

Prominent Topics.

Australian Constitution.

The people of Australia, in a recent referendum, voted down a proposition to give the Commonwealth Parliament supreme power in matters of trade, commerce and industry. Nevertheless, Federation will never be an unqualified success in Australia until this reform is brought about. A uniform fiscal system is one of the first essentials of a Federal system of Government. Imagine Canada with a separate tariff for each province and custom house frontiers to keep each from doing business with another!

The British Empire Property.

Sir Joseph Ward, the Premier of New Zealand, expressed himself happily when he said that the British Empire should be treated as a vast property to be developed on behalf of the whole British family. Development on these lines naturally entails consolidation; an estate developed piecemeal, without any set plan or consultation of the tenants of one part of it with the tenants of the other part of it, might be successful as a curiosity but scarcely as an example of development.

Scoria Blocks in Front of St. George's Church.

The determination of the Board of Control to persist in laying scoria blocks in front of St. George's Church in spite of the protest of the congregation is in questionable taste as well as of questionable wisdom. The Board certainly has the virtue of being "very set in its ways," whatever that may be worth. We fail to see that it would have jeopardised its cherished infallibility, by paying a little heed to the reasonable wishes of those most immediately interested. Nobody wants the scoria block paving but the controllers. The street is at present macadamised and it is not in any event of pressing necessity to do more than keep it in repair. The citizens have some right which even bombastic controllers should not attempt to override.

The Hot Spell.

The North American continent seems to be passing through one of the severest and longest hot spells on record. About five hundred deaths and many thousands of prostrations are reported as the result of the heat. Many cities in the United States have suffered even higher temperatures than has Montreal, and it is noticeable that in cities which have been much more numerous than in this city. The difference is attributed to greater humidity. The people of the high latitudes have never learned, unlike the people of tropical and sub-tropical lands, to accommodate themselves to high temperatures. The siesta is regarded as common laziness rather than common sense, and the art of light cloth-

ing and proper dieting is but little understood. The hot weather leads some people to ice-water and some to fire-water and has no difficulty in making both classes drink, greatly to the aggravation of the weather.

Germany in Morocco.

Germany having sent the Berlin, a protected cruiser, to succeed the gun boat Panther, it must be taken as a frank challenge to all the other interested powers to say what they have to say about Morocco. The Kaiser does not even pretend that the services of a protected cruiser are necessary to guard any German subjects or German interests at Agadir. He has staked German prestige and his own prestige as a European diplomatist upon a single throw of the dice. The powers must either force His Imperial Majesty to withdraw from Agadir or they must allow him to establish a coaling station at that point, share in the partition of Morocco and score heavily at their expense in the matter of prestige. The powers may regard the German action as a bluff, but if they meet it in the only possible way to meet such bluffs, Germany must either fight or back-down ignominiously. German interests are very wide-spread just now. Like Japan, Germany has interests prospective in every spot on earth where there is a chance for colonization or trade development. She has achieved her present magnificent position at the point of the bayonet and naturally believes in the bayonet exercise. But as Prince Bismarck said: "You can do anything in the world with bayonets except sit down upon them." While there is anything left to conquer, the German bayonets will not grow rusty for want of use. That Germany has ambitions in Austria-Hungary, in the Balkans and in Persia is obvious; she might not even shrink from the responsibility of keeping the peace in Constantinople should the Euphrates dry up, and even in the event of a graceful back down in Morocco, she may find compensations in eastern Europe. One thing is evident, and that is that the German Government has deliberately stirred up a hornets' nest and it would not be complimentary to German intelligence to assume that the mischievous prank was only played for the fun of the thing.

During the first six months of the current year the railroad, industrial, mining, and other corporations in the United States have issued new securities to the total of \$1,229,497,050, according to a compilation made by the New York Journal of Commerce. This compared with \$1,048,431,050 last year, the increase, therefore, being \$181,066,000. The railroads were wholly responsible for this increase, their offerings having reached \$855,417,000, or \$186,150,550 more than in the first half of 1910. Of this increase fully 50 per cent. consisted of short-term notes.