tasmania	“ “	1804
Tobago	cession	1763
Trinidad	capture	1797
Turk's & Cairo's Island, formerly incl. in Bahamas		
St. Vincent	obtained by cession in	1763
Victoria.....	separated from New South Wales	1850
Virgin Islands	obtained by settlement in	1666

Cost of Relaying Rails.

It is stated by Mr. Reid, the Engineer of the Great Western of Canada, that the relaying of a mile of single line of rails in Canada, including new rails, sleepers, and joint fastenings, and a fresh supply of ballast, cannot be done, at present prices, under a cost of £1140 a mile, whereas the same could be performed in England, for £725 a mile. Rails subjected to the influences of a Canadian winter and spring, will always give way many years before the same quality of iron is worn out on an English railway.—*Eng. Journal.*

The Oil Wells of America.

The *London American* says the present yield of the wells in Pennsylvania and New York is more than 85,000,000 gallons a year. Discoveries in other States are reported and the amount produced may safely be estimated at 15,000,000 gallons more during the present year, making an estimate amount of 100,000,000 gallons to be gathered up during 1861. This oil readily sells by the wells in its crude state at 25c. per gallon, making the value of the whole amount 20,000,000 dollars.

In market it sells at 40c., and when purified at 75c., making its commercial value 75,000,000 dollars, or more than £15,000,000. This oil is said to be valuable for lubricating purposes, no less than for illuminating. Should this prove the case, it will be exported largely to England. Adding this article to the United States list of exports will have a strong tendency to keep the balance of trade favourable to that country. It is now sent to Australia, and it promises to rank second only to cotton on the United States list of exports.

Consumption of Fuel by Locomotives in the U. S.

In the United States it is estimated that there are 9000 locomotives in use, their total mileage being about 175,000,000 miles. The average cost of fuel at ten cents a mile (the average in the State of New York is 18 cents) would be 17,500,000 dollars. A saving of only two cents a mile would reduce this sum to 3,500,000 dollars.

A New Alkali-Metal.—The New Metal Cæsium.

MM. Bunsen and Kirchhoff announce definitely (*Anall. der Physic und Chemie*) that they have discovered a new alkali-metal, the fourth member of the group of potassium, sodium, and lithium. At present they have only found it in very small quantities in the mineral water of Kreuznach, in the saline water of Dureckheim, and in one of the sources of the Bade—the Umgemach.

The chloride of the new metal differs from those of sodium and lithium by the yellow precipitate which it produces in the presence of bichloride of platinum. It is distinguished from potassium by its nitrate being soluble in alcohol. Introduced into a flame, and examined with a prism, the vapours of the new chloride show a very interesting spectrum, consisting of two blue lines, one of which, the fainter, almost corresponds with the blue of strontium; the other, also a well defined blue line, is situated a little further towards the violet extremity of the spectrum, and rivals the lithium line in brightness and distinctness of outline.

At the last meeting of the Chemical Society, Dr. Roscoe gave a short account of Professors Kirchhoff and Bunsen's spectrum researches, and mentioned that the new alkali-metal which they had discovered by that means had been named *Cæsium*, from the Latin word *cæsius*, signifying grayish-blue, that being the tint of the two spectral lines which it shows. By working with the residues from twenty tons of the mineral waters of Kreuznach, Professor Bunsen had succeeded in obtaining about 250 grains of the platinum salt of the new metal. Cæsium is closely allied to potassium in its chemical characters, the chief point of difference being the solubility of its nitrate in alcohol. Its equivalent number is 217,—exactly three times that of potassium.—*Chemical News.*

The Alpaca in Australia.

The Sydney (Australia) papers, are computing the value of the introduction of the Alpaca into that country. Considerable flocks of that useful animal have already been introduced to Australia. Commencing in 1861 with 280 animals, of which 220 are females, and making deductions of a liberal nature, according to the present ratio of increase there would be, in fifty years, 9,760,000 head, the wool of which (an average of 7lbs.) at 2s. per lb., would amount to the sum of £6,832,000 per annum.

Those who are familiar with the extraordinary increase of the sheep in that country, will not be surprised at the results of these computations, based as they are upon observed facts.