

Everyone is familiar with the fate of the great French three-decker *L'Orient*, whose terrific explosion hushed for some minutes the roar of battle at the Nile. It is known that *L'Orient* had on board specie to the amount of \$3,000,000, and it is believed, on good authority, that the *Maza Mundo*, a large transport, also sunk in Aboukh Bay, had on board an immense amount of plundered valuables and treasure, and a military chest for the payment of Napoleon's troops. A company has recently been formed in England to attempt the recovery of this treasure, now over 25 years sunk in Egyptian waters. Captain Ponsonby, late of the Royal Navy, subsequently in the service of the Khedive, and himself a practiced diver, has examined both wrecks, and both he and the company who have been organized seem confident of success.

United Italy, in deciding to raise a national monument to Giordano Bruno, both honors herself and notifies all whom it may concern of her adhesion to liberty of conscience and freedom of thought. Bruno, a Dominican Friar, was one of those unfortunate great men whose thoughts are centuries in advance of their age. He broke the intellectual chains of his order, combatted the Aristotelian philosophy which dominated the teachings of the church, and took refuge in England, where he wrote his greatest works, in which he embodied views of the universe which would have been startlingly new fifty years ago, and are in some respects abreast of the philosophies of to-day. In 1592 he went to Venice on an invitation which he was warned against accepting; "the emissaries of the Inquisition got on his track," he was imprisoned in Rome, and after seven years' confinement he was excommunicated and burned at the stake.

No one, in such a position as that which he occupies, could be more unaffectedly genial than our present (Military) Commander-in-Chief. He is a man of the world, and his breadth of views and public spirit render him, indeed, in some respects, a contrast to his predecessor. There is also somewhat of a contrast between the Staffs of the two Generals, but it is in a reverse way. While that of Lord Alexander was particularly cordial to all who made their acquaintance, the present staff is certainly no noticeable for that quality. It is also understood that its members entertain some hazy notions about the control they (at least the ablest of them) think they should have over the Militia, and the more hazy it remains, or rather the sooner they dismiss it from their minds, the better. The General himself knows well enough, if his subordinates do not, that the Militia of Canada, under its own General Officer, has nothing to do with the Regulars, unless in war, except in the way of courtesy and esteem, and of voluntary co-operation in any concerted arrangement.

Among the international matters which will have to be settled before all is plain sailing between the United States and Canada, is the Alaska Boundary question. There is at present very little data to go upon, and it might seem that, in view of the almost Arctic wilderness through which the line must pass, the settlement is scarcely urgent. Yet it ought to be seriously considered at once, for it is, with the unscrupulous neighbors with whom we have to deal, one that will surely develop more embarrassing features the longer it remains unsettled. This is one of the legacies left us by the blundering of British Statesmen, and is partly the fruit of the great error of British unfriendliness to Russia. As we long ago pointed out, however, the acquisition of Alaska was a long-sighted move of American Statesmanship, which well knows the value of a claim. It has been suggested that the best way to settle the matter would be for Canada to offer the United States territory to the eastward of Alaska proper in return for the narrow southern tail of Alaska, which cuts off a large section of British Columbia from the sea, and that by fixing the new eastern boundary of Alaska upon an easily ascertainable line of longitude, and the western boundary of British Columbia at the sea, the expense of surveying a boundary line would be saved to both countries. There is, however, little encouragement from foregone experiences of American diplomacy to be sanguine as to the reception of any reasonable proposition.

The cry has been raised in the States that Canadian Railroads should not be allowed any share in American Trade. It is a taking one, and it has been held to be unpatriotic to take any other ground, but a meeting of representative merchants, held last week in Boston, sounded the first note of business opposition thus far raised in New England. The movement against the Canadian roads has been carefully planned, and energetically and most influentially urged on. But the Boston *Herald*, from which we condense this sketch, strongly deprecates laying New England at the mercy of the Railroad Kings of New York and Pennsylvania. It is for the interest of these magnates that the eastern and western trade should centre itself in New York and Philadelphia, and every ton of freight that goes there puts money in their pockets. Every ton that goes to Boston takes money out. "Give them the control," says the *Herald*, "and how much commerce will Boston retain that it is possible for them to take away from her? Our weakness is that the control of our westward railroad connections is either in the hands of Canadians, or of those representing rival business centres. If we are shut off from the Canadian roads we are gone, and it is to be hoped that the delegates of the Boston Executive Business Association, which represents all the great trade organizations of this city, will deliver the mandate they have received in no uncertain tone." The result of the meeting was the appointment of a delegation to the Senate Committee to protest against such a discrimination against New England commerce as would follow the prevention of competition of Canadian railroads.

In a recent biographical sketch in the *West* of Mr. Meredith, the Leader of the Opposition in the Ontario House, occurs the following paragraph, which seems to us to be well worth the thought of all lovers of our country, and promoters of its best and truest interests:—"Mr. Meredith has no sympathy with political cant in any of its forms, and deprecates the agitation that has been going on for some time respecting the future of this country. He believes that Canadians would serve the interests of their country far better if they abandoned the agitation altogether and turned their energies to the development of Canada by natural processes. He is confident that we want neither Imperial Confederation nor Commercial Union, but solidarity—less politics, but more patriotism. He favors the centralizing of political power as much as possible, and so making the exercise of it a great educating force. He considers the system of Government as it exists in Canada, the grandest in the world, and ought to be the means of making first class men."

We are glad to learn that there is a prospect of the early construction of the Hants Central Railway, an enterprise very essential to the advancement and accommodation of the eastern section of that fine county, a large portion of which is many miles distant from railway facilities, and which had hung fire so long that hope of its being undertaken had grown dull. The matter has been brought to the notice of a prominent syndicate of American capitalists, which, having been informed that the subsidy in aid of the undertaking had been re-voted by the Dominion Parliament, has sent its representatives to the counties interested to examine into the matter. A conference is said to have resulted satisfactorily, and a large bonus of some \$30,000 or \$40,000 has been, it is said, promised by private subscription. There seems to be now a fair prospect of the much-needed line being started. All we could have wished was that the syndicate should have been entirely Canadian instead of largely American, but that is not a consideration to prevent our rejoicing in the probability of the project being carried out.

In continuation of the subject of the sign *Taurus*, touched upon in an editorial note last week, the (St. John) *Educational Review* continues:—"This would seem to indicate that over 2000 B. C. the elements of astronomy had been studied and formulated, and even the same idea of nomenclature, in some points, made common to various peoples. It appears to us most probable that the bull must have been worshipped before he was placed in the sky. His position must have depended on his popular estimation. Once enthroned in the sky, however, the bull's prestige would be in a fair way to be increased." Assyriology—more valuable to the student of myths to-day than even Egyptology—leaves little question that "the elements of astronomy" were studied and formulated at a period of even greater antiquity than 2000 B. C. The Bull was a very ancient representative of power and strength, and there is no doubt that Ezekiel's Cherubim presented themselves to the Prophet's mind in the shape of the Assyrian Winged Bull. It is, as the *Review* has intimated, not improbable that the strength and grandeur of the Bull may have prompted the idea of making it the first sign of the Zodiac; at all events, once there, it is certain that the constellation in which the sun stood at the vernal equinox dominated all religious myths for a period exceeding its actual duration in that sign. The Bible, as well as the Nineveh Library of Esarhaddon, and the Assyrian sculptures, indicate the full sway of Bull-worship long after the equinox had passed into Aries. But the old Greek myths, as well as the old Roman reverence for "the Great Twin Brethren" (Castor and Pollux)—vide Macaulay's "Battle of Lake Regillus"—plainly indicate the reminiscence of a yet older time when religion was dominated by the sign *Gemini*.

At a banquet held in March last, to celebrate the 21st anniversary of the foundation of the Royal Colonial Institute, the Prince of Wales opened the proceedings with a speech, from which we make a few extracts. In the course of his remarks he said:—"The establishment of the Royal Colonial Institute was largely brought about by the desire of its promoters to combat the teaching of a certain section of politicians in this country, who contended that the Colonies were an incumbrance and a source of weakness to the Mother Country, and that their separation from Great Britain would be rather an advantage to the Empire than otherwise. The idea of this school, I believe, and am happy to say, is almost entirely exploded, and I imagine that there are few people in these days who entertain any such opinion. We regard the Colonies as integral parts of the Empire, and our warmest sympathies are with our brethren beyond the seas, who are no less dear to us than if they dwelt in Surrey or Kent. Mutual interests, as well as ties of affection, unite us as one people, and so long as we hold together we are unassailable from without. From a commercial point of view, the Colonies and India are among the best customers for home manufactures, it being computed that no less than one-third of the total exports are absorbed by them. Lessons like these the Royal Colonial Institute has continuously striven to inculcate throughout its career; it has promoted the diffusion of knowledge respecting the Colonies and the preservation of union with the Mother Country. Its value to colonists visiting the United Kingdom, for whom it has become a recognised centre, is beyond question, and through its instrumentality they are enabled to trace their friends, to form new friendships, and to exchange experiences with others. No trouble is spared in facilitating their investigations and affording assistance in every way. It also forms an important centre for the diffusion of information to intending emigrants of every class, and to all persons making inquiries on any subject connected with the Colonies." The tone of H. R. H.'s remarks seems to us to be worth giving greater publicity to in Canada than can be accomplished by the very limited circulation of the Institute's proceedings.