

# Messenger and Visitor.

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## Morocco and its Revolution.

The state of Morocco is the westernmost of the so-called Barbary States. It lies partly opposite Spain, its most northern part forming one of the extreme points of the Straits of Gibraltar, of which the Rock of Gibraltar forms the other. It has an area of about 220,000 miles and an estimated population of 8,000,000. There are three capitals, Fez, the City of Morocco, and Mequinez. Of these Fez is the largest having a population of 140,000. Of the sea ports, Tangier is the chief. Tangier is the point of arrival and departure of caravans which travel across the Sahara desert. The present Sultan is Abdul Aziz, who has ruled since the death of his father in 1894. He was then a boy of 13. The Sultan of Morocco is the religious as well as the political head of the country. He is an absolute monarch, but he has ministers who advise him. Morocco produces large crops of most excellent wheat and is rich in minerals, though the mineral resources of the country are as yet undeveloped. The three countries vitally interested in the problem of Morocco are England, France and Spain. The rebellion which had gained considerable headway and threatened to unseat the present ruler, has been quashed, and the leader of the revolt has been slain or is a fugitive, or a prisoner. Circumstances might arise at any time in Morocco which would involve all Europe in a blaze. A wise ruler will do much to keep the peace of nations.

## Local Option in Vermont.

After more than half a century of prohibition in Vermont the voters in the cities and larger towns voted in favor of local option. After March 1st when the law comes into operation, the citizens in the different towns throughout the State will decide whether intoxicating liquors shall be sold in their respective communities or not. As far as heard from, the total vote in favor of license was 30,634 and 29,649 against, which leaves a small majority of 995 for local option. In 1853 Vermont voted for prohibition by 1,500 majority. The question was decided by the cities and larger towns Burlington, Montpelier, Rutland, St. Albans and Barre, with the village of Bennington, rolled up a majority of 6,391 in favor of the law, which the country villages and rural districts were unable to overcome. The contest in Vermont shows where the fight is to be waged, if prohibition is to win the day. Centres of population are to be reached. Men must be persuaded of the iniquity of the traffic, and brought to see their duty as citizens in regard to it. The fact is, the cities are our rulers. Here the influences which are at work, are many and varied. Win the cities and you gain your end.

## Venezuela and the Powers.

It is to be hoped that the trouble between Venezuela, Germany and Italy will soon be happily settled. The condition of affairs in the South American republic is very unsettled. There is constant trouble, and those in authority at present have very little idea how long they will remain in control. Revolutions more or less extensive break out frequently. Meanwhile debts increase and, when payments are demanded by the nation's creditors, the answer given is not always courteous and never satisfactory. The time came when, Great Britain and Germany determined to obtain a satisfactory settlement of their claims, by a naval demonstration, to be followed by a blockade of the Ports. Warships of both these nations were dispatched to Venezuelan waters and some time after the German ship 'Panther' and others bombarded Fort San Carlos at Maracaibo Bay, and this when

these long outstanding claims had been placed by the Republic in the hands of Minister Bowen of the United States, for settlement. The action of the German fleet has caused not a little unfavorable comment from the press of England and the United States. It is hoped that the friendly relations between these two English-speaking peoples may not be disturbed by this joint action on the part of Britain, Germany and Italy. In order to secure a settlement the Powers claim preferential treatment, over the other creditor nations which is declined by Mr. Bowen acting for Venezuela, who offers to set aside for a definite time a part of the customs of La Guayra and Porto Cabello for payment of the claims made by these European governments. Unless some arrangements can be made that will be mutually satisfactory, the whole question, or such parts of it as may be in dispute will be referred to the Hague tribunal for adjudication. But whatever disposition shall be made of this case, the South American republics should be taught the lesson that if liabilities are incurred, the obligation to meet them is imperative.

## Newfoundland Fisheries.

There is great activity prevailing in Newfoundland among the seal fishermen of that colony. The fleet is being overhauled at present, and got in readiness for the year's venture. There will be twenty ships engaged, but not nearly so many men will be employed as formerly. The crews will be reduced 25 per cent. on account of last year's strike. The outlook for a good year among the seals is very hopeful. The United States is now receiving thousands of skins, while formerly the fishermen had to depend on the English markets alone. The result is that prices have gone up, and seal oil is in good demand. The winter herring fishery on the west coast has about closed. The catch at the Bay of Islands for the year ending Dec. 31, was about 400,000 barrels, valued at 165,000 dollars. As the west coast is unfit for vessels at this season of the year, the fisheries are carried on in Placentia and Fortune Bays, and will be until the end of March. The outlook for a successful season, therefore, is not considered favorable. The returns of the Newfoundland Bank fishery up to the end of last year have been compiled and show a most gratifying exhibit. The number of vessels engaged were 111, employing 1444 men, and the total catch of cod was 131,000 quintals. The Bank fishery is growing in extent and value and is now as great as the cod fishing industry of Gloucester. This, with the immense mineral resources of the country and the great forests awaiting the woodman's axe, enables the sister colony to make a good financial showing for the past year.

## Briquettes.

In Germany the manufacture and use of briquettes represent a very large industry. They are made of brown coal, peat, and the dust and waste of coal mines, mixed with mineral pitch, as a binding material. These are used very largely for domestic purposes, as well as in workshops and factories. They give an intense heat, are free from smoke and are cheaper than coal. As a consequence of their use in Berlin that city is considered one of the cleanest and best kept cities in the world. Briquettes have been introduced into this country owing to the demoralization of the coal trade as a result of the strike of the Pennsylvania miners, but they have not proved a success, due perhaps to their composition. The experiences of the past winter in the compulsory use of bituminous coal would lead many people to welcome any article of fuel which would abate the smoke nuisance that has prevailed and which has been the cause of so much discomfort.

## Ontario's Steel Industry.

The output of steel for the past year was 68,802 tons the value of which was \$1,610,031. The output for the previous year was only 14,471 tons, the estimated value of which was \$347,180. This very great increase was due largely to the production of the Sault Ste. Marie works. The production of pig iron was 116,687 tons valued at \$1,683,051. The wages paid in the pig iron and steel industry amounted to \$510,107. This was nearly double what was paid the previous year. The production of iron ore amounted to 36,472 tons, which were worth \$5,1469, and the wages paid amounted to \$228,534. If the production of the iron and steel industries in the Maritime Provinces was added to the above, the importance of the industry to the country would be clearly seen. The investment of capital in these industrial enterprises will repay the careful investor and be of untold benefit to this young and growing country. Canada has a bright future before her, if her capitalists and statesmen will do all in their power to develop her naturally rich mineral resources. In the mechanism of the world to day iron and steel play a most important part.

## A Prehistoric Crematory.

There has been quite a little criticism against the use of crematories in the disposition of our dead. They are referred to as "modern institutions, and as among some of the 'new things under the sun.'" But in the excavations at Gezer by the Palestine exploration fund a crematorium in the shape of a cave thirty feet long has been unearthed, the floor of which was thickly strewn with calcined human bones. Above this stratum of cremated remains was a layer of unburnt human bodies. Pottery in a fairly good state of preservation was found in both layers. Prof. Macalister, of Cambridge University, father of the man having charge of the work, was present during the unearthing of the cave. His examination of the remains and pottery led him to the conclusion that the two layers represented two distinct races, both of great antiquity and pre-Israelite. The earlier cremated bones are of a slightly built, but active people; the latter, those of a larger, more robust, powerful race, probably early Semitic. Verily there is "nothing new under the sun."

## The Transvaal Liquor Law.

The new License Liquor Law recently promulgated by Lord Milner for the Transvaal, is worthy of note. It is drastic in its effects, and if faithfully worked will be a great boon to the people generally. The law provides that all existing licenses shall lapse, and all intoxicants containing more than two per cent. of alcohol shall come within its scope. It also provides for 1. Total prohibition of liquor-selling to natives under heavy penalties. 2. No licenses to be granted to colored persons or persons convicted of selling to natives. 3. No barmaids, and no back or side entrances. 4. No selling to persons under sixteen. 5. Closing on parliamentary and municipal election days till polls are closed, on Good Friday and Christmas day and on Sundays, except for hotels and restaurants, where food must be provided with liquor. 6. No wages to be paid in public houses. 7. Heavy penalties for serving drunken persons, and for permitting gambling, and the presence of loose women in licensed places. 8. Objections to renewal of licenses presentable by any policeman, resident, or representative of a municipal borough. Court has power to refuse license without stating reason. No licenses are to be granted near a church, school or native compound. One of the most important provisions is that, on the requisition of one-tenth of the voters, a poll may be taken in any village, ward or municipality, and a bare majority will be sufficient to prohibit the sale of liquor in that locality for three years, or longer, if not revised by a contrary vote. By a similar vote, the local authority, or any trust, appointed by them, may conduct the liquor traffic, applying all profits to public improvements, under approval of the Lieutenant Governor. Let the whole business be curtailed and hampered, until it is driven out of this and all lands.