

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES.

THE ISLAND OF ACHIL.—It is proposed to connect the large and important Island of Achil, County Mayo, with the mainland of Ireland, by a swivel bridge across the Sound. The Island contains 6,000 inhabitants, and is separated from the mainland by an arm of the sea only 310 feet wide at the point where the bridge is to be made. The cost will be £6,000, of which £3,500 has been raised, leaving a balance of £2,450 required. It is stated that when the undertaking is completed it will add more than 35,000 acres to Ireland. It will raise 6,000 people from poverty by the development of their fisheries and other resources; and it will encourage tourists to visit the Island, with its marine cliffs, grand mountains, and many other attractions.

CLIMATES OF CANADA.—Recent investigations on the subject of the climatic relations of Canada to European countries show that the Dominion has the latitudes of Italy, France, Germany, Austria, the British Islands, Russia, Sweden and Norway, and has as many varieties of climate as have those countries. There is greater cold in winter in many of the latitudes of Canada than in corresponding latitudes in Europe, but the summers are about the same. The most southern part of Canada is on the same parallel as Rome, Corsica, and the northern part of Spain; it is farther south than France, Lombardy, Venice or Genoa. The northern shores of Lake Huron are in the latitude of Central France, and vast territories not yet surveyed lie south of the parallel of the northern shores of Lake Huron, where the climate is favourable for all the great staples of the temperate zone.—*School Newspaper (English)*.

THE LARGEST ISLAND IN THE WORLD.—Immediately north of Australia, and separated from it at Torres Straits by less than a hundred miles of sea, is the largest island on the globe—New Guinea, a country of surpassing interest, whether as regards its natural productions or its human inhabitants, but which remains to this day less known than any accessible portion of the earth's surface. Within the last few years considerable attention has been attracted towards it by surveys which have completed our knowledge of its outline and dimensions, by the settlement of English missionaries on its southern coasts, by the exploration of several European naturalists, and by the visits of Australian miners attracted by the alleged discovery of gold in the sands of its rivers. It has hitherto been the custom of geographers to give the palm to Borneo as the largest island in the world, but this is decidedly an error. A careful estimate, founded on the most recent maps, shows that New Guinea is considerably the larger, and must for the future be accorded the first place. In shape this Island differs greatly from Borneo, being irregular and much extended in a north-north-west and south-south-east direction, so that its greatest length is a little short of 1,500 miles; a distance as great as the whole width of Australia from Adelaide to Port Darwin, or of Europe from London to Constantinople. Its greatest width is 410 miles, and omitting the great peninsulas which form its two extremities, the central mass is about 700 miles long, with an average width of 320 miles; a country about the size of the Austrian Empire, and, with the exception of the course of one large river, an absolute blank upon our maps.