

it. The forest had quite disappeared by the middle of the tenth century. Occasionally, at very low tides after storms, remains of it are disclosed, just as at present.—*The School Guardian*.

MAKING THE DESERT BLOSSOM.—The French have done a wonderful work in Algeria in reclaiming waste land by means of artesian wells. There is an area of 329,415 square miles in that part of the continent under French control, one-half of which belongs to the Sahara or desert. In 1857 it was shown that there were large supplies of underground water, and the total number of wells that have been bored since that date is 13,135. Large districts thus watered are used in raising grapes. The date palm also flourishes, and wheat, barley, oats, olives, tobacco, etc., are cultivated.—*The School Journal*.

2. CANADA'S GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.—Canada gives to its Geological Survey only \$60,000 a year, while the various geological surveys in our own country absorb nearly a million dollars annually. Yet Canada makes a fine showing with this modest sum. The annual geological reports are in part records of original discovery and research, and with their fine maps and photogravures are as interesting as many books of travel. Canada contains the largest unknown areas of the American continent.—*Goldthwaite's Geographical Magazine* (N.Y.).

THE DARDANELLES QUESTION.—The water passage which is, perhaps, the most important, politically, and is the most anxiously watched in the world, is the little, narrow strait known as the Dardanelles. It is the channel which joins the Sea of Marmora, and indirectly the Black Sea, with the

Grecian Archipelago, and so with the Mediterranean and the Atlantic beyond. It is the narrow strip of water which separates, at a breadth of from one to four miles, the continent of Asia from that of Europe in that corner of the world. It is forty-seven miles in length, strongly fortified on both sides, and is under the control of the Sultan of Turkey, through whose dominions on either side it flows. The main significance of this water passage is that it is the portal of Constantinople and the Black Sea. For centuries, therefore, it has had a great military and political importance. It is the only southern water outlet by which the great empire of Russia can reach the oceans.

Intimately connected with the straits of the Dardanelles is the long existing ambition of Russia to obtain possession of Constantinople and the European part of the Sultan's dominions. This has really been the purpose of Russia for two centuries. But the other powers of Europe, and especially Great Britain, have always been opposed to the attainment of this Russian ambition, which has brought about two wars within the past forty years. The Crimean War of 1853-6 was fought on the issue whether Russia should have the right to establish naval stations and sail her war ships on the Black Sea, and to send her war ships, as well as her merchantmen, through the Dardanelles. The defeat of Russia by the allied powers of Great Britain, France, Italy, and Turkey in that war resulted in the Treaty of Paris, which practically forbade Russia to do either. It had already been settled fifteen years before, by the treaty of 1841, that no war ship of any nation except Turkey should pass through the Dardanelles without the consent of the Sultan.

But in 1871 Russia took advantage of the general confusion of European affairs caused by the Franco-German