

to which is sure to take an active and threatening form. If a particular tenant cannot, from any cause peculiar to himself, pay rent that is past due, is that a reason why a landlord should be deprived of the right of renting the land to some one who will pay rent, in future? Mr. Gladstone objects to the State paying the difference between present rents and the reduced rate which the law may fix. The objection is good to the extent that present rents are exorbitant; but if the State takes from the owner of property the right to get what he could realize from it, and compels him to accept less, there is surely a case for compensation.

Is the carriage of sewage by water detrimental to public health? This question was answered in the affirmative by Dr. Tidy at a recent meeting of the London society of chemical industry. He favored the dry-earth closet, but he would find it hard to work in a great city like London. On the whole this is probably the best mode of disposing of sewage; and in all our towns, where sewage cannot be water-carried, it ought to be made compulsory. Perhaps we ought not to stop even here, but extend the system farther.

From New York to Charleston and far inland an earthquake disturbance, almost unprecedented in the extent of country disturbed, took place on Tuesday night. At Charleston, the force of the shock was strongest, causing a loss of twenty lives and destruction of property, estimated at \$5,000,000. No serious damage at other points has been reported.

Prince Alexander, of Bulgaria, is on his way to resume his throne at Sofia, which he will probably reach to-day. The *coup d'etat*, which was intended to get rid of him, is apparently due to a profuse use of Russian gold. And though the purpose of Russia, the control of Bulgaria, has not been realized, it would be unsafe to conclude that it has been abandoned. Should any of Russia's dupes be hanged, as a result of their treason, would Russia go to war to avenge them?

THE ISLAND OF ANTICOSTI.

For many years this island, which was granted as a seignory by the crown of France, for services rendered by one of its subjects, has been an object of speculation in more senses than one. In popular estimation, it has been regarded as a place the dangerous shores of which ought to be avoided by all wise mariners; while a forced residence on its coast suggests starvation, as having been the fate of some shipwrecked crews. Attempts to sell the island have been made, at several times, and it has occasionally changed hands in this way. Just now an effort is being made to sell it in England for a round sum, with a view to colonization; an enterprise not without peril, since enough is not known of the resources and capabilities of the island to justify such a venture on a large scale. What the proprietors would be justified in doing would be to give the option of pur-

chase to a company, which should undertake to raise a sufficient sum of money to secure a full exploration of the island as a means of dispelling the doubts which exist about its value for agricultural or mining purposes, or for the timber that it may contain. Any advantages which it may have in connection with the fishery of these regions can be judged of without further information.

The attempt to sell the island, in the absence of the information necessary to form a reliable opinion of its value, has been strongly condemned, in some quarters, and not altogether unjustly, though the mode of denunciation indulged in cannot always be commended. The fact is recalled that, about six years ago, a steamer had to be sent down to bring off the island, their crops having failed, some sixty families who had taken up their abode there. This was an ill omen, but as the catastrophe might be due to exceptional causes, it is not necessarily decisive. While a large quantity of virgin soil of undoubted fertility remains to be taken up, in more advantageous situations, it is not worth while to run the risk of colonizing an island of which so little that is favorable is known. In any case, it would not be wise to take the decisive step of planting a colony of considerable dimensions, before the quality of the soil and the nature of the climate were placed beyond all doubt. The time for colonizing Anticosti Island, if it be capable of being colonized, may come; the mistake is in assuming that it has come already.

The attempts to "boom" the island have probably not been all quite disinterested. The number of wrecks on its coast has been accounted for by the statement that captains who determined to wreck their vessels, sought out this island, where its ill-fame would tend to ward off suspicion, and where the operation could be performed in safety, away from the prying eyes of hostile witnesses. It has also been said that the Manicouagon shoals, Cape Rosier, Cape Chat, and Mantane and Green Islands, and other places on the main shores of the river and Gulf of St. Lawrence, are more dangerous and answerable for more wrecks than Anticosti. However this may be, what lies within the island concerns us, at present, more than the dangers that encompass its coast line. Anticosti is situated between 49° and 50° n. lat. and 61° and 65° west longitude, being more than four hundred miles below Quebec. It comprises nearly two millions of acres, being considerably larger than Prince Edward Island, with which it would not in any other respect bear a comparison. It is about 130 miles long and, at South West Point, where it is broadest, 35 miles wide. It has two tolerably good harbors. The elevation of the surface varies considerably at different points: on the south side, it is from twenty to sixty feet above the beach; at Observation River it is from two to three hundred feet high.

Mr. Alfred Roche, who wrote a paper on the island more than thirty years ago, seems to have felt a real enthusiasm for his subject. He claims that the island

contains "very fine natural meadows, producing rich grasses, five and six feet high." and that "in some parts there are alternate ranges of wood and open plain." But is not this length of grass somewhat suspicious? Are natural grasses of that length likely to be "as rich as any on this continent?" It may be that cattle "can be left out to graze there longer than they can be at Quebec," but the unaccountable thing is that all this natural treasure has been allowed to go to waste for three centuries and more. On the south side extensive peat bogs are found; salt ponds exist, which Mr. Roche thought could be turned to account. The fact that the soil rests on a substratum of limestone ought to be in its favor. Captain Bayfield found some of the cliffs composed of sand, clay and limestone; from which fact it has been plausibly argued that the interior cannot be destitute of good soil. But it will not do to rely upon hypothesis, in a case where human life and a large sum of money are asked to be put in the venture; it is this want of certainty that demands a complete exploration of the island, so that people may not be asked to buy "a pig in a poke," and colonists may not venture at unknown cost. It is true that Mr. Corbet, who resided at North Bay for ten years, speaks of the surface generally of "black light soil, clay and sand." But had he the means of speaking of the island generally? A residence at one point would not give him that qualification, and it constituted his whole experience. Mr. Corbet must therefore be understood to speak of the very limited space that came under his own observation. And it ought to be remarked, without however placing too much stress upon the observation, that Lieut. Badgley, R. N., had previously described this very spot as the most barren and uninteresting in the whole island, only a very small part of which he had most certainly seen. It seems probable that parts of the island are capable of growing oats and potatoes, though it is not certain that the oats would always ripen. Mr. Morrison stated, many years ago, that he had successfully grown wheat, barley and oats on the south side of the island; but the fact remains to be satisfactorily accounted for that his experience has so very seldom been repeated. It is claimed that the climate is mild, in winter, compared with that of Quebec; and this could be easily understood from the insular position of Anticosti, in the absence of large bodies of surrounding ice. But how does the ice which comes down Davis Strait affect the summer climate?

A fishery with its head quarters on the island would probably do well; there seems to be no reason why it should not. Large numbers of fishing vessels regularly go there from other places, and a sedentary fishery would have some advantage over these. The mineral resources of the island, whatever they may be, are little known and belong to the category of lotteries, in which all such uncertain things must find a place. Complete exploration of the island, we repeat, is what is wanted, not a rash and premature essay in colonization carried on at great risk of life and money.