

third year and between these and the civil engineers somewhat earlier. Mathematics and pure science and the modern languages will be given in the University proper. A good general education is expected to be secured in advance of entrance into the technical courses, which are made entirely professional, as is usual in law and medicine.

R. H. THURSTON.

#### THE PREVENTION OF HAIL STORMS.

MR. JOHN C. COVERT, U. S. Consul at Lyons, writes to the Department of State: An effort is being made in this section of France to dissipate hail storms by firing cannon at the clouds. Fifty-two cannon, manned by 104 cannoneers and their chiefs, have been distributed over an area of 2500 acres of rich vine land. For the expense of the experiment, the Government appropriated 2000 francs (\$386), the departmental council 1500 francs (\$289), the National French Agricultural Society and a number of wealthy wine growers added 12,000 francs (\$2316) and furnished fourteen more cannon. The Minister of War supplied powder for 2½ cents per pound.

A high point in the vine land to be covered by the experiments was selected as the central post of observation and a signal code adopted. When a shot is heard from the central post all the cannon are fired, at first twice per minute; more slowly after the first ten shots. I translate the report of the first firing at the storm clouds this season:

The farmers of Denicé were aroused at 1.30 o'clock on the night of June 5th-6th. The storm was very severe. The artillerists, from 40 to 50 strong, fired their guns and stopped the thunder and lightning. In the neighboring communes, the people saw columns of flames rise 300 feet above the cannon when the shots were fired. At several places, women recharged the cartridges.

The wine growers are organizing to attack the hail storms in many of the great wine-growing regions of France. The two experiments thus far reported are pronounced successful. A writer in one of the wine-grower's organs says:

The results obtained from these experiments

are such that organizations will be established at once in all the places that have heretofore been ravaged by hail.

I am told that the practice of shooting at the clouds was known in France over a hundred years ago, and that it originated in Italy. It is to be more extensively carried on this year than ever before.

#### BRITISH CONGRESS ON TUBERCULOSIS.\*

It has already been announced in the *British Medical Journal* that a Congress on Tuberculosis is to be held in London next year. The date of meeting has been fixed for the last week of April. H. R. H. The Prince of Wales, is the President of the Congress, and among the Vice-Presidents are the Duke of Fife, the Marquis of Dufferin, K.P., Earl Spencer, K.G., Lord James of Hereford, Lord George Hamilton, P.C., Lord Reay, G.C.S.I., Lord Lister, P.R.S., Sir John Burdon Sanderson, Sir Hermann Weber, the Presidents of the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, the President of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons, the Director-General of the Medical Department of the Navy and the Chairman of the London County Council. The President of the Organizing Committee is the Earl of Derby; the Chairman, Sir William Broadbent; the Honorary Treasurers, Lord Avebury and Sir James Blyth; the Chairman of the General Purposes Committee, Professor Clifford Allbutt, and the Honorary Secretary-General, Mr. Malcolm Morris. The Prince of Wales has consented to open the Congress in person. In order to make the Congress as comprehensive as possible every colony and dependency in the Empire will be asked to send representatives, and distinguished guests will be invited from Europe, Asia and America. Authorities in these and other countries will be invited to take an active part in the work of the Congress.

It is hoped that the Congress will be able to adopt practical resolutions which will serve to indicate the measures best adapted for the suppression of tuberculosis. The work of the Congress will be divided into Sections, as follows: Section 1 (State and Municipal). Presi-

\* From the *British Medical Journal*.