

Messenger and Visitor.

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Russian Influence in Italy. The young Queen of Italy, is said to be making her personal influence felt in a rather disturbing way in the political affairs of the nation. The Queen, who was a Montenegrin princess, is spoken of as the recognized head of a new political party in Italy, the members of which have been nicknamed the Caprari (goatherds), in allusion, it would seem, to the raising of goats, the principal industry of Montenegro. The Caprari, we are told, are bent on the extension of Russian influence in Italy, the Russians aiming, among other things, to secure the withdrawal of Italy from the Triple Alliance, and the conclusion by her of some kind of a convention with the government of the Czar. Such an alliance would be in the direction of the realization of the Pan Slav dreams of a great empire under the sway of the Czar, embracing the Balkan States, the Christian Provinces of Turkey, Albania and the Slav Provinces of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The present Italian Government and many statesmen out of office are said to understand and resent the aims of the Caprari and to oppose them in every possible way.

Let us Have Atlantic Standard. The Telegraph is engaged in a praiseworthy agitation looking to such a change in St. John time as would bring it into harmony with the standard generally adopted elsewhere. We heartily wish full success to this movement. The disadvantage of having a standard of time which is neither in harmony with that on which the trains are run or with that generally adopted in the adjacent Provinces is so great and has been so long endured by us that it certainly need not be dilated upon. By setting our time-pieces forward twenty-four minutes we would be in harmony with Atlantic standard time, and in harmony in the matter of time with Halifax and with Nova Scotia and P. E. Island generally, and we would be just one hour faster than Eastern Standard time upon which all our railway trains are run, and would not, therefore, need to rack our brains or miss our trains in the problem of converting local into standard time, or vice versa. If, as the Telegraph seems to think, the Railway authorities can be persuaded to adopt Atlantic Standard time for the Maritime Provinces, so much the better. The adoption of Atlantic time would of course make our time-pieces some twenty-four minutes faster than almanac time for this longitude. But if it should have the effect of getting the people out of bed a little earlier in the morning and giving them a little more daylight to rest or play in after the day's work were done, we do not see that that would be in any respect a disadvantage. It would be much better in our opinion to adopt Atlantic than Eastern Standard time—much better to set our watches on 24 minutes than set them back 36 minutes, as the latter would no doubt, in a general way, have the effect of making the day's work begin later and end later.

Canada's Postal Business. The recently published report of the Post-Master General of Canada for the last fiscal year reflects the general prosperity of the country, and appears to indicate efficient management in this important department of the public service. During the year, 227 new post offices have been opened, and at 347 other offices the service has been made more frequent. The total mileage of mail carriage by stage exceeded that of the previous year by more than 460,000 miles, and the increase mileage by rail amounts to nearly 17,000 miles. The business of the department shows a large increase. The number of letters carried was greatly in excess of those in

the preceding year. In the amount of money orders issued there has been a gain of nearly one and three quarters million dollars, the aggregate value of the orders issued the past year amounting to \$17,956,257. The fact that 877,599 postal notes were issued, aggregating \$1,459,015, indicates that this new feature of the service is being appreciated by the general public. This makes the transmission of money business amount to \$19,415,273. Notwithstanding the introduction of the two cent rate on letters within the Empire and to the United States the deficit in the department is nearly \$365,000 less than it was five years ago, and about \$45,500 less than last year. It should be said, however, that there is still a deficit of \$416,000, and in this the Yukon is not taken into account. The postal service in that country is of course very expensive and shows an additional deficit for the year of more than \$97,000. The arrangement with the United States, by which all postal notes and money orders issued in one country will be cashed in the other, has added materially to the business and revenue of the department.

The Unveracious Boers. Evidence accumulates that, whatever virtues the Boer leaders may possess, a profound respect for veracity of speech is hardly to be numbered among them. Their systematic deception of their own people and the world, so far as possible, as to the facts in reference to the war seem to indicate that they have employed the policy of deception for all it could be made to yield. In this connection a recent London despatch says: There has just been issued an English translation of all the Dutch official telegrams issued during the war until British troops occupied Vryheid. They provide extraordinary reading, comprising as they do the actual reports sent by the Boer commandos and the proclamation of leaders, showing the perfect system by which the Dutch people were continually deceived and kept in ignorance of the true state of affairs. In these telegrams the British forces are boldly accused of attacking Boer ambulances, and hiring Basutos and other native races to take up arms. One report stated that the British apparently respected neither the red cross nor the white flag, and, while the Boers never retreated, but only took up other positions, the British soldiers were always put to flight. The British losses, as given by these reports, were terrific, and the Boer casualties appeared to be confined to cattle and horses.

The Prince of Wales' Speech. Since the conclusion of his world tour, the Duke of Cornwall and York has had conferred upon him the title 'Prince of Wales,' and at a reception given by the Lord Mayor of London at Guildhall, the Prince made a speech which has attracted much attention. Leading statesmen, including Lord Salisbury, Lord Rosebery and Mr. Chamberlain, were heard from on the same occasion, but the Prince's effort is spoken of as the speech of the day. He is said to have spoken from rather copious notes, and it is suggested that some one else may have been at least in part responsible for the ideas presented, but at all events there was felt to be elements of freshness and practical statesmanship reflected in the speech, quite uncommon in the utterances of royalty. The keynote of the Prince's speech, we are told, was the idea of the freedom of the Empire from all entanglements and its dependence upon itself. The Prince frankly conveyed to the assembled British statesmen and men of commerce the impression of the colonists among whom he had been, that the Old Country

must wake up if she intended to maintain her position of preëminence. He pointedly recommended to the special notice of the War Minister the success of cadet corps in the colonies for imitation at home, gave the Ministers significant hints of the strong colonial feeling that the problem of peopling the vacant places of the Empire is too much neglected. Official colonial representatives in London have followed up his hints by a reminder that the German Government takes special steps to encourage Germans to settle within the German empire, whereas British statesmen look on indifferently while 80,000 of the King's subjects go each year to the United States. This, it is said, will be one of the principal themes of the inter-imperial conference summoned to meet in London next June at the time of the coronation. The speech has evidently done much to bring the Prince to the front and to make him recognized as a vital factor in the political life of the nation.

Electric Wireless Communication Between Newfoundland and England.

Signor Marconi, the inventor of the wireless telegraph system, which bears his name, has been in Newfoundland during the past week engaged, as was understood, in establishing a system of telegraphic communication with passing steamers. But from despatches which appeared in Monday morning's papers, it seems that the inventor had something of still greater interest in view—viz., to test the possibility of communicating by the wireless system with a trans-Atlantic station. It is moreover stated that the experiments made in that connection have been in so far successful that Mr. Marconi has received electric signals in Newfoundland from an electric station in Cornwall, England. According to the despatches Mr. Marconi had established a very powerful electric station at Poldhu, Cornwall, and before he left England he had arranged with the electricians in charge of the station to begin sending signals after a certain date which would be cabled him. Marconi selected Signal Hill, at the entrance of the St. John's harbor, as his experiment station in Newfoundland, and cabled the Poldhu station to send signals during certain hours on certain days. On the hill he elevated a kite with a wire attached, by which signals are sent or received, and we are told that signals were received by him at intervals in accordance with the programme which had been arranged previously with the operator at Poldhu. According to the statement of the despatches, the signals were not as strong as Mr. Marconi had expected them to be, but no doubt is intimated that he did really receive signals from a station in England 1700 miles away. Naturally there will be some incredulity in regard to the matter until Mr. Marconi's conclusion in respect to the signals is confirmed, or otherwise, by further experiments. If, with such imperfect apparatus as is at present available, unmistakable signals are received, there would seem to be grounds to justify the expectation that a trans-Atlantic wireless telegraphic system may become a practical thing. Mr. Marconi is represented as having the greatest confidence in the success of his scheme. It is said that he will return to England that he may carry on experiments more advantageously, leaving the Newfoundland station in the hands of assistants. It is also said to be a part of his plan to build a large experimental station near St. John's, having the same equipment as the Poldhu station and designed to play the same part on this side the Atlantic as Poldhu does on the other side.

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