For the estimation of fat in milk the Adam's method is recommended, viz., absorption of the milk by bibulous paper, drying, and extraction with ether. As alternate methods the procedure of Morse and Piggot or the lactocrite may be used. In the method of Morse the milk is dried by treatment with anhydrous sulphate of copper, and the fat extracted with light petroleum. Afterwards it is estimated volumetrically by saponification with standard alkali. In the method by the lactocrite the fat is separated in a centrifugal machine, revolving at the rate of 7,000 turns per minute, the milk being previously treated with an equal volume of a mixture of 1 part sulphuric and 20 parts acetic acid.

The method for analysis of fertilizers, with a few slight changes, remains as last year. The most important contribution in this matter was from Prof. M. A. Scovel of Kentucky, who showed that fertilizers containing nitrates could be treated by the Kjeldahl process, if the sulphuric acid used in digestion contained a certain portion of salycilic acid. By this means the total nitrogen existing in the three forms can be determined by an extremely simple and easy process.

The meeting was largely attended and full of practical interest from beginning to end. Two new committees, viz., one on fermented liquors and the other on sugar analysis, were appointed.

The following are the officers and committees for the coming year: President, Dr. P. E. Chazal; Vice-President, Dr. W. J. Gascoyne; Secretary, Mr. Clifford Richardson; Members of Executive Committee, Dr. E. H. Jenkins, Prof. J. A. Myers; Committees, on phosphoric acid, W. J. Gascoyne, N. W. Lord, W. E. Moses; on nitrogen, M. A. Scovel, N. T. Lupton, Wm. McMurtrie; on potash, J. A. Myers, Wm. Frear, E. H. Jenkins; on feeding-stuffs, G. C. Caldwell, W. H. Jordan, Clifford Richardson; on dairy products, H. W. Wiley, S. M. Babcock, H. P. Armsby; on fermented liquors, W. B. Rising, C. A. Crampton, G. F. Fellows; on sugar analysis, W. C. Stubbs, N. T. Lupton, H. W. Wiley.

ALASKA LETTER.

IT is strange that so little is known in the United States about Alaska. It has been a possession of our government for twenty years, and even now interest in it is only beginning to be developed. Yet in it we have by far the most remarkable of all our territories. Its area is not less than 600,000 square miles, or one-fifth of that of the United States proper. It is equal in extent to all the New England states, all the middle states, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, the Virginias, the Carolinas, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Mississippi. Sitka is as far from the parallel of the extreme western boundary of Alaska as it is from the parallel of Eastport, Me. The present governor of the territory estimates its population to be 35,261, including whites, creoles, and natives. Of this number, 10,600, including 3,100 whites, dwell in south-eastern Alaska, the part accessible to tourists.

The native race of south-eastern Alaska is the Thlinket. The Thlinkets are far superior, intellectually and industrially, to the North American Indian. They are variously said to be of Asiatic and Aztec origin, but the majority of observers believe them to be related to the Chinese. They are skilful workers in wood and metals, shrewd traders, and very amenable to civilizing influences.

The climate of south-eastern Alaska is any thing but Arctic. The observations of Sergeant John J. McLean of the Signal Service at Sitka, for the year ending Aug. 31, 1886, showed an average temperature of 44°.8 F. The maximum was 72°, reached both in July and August, and the minimum 4°, reached in January. The rainfall is very heavy, often being more than 100 inches per annum.

Alaska's resources are timber, mining, furs, and fisheries, but as they are only just being measured, it is useless to quote figures concerning them.

The trip to Wrangell, Juneau, Sitka, and the great glaciers of south-eastern Alaska is now easily and quickly made by frequent steamers from the Puget Sound ports. During the summer season there are weekly sailings, and the fastest steamer makes the round trip from Tacoma, W.T., in eleven days. Travellers should provide themselves with warm clothing, for it will be needed during the entire trip. Rubber boots or overshoes, a rubber coat, and a stout pair of walking-boots are desirable. The last-mentioned are necessary for climbing on the Davidson and Muir glaciers, and the rubber articles are a protection against the wet weather.

For maps of the coast, the British Coast Survey maps are to be recommended, and the 'Coast Pilot' is a most valuable aid in determining the various peaks, glaciers, and channels. Though numerous books on Alaska have been issued, no one of them is satisfactory. Lieutenant Schwatka's book does not treat of south-eastern Alaska, and those that profess to do so are superficial and inexact. Hubert Howe Bancroft's 'History of Alaska' is important, but far from satisfactory.

Adequate educational provision for the native and white children has yet to made. The Thlinkets show great ability in industrial work, and it is a source of great satisfaction to hear that an organized course of industrial training is to be put in operation in the Sitka school at once. In the 'Circular of Information' of the Bureau of Education known as No. 2, 1882 will be found an interesting paper on 'The Neglect of Education in Alaska.' B. N.

Sitka, Alaska, Aug. 1.

HEALTH MATTERS.

AGAINST BERGEON'S TREATMENT. — Dr. Townsend and Dr. Hennessy report, in the *Albany Medical Annals*, nine cases of phthisis treated by gaseous enemata, after Bergeon's method. The reporters say that these cases, though few in number and somewhat incomplete, are deemed worthy of publication, as showing that this method of treatment seems as much of a failure in this dreaded malady as are others equally highly advocated at the present day. Besides these cases, four others have come under the observation of the writers, in three of which they personally superintended the administration of the gaseous enemata, the fourth being seen only once in consultation, but the records of which were accurately kept by the attending physician. With reference to all these cases, it is stated that after a fair trial of from two to four weeks it was deemed expedient and proper that it be discontinued for the two following reasons: first, it did no permanent — indeed it might almost safely be said not even transient — good; while, second, it was most disagreeable and annoying to the patients, who generally were the first to suggest, or even beg for, its withdrawal.

CHLOROFORMING WHILE ASLEEP. — In the August number of the *New Orleäns Medical and Surgical Journal* is an editorial comment on the subject of chloroforming persons while asleep. The editor says that there are several points relating to the physiological action of chloroform which have an important bearing on the question. The condition of health and the age of the person are matters to be considered in regard to the possibility of chloroforming people while asleep. To adults in perfect health chloroform is a decided cerebral stimulant, and it may be stated as a rule, to which the exceptions are exceedingly rare, that healthy adults cannot be chloroformed while asleep, unless their sleep has been induced by exhaustion or hypnotic agents. Weakly adults and children take chloroform with less resistance, as the stimulant effect on the cerebrum is less in degree and shorter in duration. Weakly adults and those acutely exhausted by disease or injury may be chloroformed during sleep. Children may also be chloroformed while asleep, and especially if they are depressed on any account. The editor recently demonstrated to several physicians the ease with which chloroform could be administered to a sleeping child when in a state of depression. The case was one of cancer of the mesentery, in which the little patient had been exhausted by pain and restlessness. The victims of chloroform at the hands of burglars are usually at the time in good health. The more improbable, then, is the story usually told of such burglaries. Under all conditions anæsthesia by chloroform can be accomplished during sleep only by skilful administration. Overdosage at the outset will certainly awaken the sleeper. The ability of burglars to force the anæsthesia of several persons sleeping in the same room without raising an alarm is to be doubted. In regard to the impression which prevails that burglars impregnate the air of an apartment with chloroform vapor, so as to gradually anæsthetize all the sleepers at the same time, the editor says that the weight of chloroform vapor and the readiness with which it descends make it difficult to saturate the air of a sleeping apartment, especially one