

THE FRENCH AND OUR ISTHMUS CANAL.

The last meeting of the International Congress of Commercial Geography was recently held at the Trocadero, in Paris, when speeches were made by most of the foreign delegates. The most important subject discussed, and the one which claimed the principal attention of all, was the ship canal across the American Isthmus. The people of the United States will be glad to learn of the progress that has been made towards the accomplishment of this work. At the opening meeting, Mr. Ferdinand de Lesseps declared himself entirely in favor of it, and said that one reason for his opinion was that he was entirely opposed to monopolies. He liked to see competition and many routes of communication opened. He was of the opinion that a canal without locks was absolutely needed for ship navigation, but he did not believe that a tunnel would be objectionable. The two routes surveyed by Lieut. Wyse, and both pronounced as feasible, need tunnels of only 14 and 7 kilometers respectively, while the entire length of the canal will be only from 50 to 70 kilometers. The Suez canal, he said, was 165 kilometers long, and had cost 495,000,000 of francs. Statistics shows that at the present time it is paying handsome dividends, and its stock is far above par. He estimated the expense of the American canal at something like 300,000,000 of francs, and thought that a capital of 500,000,000 would amply cover all expenses. He also said that Mr. Levalley, who had been in charge of the work of the Suez canal, had told him that it would be easier to make a canal such as this than one for railroad purposes, on account of the greater room for working.

Mr. Nathan Appleton spoke most strongly in favor of the canal, in behalf of the United States. He was convinced that when Mr. de Lesseps rang the bell, and gave the word to say that the explorations had been sufficiently made, and that they were ready to decide upon the route, delegates from all nations would come to the summons, and that when the line was decided upon, and Mr. de Lesseps would start the work of execution, and form the company, the capital of \$100,000,000, or even twice this sum, would be easily secured. He hoped the company would be organized in France, with its office alongside of those of the Suez canal, with Mr. de Lesseps as President, and that there would be a branch office in New York. He felt a just pride in what France and the United States had thus far done towards it, and trusted they would continue to work together in the future.

A SCENE IN BRAZIL.

Rio Janeiro, the capital of Brazil, a country whose liberal and high-minded Emperor visited us a few years ago, is deservedly called the finest and most important city of South America. It is situated upon a high strip of land and at its feet lies the bay, the entrance to which is guarded by forts. The harbor, which is very large and deep, is defended by a castle. The city is built upon one side of the bay and is entirely deprived of the inland breezes by the mountains. The heat therefore is tremendous during the forenoon, but in the middle of the day the sea breeze brings fresh air and comfort.

HOW GALVESTON ESCAPED.—The people of Galveston have proved that the way to keep yellow fever out of a place is to keep it clean and drained. Although that city was formerly subject to a severe visitation of the plague once in three or four years, it has had none for 11 years past, owing to the means taken after the great epidemic of 1867 to put the town in good sanitary condition. This experience is of value with regard to other diseases than the yellow fever, and should be duly heeded throughout the country both in cities, villages and country homes.

POULTRY NOTES.

EXAMINE THE COMBS.

It is the easiest thing in the world, when you know how 'tis done, to tell when your fowls are in ill health, even in the incipient stages of any disease or ailment, if you but examine your flock carefully. The comb of each fowl is a true index to the working of its system. If they be in ill health, the comb will lose color and become far less firm in texture; as the malady increases, the color decreases, till a very sick bird will show a comb almost devoid of scarlet, being of a livid dull crimson, or else pale or ashy in appearance. If the cholera, or any other disease, should come into the flock, carefully examine the combs of each bird, morning and night, and all those which are wanting in that bright, rich color which denotes perfect health, remove at once from the flock to a place remote, where they should at once be put under medical treatment.

The comb of a fowl is an honest index of the true inwardness, and should be daily consulted by the fancier who values the health and well being of his flock. Look at the comb of

depends upon the way it is fattened, and on what it is fed, too, in a great measure. To make a bird tender and juicy, it must be fattened quickly. The food which gives it the best flavor is undoubtedly a grain food partaking largely of corn in some of its different forms, the amount and manner of feeding depending upon circumstances.—*American Poultry Journal.*

A BALL SAFETY-VALVE.—A recent English invention has for its object the adaptation and application to steam-boilers of an entire ball, for the purpose of a safety-valve for the escape of steam as required, such valve being capable of being moved repeatedly, so as to present a fresh face to the seating, and thereby economize the use of the valve. And his invention consists in the use of a ball made of brass, or other suitable material, resting on a seating of steel or other suitable metal or substance harder than that of the ball, and pressed down as required on to the seating by means of a weighted frame capable of swinging freely on the ball. This ball is sufficiently large in diameter to admit of its being moved a number of times on its



BOULEVARD LA GLORIA RIO JANEIRO.

a laying hen or pullet! She is in the height of health and strength, and carries her unfailing sign of healthfulness on her head, in the shape of a blood-red, bright, and full comb. A vigorous cock or cockerel will carry the same sign, though not, perhaps, in so eminent a degree as his harem.—*Poultry Yard.*

TABLE FOWLS.

There is considerable difference in the merits of the different breeds of fowls for the table, although taste has much to do in determining which are the best; and, while breed has something to do with it, the age has a great claim, for some are better at certain ages than at others. The young immature and slow growing Brahma, for instance, is not desirable until it has nearly gained its growth, and even then it is far better when a year old, when fattened up quickly. And, in fact, a year old bird of any breed we prefer to chicken, no matter how it is cooked, though many have a weakness for broilers in the shape of young chicks. Young Leghorns, which feather up more quickly than do the Asiatics, and mature more rapidly, make the best broilers, and many a nice one have we helped to dissect after it has come from the hands of a skillful cook.

Although but few persons seem to know it, much of the table merits of a fowl or chick

seating, so as to present each time it is moved a fresh face to the seating, no one face intersecting another. The ball may also be moved at convenient intervals before being worn on any one face. The valve or ball is weighted with ordinary dead weights, but the frame by which the weights are suspended, instead of being fast to the valve, as usual, is made to swing freely on the ball at the top by means of a center piece of suitable concave form, lined with soft metal or other suitable material, to prevent injury to the ball.

PRACTICAL RESULT OF AN ARCTIC EXPLORATION.—Wheat from a new source made its appearance in Europe this year, the Danish vessel *Neptune* having brought a cargo from the Obi river in Siberia, to Hamburg. The voyage from Hammerfest, in Norway, through the Arctic sea to the mouth of the Obi and return was made in five weeks, and without any serious difficulty. Siberia is a great country in extent and there are said to be almost limitless possibilities in the way of wheat raising on its vast steppes, but as long as the country is as thinly peopled, and as difficult of access as at present, our Western wheat growers will have little to fear from its competition. The voyage of the *Neptune* was suggested by recent explorations made in the Arctic sea.