

A CHANCE FOR CAPE BRETON.

The people of Cape Breton have for years patiently awaited the dawn of the railway era in that Island; but until recently no definite scheme had been proposed that would be acceptable to the inhabitants of Cape Breton as a whole. The advocates of the southern route have had to meet upon the floors of both Parliaments the enthusiastic supporters of the central road, and these in turn have encountered the opposition of those who regarded the latter route as unfeasible. It is the old story of a "house divided against itself." Cape Breton has been without a definite railway policy, and the lack of united action upon the part of her sectional representatives, has prevented the Island from obtaining the railway facilities to which all parties agree she is entitled. The Dominion and Provincial Governments have offered to subsidize a through Trunk Line from the Strait to Sydney or Louisburg, but we are doubtful whether the inducements are sufficient to warrant any private company undertaking the construction and operation of such a road. But even if they were, it would probably be many years before the people of Cape Breton would finally agree upon the route to be taken. Under these circumstances, we think that the proposals of the new company recently incorporated deserve to be considered by Cape Bretonians. This company, which is styled the "Cape Breton Railway and Annex Steamboat Co." propose to build and equip, within two years, a line of railway from the Strait to St. Peter's, another branch from East Bay to Sydney, and another from North Sydney to Little Bras d'Or. It is further proposed to have connection made between St. Peter's and East Bay and St. Peter's and Little Bras d'Or by steamboats, and to have further steam and ferry connection.

So far as the County of Richmond is concerned, these proposals should be heartily endorsed by the people. The citizens of Sydney proper should also be satisfied with the arrangement, in the event of no company being found to undertake the through Trunk Line, as the line to East Bay gives them speedy and easy communication with the outside world. The line from North Sydney to Little Bras d'Or would place the citizens of the former prosperous town upon an equal footing with those of Sydney. No Trunk Line would be of any direct advantage to the people of Inverness; but if a road connecting Broad Cove or Margaree with Baddeck could be guaranteed, the inhabitants of both the northern counties would probably heartily endorse the scheme of the new company. It will be noted that by the arrangement the lakes would be tapped at four points by railways, and these it is proposed to connect by steamers, thus affording facilities for travel quite equal, if not superior, to those enjoyed upon the mainland. With fast and commodious steamers plying between St. Peter's and Whycoconah, Baddeck, Little Bras d'Or and East Bay; and Sydney, North Sydney, and Broad Cove connected by rail with the three latter places, an impetus would be given to the trade of the Island such as the inhabitants of its many sleepy hollows have never dreamed of.

NEWSPAPER RELIGION.

The attitude of the secular press in the United States towards religion has been made the subject of enquiry by an American journalist. The information which he collects is very incomplete; but it enables him to draw the conclusion that the great majority of American editors either discountenance religion or look upon it as only a protection to morality, law, and order. The German editors heard from, profess total scepticism, while nine-tenths of the English ones, though patronizingly tolerating religion for its usefulness to society, are avowed unbelievers in any creed whatever. This position is most harmful in its apparent harmlessness; it is irreligion covered with the transparent veil of policy. If the editors really look upon religion as only a useful adjunct to law, they certainly very rarely make their journals the mouth-piece of this opinion. On April 12th the practical saltnage preached a powerful and eloquent sermon on "Journal and Journalists," which is full of the highest commendation of the Press. The following passage is among the most forcible:—

"In the clanking of the printing press, as the sheets fly out, I hear the voice of the Lord Almighty proclaiming to all the dead nations of the earth,—'Lazarus, come forth' and to the retreating surges of darkness,—'Let their be light!' In many of our city newspapers, professing no more than secular information, there have appeared during the past ten years some of the grandest appeals in behalf of religion, and some of the most effective interpretations of God's government among the nations."

Then, referring to the alleged scepticism of journalists, he says:—

"Through every newspaper office, day by day, go the weaknesses of the world, the vanities that want to be puff'd, the revenges that want to be wreaked, all the mistakes that want to be corrected, all the dull speakers who want to be thought eloquent, all the meanness that wants to get its wares noticed gratis in the editorial columns in order to save the tax of the advertising column, all the men who want to be set right who never were right, all the crackbrained philosophers, with story as long as their hair and as gloomy as their fingernails, in mourning because bereft of soap; all the itinerant hores who come to stay five minutes and stop an hour. In the editorial and reportorial rooms, all the follies and shams of the world are seen day by day, and the temptation is to believe neither in God, man nor woman. It is no surprise to me that in your profession there are some skeptical men. I only wonder that you believe anything. Unless an editor or a reporter has in his present or early home, a model of earnest character, or he throw himself upon the upholding grace of God, he must make temporal and eternal shipwreck."

It is true, the object of the great preacher may have been to conciliate the press; to enlist the journalists upon his side and upon the side of religion. There is none the less truth in his high appreciation of the work

done by the secular press in the cause of morality and enlightenment, or in his extenuation of journalistic scepticism. There is really little ground for alarm in the attitude of the press. It is scarcely to be expected that a secular newspaper will preach any religious doctrine—that is not its province. If it upholds the cause of right, if it opposes wrong-doing and exposes the wrongdoer, if in short it is worthy of the place it fills in the economy of society, it cannot fail to be a powerful co-adjutor to the pulpit

MONEY—OR A DIVORCE.

We have long been convinced that the interests of these Maritime Provinces would be greatly promoted could their union be effected in a manner satisfactory alike to the people of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island; and we firmly believe, that with an united Province, a readjustment of the financial terms of confederation could readily be brought about. This, we presume, is the ultimatum arrived at by those supporting the resolutions of the Provincial Secretary in the Provincial Assembly.

The strong objections which were taken against the financial terms of the union at the time of Confederation, were for a period of ten years allowed to rest, owing to the increased subsidy obtained for Nova Scotia by the late Hon. Joseph Howe. That astute statesman predicted the present crisis, and declared, despite the Hon. Edward Blake's desire to make the settlement which he accomplished a final settlement: "that posterity would have to fight its own battles."

The financial condition of this Province is certainly far from satisfactory, but we fear that the people of New Brunswick and P. E. Island are as yet far from favorable to a Maritime union; and in the absence of definite action upon the part of the people's representatives in our sister Provinces, we fail to understand how a purely Nova Scotian Assembly can affirm "that the financial and commercial interests of the people of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, would be advanced by these Provinces withdrawing from the Canadian Confederation, and uniting under one Government."

CHEAP AND READY TRANSFER OF LAND.

We are pleased to observe that the Dominion Government has determined to adopt for the North-West Territories the Torrens Land Transfer System, which has been found to work so well in the Australian Colonies. So far, the County of York, Ontario, is the only section in this country to which the Torrens Act applies; but there can be no doubt, that so soon as our people become familiar with its advantages, it will find a place in the Statutes of the several Provinces. The peculiar feature of the Torrens system is that the title does not pass, until the registration, from the grantor to the grantee. A person wishing to sell a piece of land, makes a short memorandum of the sale, which he hands to the registrar with his certificate of title. The registrar issues a new certificate to the vendee, and this certificate constitutes a perfect title. The transfer is cheap, simple and effective. Under the Torrens system trusts are not recognized; the title must pass absolutely from the registered owner to the purchaser, but where there is a trust a memorandum to that effect is made in the register, and a title can be given by all the trustees jointly.

The system has much to commend it. It requires no more education to transfer land under this system than it does to discount a note, or purchase a post office money order. The disposers and purchasers of property are saved from the annoyances and loss of time arising out of the cumbrous method of transfer now in vogue, and are not called upon to pay heavy fees to the professional men for searching titles, and the drawing up of new deeds.

FROZEN BUT NOT DEAD.

It has been stated by men of unquestionable veracity that the Hindoos have the power of suspending animation for many days, and that instances have been known of persons while in this state of suspended animation, being buried in the ground until the grass had commenced to sprout from the earth above them; when they were taken out, and again restored to their customary vigor. But however skeptical our readers may be as to the truth of such statements, they will be inclined to regard the announcement as to the recent discoveries of the Swedish magician, Dr. Grusdback, as quite beyond the region of possibility. Dr. Grusdback claims to have discovered a method whereby he is enabled to freeze human beings alive, and after keeping them in a frozen state for an indefinite period, again restoring them to vitality. The announcement of this discovery has created a great sensation among European Savants; and several persons well known in society have offered in their own persons to prove the feasibility of the experiment. We had always imagined that a frozen man was a dead man, but if Dr. Grusdback can convince us to the contrary we are quite open to conviction. Certainly the discovery of any means by which a frozen man could be thawed out and restored to vitality would be of great advantage to those dwelling in the zero climates.

We laugh at John C. Haman, but we may after all learn a few lessons from the inhabitants of the flowery land. The Celestials recognize the hereditary principle in the nobility, but they have adopted a descending scale by which the son of a duke holds the position of a Marquis, while the son of a Marquis is an Earl. By this method family titles run out in a few generations unless its members are able by their services to the country to earn fresh laurels. The families of Confucius and Coxinga are the only exceptions.