

PATOS ISLAND, STORM CENTER OF ANGLO-VENEZUELAN DISPUTE

In the threatened agitation over the alleged seizure by Great Britain of the little island of Patos in the bay of Paria, off the northern coast of Venezuela, another Venezuelan boundary question seems to be imminent. The contention between these two countries, which had existed for many years, was supposed to be settled for good and all in 1899 by the unanimous decision of the boundary commission. The territory previously in dispute lay to the south of the Orinoco river, but the latest trouble is over an islet lying to the northward of its northern affluents.

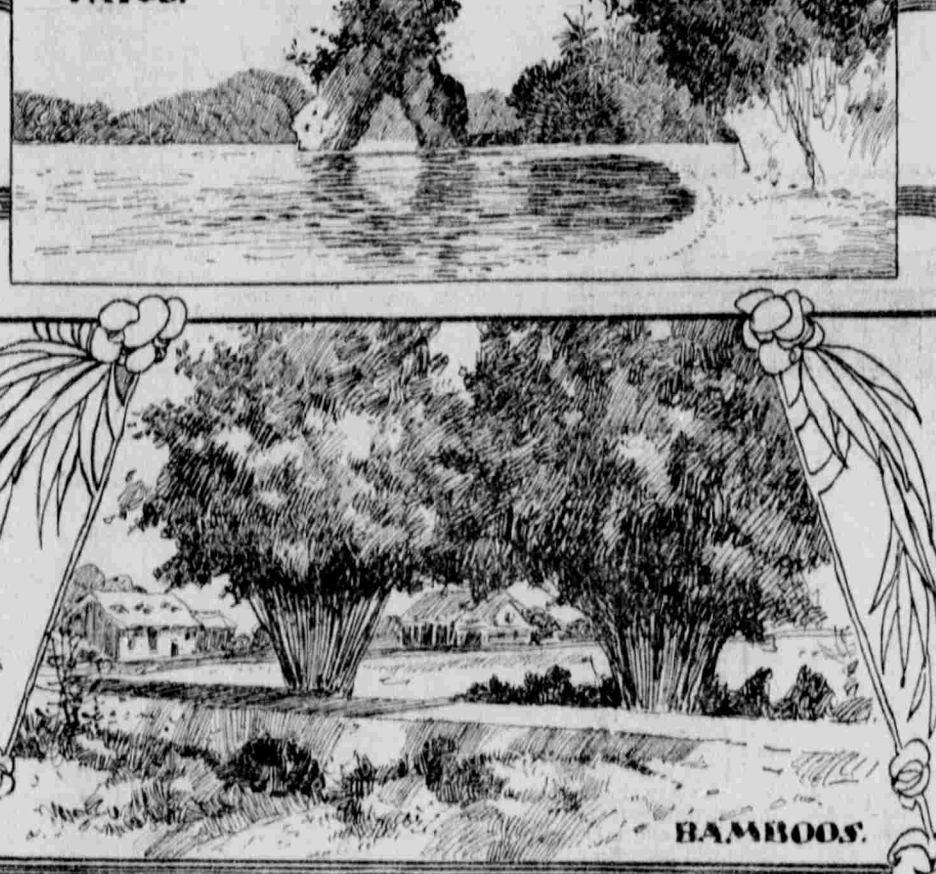
It is Patos, or Duck Island, in fact, lies to the westward of the British island of Trinidad, in the mouth of the dragon, as the channel is called which separates it from the latter island. It was discovered by Christopher Columbus in the year 1498 when he was on his third voyage to America and is identified with an interesting period of American history. Toward the end of his third voyage Columbus imagined himself drawing very near a subterranean inferno, for he had sailed further to the southward than on any previous voyage, and was within ten or eleven degrees of the equator. Reasoning from what he had read in books by speculative philosophers, he expected to find all vegetation parched from the heat, and the inhabitants of such lands as he hoped to discover black, like the Africans, from continued exposure to a tropical sun. So he was not alarmed at the heat which opened the seams of his vessels and drank up the contents of his water casks. Sighting three mountain peaks, he called the land then discovered Trinidad, after the Trinity, and as he came up to it he argued accordingly to the historian of his voyages:



"The earth is not round after the form of a ball or an apple, but rather shaped like a pear as it hangs on the tree, and this region is that which possesses the superlunary or highest part there-

of, nearest unto heaven. Inasmuch that he contended the earthly paradise to be situated in the top of those three hills which the watchman saw out of the top of the ship, and the out-

BEACH VIEW OF PATOS.



BAMBOOS.

rageous stream of fresh waters which did so violently issue out of the gulf of Paria and strive so with the salt water fall headlong from the tops of said mountains."

Columbus entered the gulf of Paria, which lies between Trinidad and the mainland of South America, through the southern channel, which he called the "Boca del Serpiente," or the Ser-

pent's Mouth, and the northern exit of the gulf into the Caribbean sea (which he reached after coasting the western shores of Trinidad) he called the "Boca del Drago," or Dragon's Mouth, because both channels were filled with foaming, rushing waters that nearly overwhelmed his ships. It was while going out through the Dragon's Mouth that he saw the island now known as Patos.

As to the ownership of the islet, let the respective governments of Great Britain and Venezuela fight it out. Perhaps it will not be settled until another boundary commission shall have been appointed and a vast sum of money spent, as on the former occasion. While the island itself is relatively insignificant, being but a mile or so in extent and having no important settlement on it, still it occupies a strategic position with relation to the Caribbean entrance of the great gulf of Paria and Trinidad's important harbor, Port of Spain. A rude fort and a few guns established on Patos could command the channel most effectively, as Great Britain knows full well, and such an outpost would be of greater importance to her than to Venezuela.

Should the present dispute come to a crisis Venezuela will probably contend that the island belongs to her as Spain's successor in the first quarter of the last century. Spain lay claim to all the country bounded by the Orinoco, the Amazon, the Atlantic ocean and the Caribbean sea by virtue of discovery, exploration, formal proclamation of sovereignty and occupancy, as was set forth at the time of the boundary contention a few years ago. Then, again, she claimed all the lands and waters of the new world by authority of a papal bull in 1493 which gave her the two

Americas. Anyway, Spain's title to that region was never questioned, and as Venezuela fell heir to her possessions there it would appear that she has a good case against John Bull, especially as she asserts that she never transferred her title to him or to any of his people.

Great Britain, on the other hand, claims the island by virtue of the treaty of Amiens, signed in 1802, after her conquest of Trinidad in 1797. Trinidad, as is well known, is one of the most important of the British possessions in the West Indies, lying as it does off the northern mouth of the Orinoco, right abreast the northeast end of South America. Southernmost of the West Indies and only ten degrees north of the equator, it has a tropical but healthful climate and is rich in every variety of vegetation peculiar to that section of the world. It is about fifty miles in length by forty in breadth, oblong in outline, mountainous and fertile, with about 250,000 acres under cultivation, devoted mainly to sugar cane, cacao, coconuts, spices and tropical fruits in general. It has a population of some 270,000, composed of English, French, Spanish, coolies and black and colored people. Near its southwestern end is situated the wonderful pitch lake La Brea, with its inexhaustible supplies of asphalt, controlled by the Trinidad asphalt trust. The insular government receives \$20,000 annually for the privilege of working La Brea, and the trust has made millions out of it by transferring the asphalt to American streets.

Patos itself is picturesque, having fine beaches overhung with palms and grotesquely shaped rocks hollowed into caverns. It is hardly worth fighting over, however, being valuable solely from its situation amid the roaring waters of the Dragon's Mouth.

FREDERICK A. OBER.

OUR ROYAL VISITOR, THE CROWN PRINCE OF SIAM

An incidental tribute to the greatness of this growing nation as a world power is found in the fact that the education of no son of a royal house, either European or Asiatic, is now considered complete without a tour of the United States. The latest to avail himself of the unequalled opportunities for observation and improvement in this country is the crown prince of Siam. His royal highness Maha Vajiravudh was twenty-one years old last January, and since his twenty-first birthday has been touring Europe for the same general purpose that brings him here—the improvement of his mind—and the Siamese crown prince is not anxious to know things. He has been in England for the last eight years, most of the time hard at work studying, latterly in Oxford university. First he had a private tutor, who taught him English; then he went to Sandhurst, where he pursued his military studies with such ardor as to gain the rank he now holds of first lieutenant in the army. He is modest and unassuming, cheerful and hardworking, and the rumor precedes him that he is a good fellow for the other boys at school and took his numerous "lickings" like a little man. He is little, and no mistake, being only an inch or so over five feet; but what there is of him is all pluck and determination, his closest friends say, and he doesn't presume at all upon the fact that he is the son of a "really truly" king and the heir to a rich and populous kingdom.

The crown prince was invested with his present dignity when he had just

turned his fifteenth year, being then in London, and his eldest brother having died. The present dynasty in Siam succeeded a Chinese one about the year 1782, when the city of Bangkok was made Siam's capital. The last three kings of this dynasty have been progressive and desirous of extending Siamese relations with the western world, but none has done so much as the present monarch, King Chulalongkorn, who ascended the throne in 1868 at the age of fifteen. His father, Maha Mongkut, who reigned from 1852 to 1868, was broad minded and enterprising, like the son, whose modernity may be inferred by this excerpt from his edict on religious freedom: "It is our will that our subjects, of whatever race, nation or creed, live freely and happily in our kingdom, no man despoiling or molesting another on account of religious difference of opinions, customs or manners."

That King Chulalongkorn is honest and sincere in this declaration is attested by the fact that, though a Buddhist and the protector of Buddhism, at one time himself a priest of his sect, he has encouraged the spread of Christianity in many ways. He is enterprising and advanced in everything he undertakes, and his sending his two sons away to receive an occidental education is but one proof of his desire to keep abreast the progress of nations. He has an annual income of some \$10,000,000, his country's imports and exports aggregate more than \$30,000,000, and though he is extravagant in expenditure, Siam can make a boast if any other nations can—that it has no public debt.

Of the king's magnificent palaces at Bangkok, his queens and his harem

much has been written and probably little exaggerated. His army of about 12,000 men is officered by Europeans, as also is his little navy consisting of a few gunboats. Foreign ideas are making progress in his kingdom, and of Siam's population of some 6,000,000 only about one-third are really Siamese. Education is in charge of the Buddhist priests, but the king has also established public schools in which the sciences and languages are taught. The land to which the crown prince falls heir in due time is rich in mineral and agricultural products, yielding rice, teak, ebony, rosewood, sandal wood, etc., while within its confines, embracing about 220,000 square miles, are found gold, coal, iron, argentiferous galena, antimony and many precious stones, such as rubies, sapphires, topazes and jade. The Siamese fauna is one of the richest and most varied in the world, two of its peculiarities—the white elephant and the white monkey—being considered sacred and worthy of worship by the priests and king.

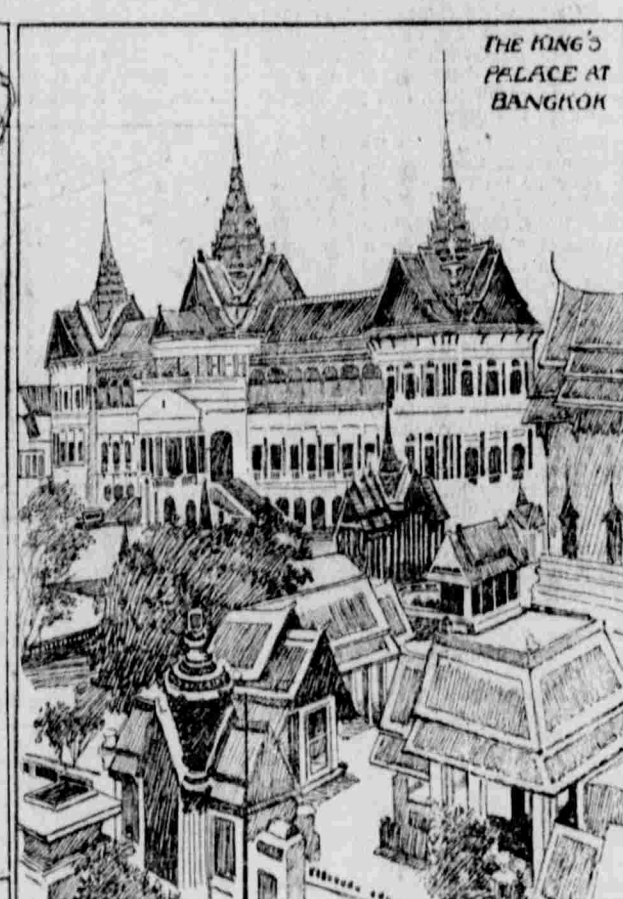
The throne is hereditary, but the king has the privilege of naming his successor, whom he has designated as the young man our present visitor who comes to us in the company of a younger brother and a small staff of Siamese dignitaries.

King Chulalongkorn has his peculiarities despite his liberal ideas, but they were thrust upon him by his religion and by custom. As it was difficult to find females of a rank exalted enough to wed with him, he was married to his three half sisters, daughters of his own father. He has had sons by all his queens, but has chosen to honor the son of his third queen as crown prince. The king is very fond of his



MAHA VAJIRAVUDH, CROWN PRINCE OF SIAM.

children and when the boys were with him liked nothing better than a romp with them through the magnificent palace at Bangkok. His stern sense of duty, however, impelled him to send his



THE KING'S PALACE AT BANGKOK.

sons away for their education, which is now being completed by their American tour. The two princes speak our language perfectly, and the crown prince has even written a book in English, his

ident having designated attendants for them from the department of state. Their mission is one of information, and the crown prince will spend most of his time during the six weeks allotted to his stay in acquiring knowledge of our wonderful industries and institutions.

HERBERT M. LESTER.

GREAT GENEROSITY.

An Englishman whose liberality in no way corresponded to his means found out one day that there was some remainder left in his cellar almost spoiling and decided to get rid of it without delay.

The next morning when he was rambling over his estate he came across a party of workmen. Addressing the man in charge, he ostentatiously presented the ale to the men and said they could go and fetch it as they liked.

A few days afterward he happened to meet the foreman again and immediately proceeded to extract from him in some way a suitable acknowledgment of the bounty recently bestowed.

"Well, Williams," said the donor with the air of a man who had granted an unrepayable favor, "did you and your men have that ale?"

"Oh, yes, sir, thank you, we had it," was the reply.

"That's right. And how did you like it?" said the gentleman, desiring a warmer expression of gratitude.

"Oh, sir, it was just the thing for us," was the rather vague response.

"Ha! That'll do then. But what do you mean by 'just the thing'?"

"Well, sir," said Williams, "if it 'ad been a little better we shouldn't 'a' ad it, and if it 'ad been a little worse we couldn't 'a' dranked it."

HOW WE FEED GREAT BRITAIN FROM OUR CROP OVERPLUS

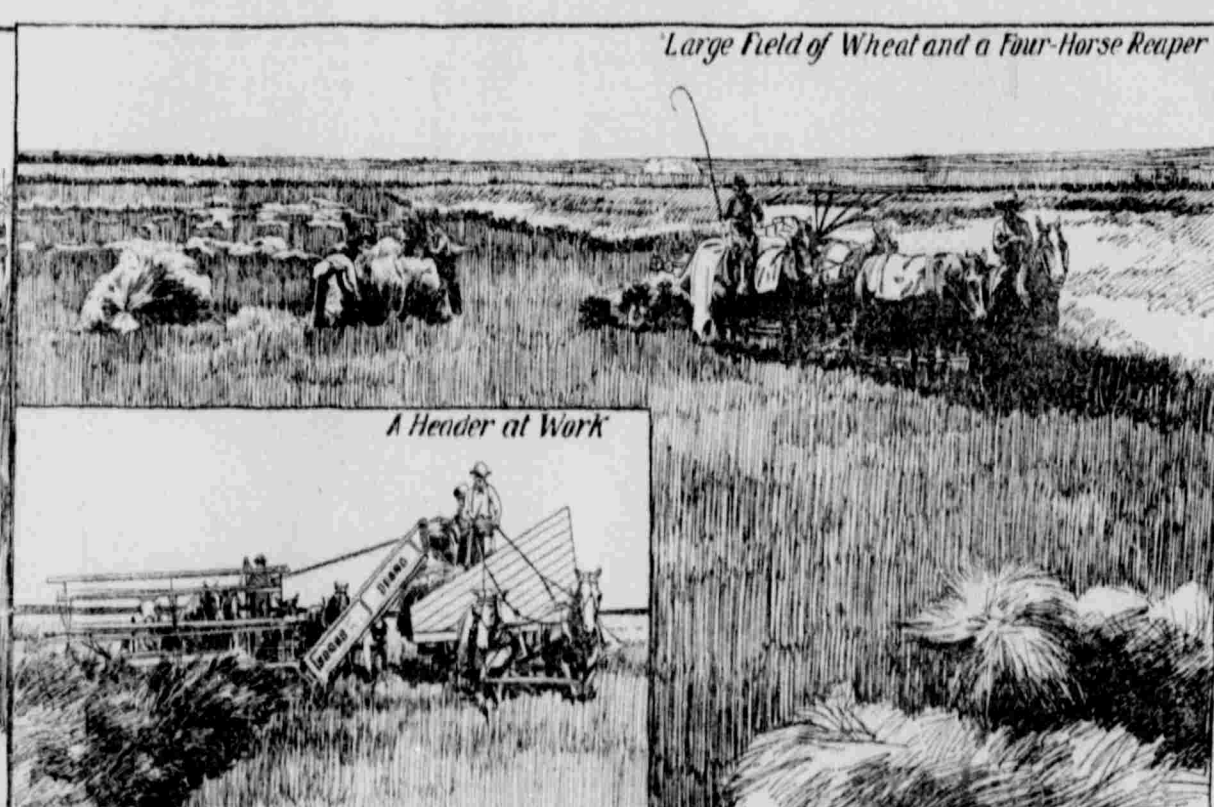
ENORMOUS as are our crops of cereals this year—estimated as aggregating more than 4,000,000,000 bushels—there is no danger that the American farmer will be unable to sell all he has raised. There was a time not many years ago when a great crop of corn was regarded almost as a great calamity, but at present, owing to the increased facilities for harvesting and moving the crops and the demand for all kinds of cereals abroad as well as in this country, the farmer will not be compelled to use the bulk of his crop for fuel. He has corn "to burn," to use a popular expression, and if the price of coal should continue to soar may avail himself of the caloric stored up in the cereal; but the fact is prominent that he will not have to do so in order to dispose of it.

While it is pretty certain that of the estimated 1,500,000,000 bushels of corn relatively little will be left over for shipment abroad, the same may not perhaps be said of the other cereals, estimated at about 1,600,000,000 bushels more. Americans have a liking for Indian corn not yet shared by people "across the pond," and, again, it is in demand for feeding the stock, which in the shape of "meat products" is a far more profitable item of export. Still the fact remains that other countries stand ready to take our agricultural surplus of whatever kind, and especially Great Britain, as English crops this year are reported the poorest since 1860, owing to exceptionally heavy rains.

According to the statistics of last year, John Bull was dependent upon the agricultural productions of America for six years existence. If we should stop



In a Kansas Cornfield.



Large Field of Wheat and a Four-Horse Reaper.

A Header at Work.

shipping him the products of our fields and packing houses, it is doubtful if he could survive a month without trembling on the verge of famine. During the five years from 1896 to 1900, inclusive, says our government statistician, we sent Great Britain fully one-third of all the agricultural products that country imported, to the tune of more than \$400,000,000. We have not yet caught up with some other countries in the export of manufactured articles,

though last year's showing was very good; but we lead them all in the products of our farms and ranches. We sent to the United Kingdom more land, tobacco, cotton, flour, fresh beef, cattle, Indian corn and bacon than all other countries combined, and it is a matter of note that while other countries led in the matter of luxuries, the United States marched in the van with the great staples absolutely indispensable to the maintenance of life. In short,

Great Britain is now dependent upon us for the necessities of existence. Mr. Labouchere declared not long ago: "No wonder John Bull is in a comic state of consternation. The world, from his point of view, is turned upside down. He is no longer on top, but underneath. Instead of being an exploiter he is being exploited. . . . Individual fools have often enough dropped the substance to grasp its shadow, but never before has a whole nation committed

itself to this folly. Our supremacy in trade and commerce is not only threatened, but doomed!"

Mr. Labouchere affects to believe that by utilizing to the utmost British resources in raw material, capital and labor his countrymen can hold their own, but facts seem to be against his assumption. So long ago as 1795 the British Isles began to be dependent upon foreign aid for feeding their ever growing population, and the demand upon

outsiders has constantly increased. Great Britain produces more per acre of every staple food suited to her soil and climate, an authority tells us, than any other country in the world; but she has a larger population to the cultivable area than any other country in Europe, and it is impossible therefore to provide the food required without extensive importations. Land is high, ocean transportation is relatively low, and there you have the situation in a nutshell. It is impossible for the British farmer, with his high priced land and restricted acreage, to compete with the American farmer who tills 5,000 acres in a season. It will not appear that the Yankee dealt in hyperbole who said Uncle Sam might some time "go over and annex England as a garden patch" when the respective areas under cultivation are compared. The United States, for instance, had this year 841,000,000 acres in cereals alone, while the gross area in Great Britain devoted to agriculture of every kind was only 48,000,000 acres. The total acreage of the United Kingdom is under 78,000,000 acres.

It has been asserted that the colonial possessions of Great Britain will soon supply all her agricultural needs and that Canada, which this year boasts of a one hundred million bushel wheat crop, will in a few years supply the mother country's crying wants. But while this may be true, there is one cereal for which there is a growing demand which Canada cannot raise successfully. This cereal is Indian corn, or maize, of which Great Britain took from us last year about 40,000,000 hundredweight. There is only one vast corn belt in the world, and it extends right through the central portion of the United States, including the so called "prairie states," which have yielded so miraculously this year. In 1900 Great

Britain took of us 10,000,000 barrels of flour, and we supplied her with three times as much wheat as the Argentine Republic, six times as much as India, six times as much as Canada and fourteen times as much as Russia. It will be many a long year before supremacy in this respect will be wrested from the United States. While there is a climatic limit to the corn belt country, north, east and west, there is hardly any to the wheat producing area, which is considered incapable of exhaustion for many years to come. It is in the development of her almost boundless wheat lands that the Dominion of Canada will find her wealth of the future and perhaps in the course of time be able to supply all the demands of Great Britain for its breadstuffs. Nobody will begrudge her the honor of doing so, especially as the home demand for United States wheat is constantly increasing, while the wheat land area is not capable of indefinite expansion.

CHANNING A. BARTOW.

THE KAISER'S ODDITIES.

Kaiser Wilhelm never mentions his father in his speeches. He always refers to his grandfather, William the Great, as his ideal, his model and his inspiration. It is true that the Emperor Frederick was never crowned. His reign was limited to a hundred days, and all that time he was desperately ill with cancer. He was a good father, a splendid soldier, a pure and honest statesman—"the wise kaiser," the people call him.

It was this indifference to his father's merit and neglect of his memory that permanently alienated William II. and his mother, the late Empress Frederick. They were never reconciled, not even in death. "I do not understand him," she said once, "and I don't blame other people for not understanding him."

GLEANINGS FROM THE PRESS.

Pension Commissioner Ware has made it a practice all his life to preserve his letters. In his office at Topanga he has a great letter file containing more than 25,000 letters of a private character and another file containing about as many of a business character. He has these letters indexed in such a manner that he can turn instantly to

any one of them by name, date or subject matter.

A ladybird can travel 20,000,000 times its own length in an hour. In that time a sloth can only travel fifty times its own length.

It is said that Lord Rosebery has written a novel, but has decided to put it aside, for a time at any rate, fearing

that the publication might injure him in his political career.

Probably the smallest village in the United Kingdom is Bagley Wood, about three and a half miles from Abingdon. It was formerly the abode of a hermit and has only four inhabitants now.

The French colonies on the west coast of Africa are increasing in importance every year and are receiving zealous attention from the French government.

The United States exported to these colonies in 1899 \$657,266 worth and received therefrom products to the value of \$901,165.

Spain holds the record for cheap working of her railways. Only 48 per cent of the gross earnings are spent in management.

Charles Dickens' office table, chair and looking glass and another high back chair he used in the editor's office

of All the Year Round were sold at auction in London lately for \$425. They were given at Dickens' death to his housekeeper and sold by her to a collector.

According to reports made by the government geologists of Victoria and Queensland, there are no less than 62,000 square miles of coal bearing country in the eastern states of Australia.

The director of the United States geological survey has issued orders for the completion of the mapping of the Roan mountain quadrangle, a section in the heart of the southern Appalachians in the vicinity of the mountains of

that name, included between latitude 32 degrees and 32 degrees 30 minutes and longitudes 36 degrees and 36 degrees 30 minutes.

Searchers have found a hoard of \$2,500 in the dwelling of a supposed pauper

who died at Pontesbury, Shropshire, England. Four hundred dollars was discovered in an old glove.

Sweden has the lowest death rate of any civilized nation. During the last ten years the annual average has been only 16.49 per 1,000.

Crematories for the destruction of the bodies of animals which have died from infectious diseases are to be erected in