

Dr. Hayes to this duty, upon the latter's request when it was known that the expedition was organizing. The *DESERT NEWS* can therefore promise its readers the series will contain everything of a popular scientific nature that will be of a useful and interesting character. The less important personnel of the expedition will be described in the lieutenant's preliminary articles.

The Treasury Department and the Navy Department have very kindly tendered assistance so far as their vessels in Alaskan waters can do so, wherever no established line of communications exist and where such assistance will not interfere with previous orders.

The U. S. Geological Survey, and the U. S. Coast Survey, have generously supplied the necessary instruments to make the expedition a success in their departments.

This is Mr. Schwatka's third expedition of like character in that region, he having commanded the United States exploring expedition of 1883, and the *New York Times* expedition of 1886. For his Alaskan explorations he has received the medal of the Imperial Geographical Society of Russia, the only living American holding it, and no doubt prompted by the fact of that country having formerly been held by Russia.

The articles may be expected to begin not later than the fall, and will be as continuous (probably one a week) as the circumstance of exploration, composition and illustration will permit.

### CAUSES AND PREVENTION OF CONSUMPTION.

In Woods' Medical and Surgical Monographs, for April, 1891, there is an exhaustive and instructive article on "The Causes and Prevention of Phthisis," by Arthur Ransome, M. D. He says that tubercle, in its various forms, at the present day, carries off a great host of persons annually. One-half of the people who die between fifteen and thirty-five, and one-third of those who die between fifteen and forty-five are carried off by tubercle in the form of phthisis or, as it is commonly called, consumption.

It is only a short time ago since this disease was considered incurable. Sir Thomas Watson said: "tubercular disease, when established, is beyond our power." This theory no longer holds good. The medical profession now regards it both curable and preventable. In the past 30 years the disease has diminished by one third in England according to the annual death rate.

Professor Koch's discovery of the

bacillus organism in all cases of consumption was first made known 8 years ago. This discovery is now becoming recognized as a scientific truth, and all the observations and researches made since 1882 only tend to establish more firmly the Koch discovery. This organism it is demonstrated comes from the air in the majority of cases. "The disease is found everywhere. In all climates, in the north, and in the south, east and west. However, various the conditions under which men live, however much they may differ in race, in diet and clothing, and in habits of life, wherever human beings are congregated together, there phthisis is to be found."

Dr. Ransome gives a table showing the proportion of those caused by consumption out of 1000 deaths in the various cities of the world. In Vienna it is highest, being 208. In Rio de Janeiro it is 186. In Athens 183, in Lima 171, in London 121, and in Rome 114, the lowest in the table.

There is also another very interesting table showing, by comparison, according to altitudinal columns, the distribution of consumption at a rate per thousand among the living. In this table Salt Lake City is the lowest of seventy-two columns representing so many places on the earth's surface. Brun, in Moravia, is the highest—exactly ten times greater than in Salt Lake City. Prague, Vienna and Remscheid are the next highest.

The regions comparatively free from consumption are deserts, mountain regions and arctic realms.

Dr. Ransome contends that this is owing to sparsity of population. He holds that as population increases consumption will appear where at one time it was entirely unknown. He admits that occupation has much to do with its increase or decrease. The diminution of the disease in England he attributes rather to improved ventilation and drainage than to advances in medicine. He thinks that with the researches now being made, an effectual cure for the disease will in time be effected.

The work from which the foregoing facts are gleaned is published monthly by Wm. Wood & Co., New York.

### SIGNS OF PROGRESS IN URUGUAY.

THE little republic of Uruguay in South America is receiving at present considerable attention from travelers and men of trade. Several magazines and innumerable newspaper articles have appeared during the past few months relating to it. It is one of the most interesting of the Latin-American countries. In size, climate, soil

and many other particulars it differs from its neighbors the Argentine Republic and Brazil. It is now causing much comment, owing to the fact that it is entering an era of progress and prosperity. At the Paris Exhibition of 1889 it made a fine display, and published glowing reports of its resources.

Uruguay is situated in the south temperate zone. It lies between 30 degrees and 35 degrees S. L. Brazil bounds it on the north and east, the Atlantic southeast and south, and the rivers La Plata and Uruguay on the west and southwest. Its area is about 73,000 square miles—about one-sixth larger than England. The country is well wooded and watered. The climate is moist, mild and healthy. There are only two seasons, winter and summer. In January the maximum heat runs up to 97 degrees F. and in July down to freezing.

The country presents the aspect of an undulating plain, with chains of hills traversing it in various directions, and interspersed with rivers, lakes and streams. The mountains cannot properly be called such, the highest being less than 2000 feet. The Plata, the Uruguay and the Negro are important rivers, and navigable for considerable distances. There also thirteen large rivers, supplied by over 1500 tributaries within the republic, making it one of the best watered lands in the world.

Every kind of fruit and grain known in the temperate and sub-tropical climes can be grown in Uruguay. For cattle it is a paradise. Its mineral wealth is but imperfectly known.

Its estimated number of animals in 1887 was 22,000,000, comprising horned cattle 6,000,000, sheep 18,000,000 and horses 500,000. Its greatest industry is in the beef and hide preserving line. The establishment at which Lieoeg's extract of beef is put up, kills 1,000 animals daily and employs 600 men.

The population in 1888 was 687,194. Monte Video, the largest city in 1889 had 214,682 people; of these 100,104 were foreign born. Of the latter the Italians are the most numerous. Next to them come the Spaniards, and then the Brazilians.

Though Roman Catholicity is recognized as the religion of the country, yet there is perfect freedom for all religious creeds. It was not always thus. A few years ago the Archbishop exercised supreme authority both in religion and politics. At present the Liberal party there care nothing for the edicts of the Vatican. Monks and nuns have been absolutely forbidden to live within the republic. On the 1st of August 1885 all nunneries but one were abolished by act of State. The one which