

News and Views

Colorado Beetle in Great Britain

THE recent occurrence of the Colorado beetle in an allotment in the parish of Chadwell St. Mary, Tilbury, has received considerable publicity through the Press. The pest is well known as being the most serious insect enemy of the potato in North America, where regular spraying of the foliage with arsenical compounds is necessitated in order to preserve the crop. During the War, the insect was accidentally introduced into France at Bordeaux, where it flourished for a while before its presence was detected. Owing to the nature of the country, and the vast numbers of small gardens and cultivated areas in the vicinity of the city, the pest speedily obtained a foothold. It is now gradually extending its range and has been reported from the Cherbourg district. The infestation at Tilbury is apparently a very slight one, since only three examples of the beetle have been discovered. Prompt action has been taken by the director of the Pathological Laboratory of the Ministry of Agriculture, aided by a staff of inspectors, and all areas under potato within a 10-mile radius of Tilbury have been subjected to close examination. Approximately 2,000 acres of the crop are involved, and we learn from the *Times* that this area is being systematically sprayed with insecticides by Messrs. Solignum, Ltd., who are the contractors for the work. The possible advent of the pest into Britain has been the concern of the Ministry of Agriculture ever since the insect established itself in France. The occurrence of further specimens in the future cannot be ignored and their prompt destruction is a matter of the utmost importance. Anyone, especially potato growers in the vicinity of ports, who finds a striped (not spotted) beetle, or any red or yellowish grub feeding on potato foliage, will render definite service by reporting the same to the Ministry of Agriculture, 10, Whitehall Place, London, S.W.1. The Ministry requests that suspected specimens, securely packed, should be forwarded to the above-mentioned address. If the label bears the instruction "O.H.M.S." no postage need be paid.

Reindeer in Alaska

THE recent arrival at Kittigasuit, near the mouth of the Mackenzie River, from Sewark, Alaska, of the herd of nearly 3,000 reindeer purchased by the Canadian Government for a food supply for the Eskimos, bears witness to the success of the experiment of importing the reindeer (*Rangifer tarandus*) into Alaska from Siberia after the caribou (*R. groenlandicus*) decreased and the natives were without sufficient food. In 1890, Dr. Sheldon Jackson, of the United States Bureau of Education, made a tour of the Behring Sea in the revenue cutter *Bear*, and noticing the plight of the Alaskan natives and the absence of the reindeer, which so much lightened conditions in Siberia, returned to Washington with the idea of importing reindeer into Alaska. Sixteen reindeer were purchased from Siberia in 1891 and 171 in 1892, and importations continued up to 1902,

reaching the total of 1,280, when the Russian Government stopped the supplies. The reindeer in Alaska were loaned to experienced Lap herders for breeding, and rapidly increased in numbers. By 1905 they had reached 10,000, by 1915, 70,000, by 1920, 200,000 and in 1929 were estimated to number more than 1,000,000, exclusive of more than 300,000 which were killed for food and clothing (C. J. Lomen, *Scientific American*, August, 1929). In 1901, the American Government loaned to an experienced Lap breeder, Alfred Nilima, 24 male and 75 female reindeer. In 1906, Nilima returned 99 animals, keeping their offspring. In 1908 he divided his herd of 800 with his wife, keeping 400 himself. As this herd grew, Nilima employed other Lap herders, paying them in part with reindeer, and in 1914 he sold his herd, which then numbered 1,200. In 1917 his former herders sold 1,717 and in 1921 an additional 1,606, all this the natural increase of the original 99.

THE importation into Alaska occurred chiefly at Port Clarence Bay, near the town of Teller, but later when companies began breeding them at Nome, etc., ranges increased. The Bureau of Animal Biology of the United States Department of Agriculture founded a Reindeer Experimental Farm in 1920 at Fairbanks. At this station, and at sub-stations at Nome and on Nunivak Island, studies are made of feeding, breeding, and management practices essential to the production of reindeer; the diseases and parasites affecting reindeer; and cross-breeding reindeer and wild caribou to increase meat production and to develop a larger and more hardy animal, better adapted to Alaskan conditions, and experiments are being made in the introduction of musk oxen and their domestication (Directory of Field Activities of the Bureau of Biology Survey; Miscellaneous Publications No. 49, United States Department of Agriculture, 1932). Reindeer are found to prefer the highlands to the coastal plain and range inland the greater part of the year, but the warm weather of early summer and the trouble of mosquitoes force them to seek the sea coast.

Broadcasting in India

THE Indian Broadcasting Co. opened a station at Bombay in July, 1927. After suffering many vicissitudes it was taken over by the Government of India in April 1930. On the celebration in the last week in July of the sixth anniversary of the founding of broadcasting, Sir Frederick Sykes, Governor of Bombay, laid stress on the importance of broadcasting in India. The great difficulty the Indian Government has to contend against is to get in touch with the masses in order to explain policies and give authoritative news of public events. The future working of democratic schemes in India depends on accurate news being broadcast. A few experiments with selected sets in up-country centres have been made, but an elaborate organisation is required to develop all-India broadcasting and it will take time to build