

dye-woods, fruits, and herbs, or intended to. In the history "Primer viage de Colon" (Navarette, cap. 1) is the passage,¹ "And besides there are trees of a thousand species, each having its particular fruit and all of marvellous flavour, so that I am in the greatest trouble in the world not to know them, for I am very certain they are each of great value. I shall bring some home as *specimens*, and also some of the herbs." Taking Washington Irving's inspection of Navarette's materials as reliable, Columbus knew the potato—the battata.

Then it is also probable, for here we have to deal with probability only, that the *Solanum* [under the name papas] was known in Spain soon after the conquest by Pizarro [1527], when Cieza de Leon wrote [1532-50].

Both of these are at present but assumptions in respect to dates. The exact dates may perhaps be known in Spain. Possibly some people in England may know what is known, but the writer has been unable to trace anything more through the published second-hand statements.

We in England somehow knew the battata, pronounced and spelled potade or potate or potato, before the time of Hawkins's voyage, and before Shakespeare wrote his "Merry Wives of Windsor," where he uses the word. That Shakespeare's potato was the batata is clear from Gerard's reference to the confectioners using the battata as a basis for their sugar work (p. 781 of his "Herbal").

It was Gerard who called the papus (papus, as he chose to spell it, instead of papas) the Virginian potato, or bastard potato.

There in his work we have the word "batata," or patata, or potato, transferred to the papas, to Bauhin's *Solanum tuberosum esculentum*. Though Gerard does not use the word *Solanum*, his figure and description are sufficient identification. Somehow, though it does not seem possible to trace how, the word "potato" or "taters" has, as an English word, stuck to the *Solanum*. The "battata" has now dropped out of cultivation as an English root, and this no doubt has been the main cause of the transference of the word "battata" from the original battata to the "bastard" potato of Gerard—the *Solanum*.

The establishment of batata as a botanical name, its recognised description, and its admission into generic nomenclature have a curious history, but that is somewhat wide of the points more immediately under consideration.

The whole question is by no means yet worked out, but the above suggestions may draw attention to the subject.

W. S. M.

THE COLONIAL AND INDIAN EXHIBITION

THIS Exhibition was opened on Tuesday by Her Majesty in state. Science in one form or another will be prominent in nearly all of the sections. The Exhibition as a whole will be a geographical education in its widest sense. Not many can follow the example of Mr. Froude and Baron Hübler, and spend the best part of a year in visiting our scattered Empire. At South Kensington, in the course of a few days, however, we may learn even more of the products and people and geographical aspects of our colonies than we might do by an expensive voyage. Of course the main purpose of the Exhibition is to draw attention to the economical and commercial aspects of the colonies and India; but in doing so, necessarily the introduction of a considerable amount of science is involved. In nearly all the sections, for example, we find excellent large maps of the various colonies on the walls, besides the gigantic map of the world in hemispheres beside the gateway of Old London. Again, several of the colonies have sent specimens of their natives, and from India especially there is a considerable number of individuals of all ages representing the various races which form the heteroge-

neous population of that vast territory. So, from South Africa, we find Kaffirs, Hottentots, Zulus, and Bechuanas; Singhalese from Ceylon, and Malays from the Straits Settlements. In several of the sections, also, notably in India, do we find life-size models of natives; some of the finest of them are in the British Guiana Court, prepared by Mr. Im Thurn. Several of the colonies, again, have had large reliefs either of the whole or part of their territory prepared. Among the exhibits of the Indian Survey is a relief-map of the Peninsula from the Tibetan table-land to Cape Comorin, on the scale of thirty-four miles to an inch. One of the finest of these models is that of New Zealand by Dr. Julius von Haast, under whose care this Court is markedly scientific. He has brought over with him the skeletons of three large moas; numerous specimens of flora, fauna, and geology, and the exquisitely beautiful skeleton of a ribbon-fish prepared after the method of Prof. Parker of Dunedin. Maori ethnology is also amply illustrated, though we believe no actual live specimen has been imported. One of the finest conservatories of native plants in the Exhibition will be that attached to the New Zealand Court. But such conservatories will be a marked characteristic of this Exhibition, and will be found attached to the Courts of the Cape of Good Hope, Queensland, Natal, and other colonies. India, of course, has much to show of interest to science, besides its numerous groups of life-size models of natives taken from actual casts. Under the care of Dr. Watt the botany is very fully illustrated. The Geological Survey has sent a fine exhibit; while the Topographical Survey will have a Court to itself. In all the Australian colonies geology is a prominent feature, at least in its economic aspects, and so we may say of botany, at least so far as timber-trees are concerned. In the Australian and several other colonies, moreover, large collections of natural history have been arranged in cases, while of course the numerous game-trophies will interest the naturalist. The trophy of trophies, however, will be the great jungle scene prepared by Mr. Rowland Ward, into which it has been attempted to compress the whole of the fauna of India. It is a triumph of arrangement; and we may refer to it in detail in a future article. An almost equally striking scene is the landscape in the South Australian Court, representing an actual piece of country near Lake Alexandrina. Of course, as in the jungle scene, we have *multum-in-parvo*,—features which in reality are spread over a wide area compressed into a few square yards. But everything is on the scale of nature, and nothing introduced that is not actually met with. We have natives at various occupations, including a woman and child under a rude shelter of branches; kangaroos, wallabies, eagles, and other animals deftly posed; characteristic vegetation and rocks, with mountains away in the background. The model of Hong Kong and the neighbouring coast may also be mentioned. The West Indian Court contains much of interest. The woods of Honduras are conspicuous; many curious land and water products from Trinidad; and a fine collection of Columbian pictures and relics, and several fine paintings and photographs of West Indian scenery. Indeed, in all the sections, pictures, and especially photographs, are among the most conspicuous exhibits, and have much geographical value.

Of course this Exhibition is one of many-sided interest, and we have mentioned here only a few of the points that will attract those interested in science. Its educational value is evident, and we hope that teachers will take advantage of so exceptional an opportunity of giving their pupils a practical lesson in physical geography and its economical and "political" developments. Most of the colonies will publish special hand-books, and in several of them we are glad to know that science will hold a prominent place.

¹ Quoted second-hand through W. Irving's "Life of Columbus."