

Messenger and Visitor.

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Mr. Carnegie's Proposed University. Mr. Andrew Carnegie appears to be making tolerably good progress in his endeavor to dispose of his vast fortune in the promotion of philanthropic enterprises. It may be almost as difficult an undertaking to give away a great fortune judiciously, as it is for some men to gather one. Among the most recent proposals of Mr. Carnegie is the founding of a national University at Washington. For this he has offered \$10,000,000, and it is said that if such a start is made with the undertaking as to encourage the expectation of large results, Mr. Carnegie is prepared to supplement the offer to such an extent as will bring the endowment up to \$25,000,000. So far as the public has been informed it does not appear that any definite plan as to the lines upon which the propose University will be developed has yet been evolved.

Branded Candles and Cigarettes.

It has been reported that some samples of candies seized by the police in Montreal on the suspicion of containing brandy, were found on examination to contain more than three per cent. of alcohol. The selling of confectionary so strongly charged with alcohol is a serious business. Children supplied with such candies may be expected very soon to acquire a taste for alcoholic stimulants, and the result cannot fail to be pernicious. Branded candies would play the same part in luring children to the use of intoxicating drinks that the cigarette does in bringing them under the bondage of the tobacco habit. It is beyond question that the cigarette is at the present time working immense injury to the manhood of our country. It is a common thing in our cities to see boys of a tender age smoking cigarettes, and it would seem as if there are many young men who are seldom on the streets without a cigarette or cigar in their mouths. Little nor nothing, it would appear, is being done to check this evil. The only thing in the way of legislation that would have any effect would be the entire prohibition of the cigarette. So long as cigarettes are made and sold they will of course find their way into the hands of boys, and thus the great army of smokers will be continually recruited from the ranks of growing boys who will acquire the tobacco habit at the expense of large loss to their physical and moral manhood.

The Trans-Isthmian Canal.

Now that Great Britain has given the United States an absolutely free hand in respect to the proposed trans-Isthmian Canal, it is probable that, before many years shall pass, a way will be made for the passage of ships from ocean to ocean across the neck of land which connects the two American continents. The Canal would save a long and perilous voyage around the Cape, and as it would thus have the effect of making water communication between the eastern and western shores of America comparatively easy, it would doubtless soon become a great commercial highway. It has been generally assumed that the Nicaraguan route for the Canal would be chosen, but this is not certain, and there seem to be some reasons for thinking that the Panama route, upon which so much money was expended in connection with the ill-fated scheme of De Lesseps, will be finally adopted. It is said that the majority of engineers favor the Panama route, and that the reason the Nicaraguan route has been given the greater prominence, in connection with the proposed undertaking by the United States, is that the Panama route is controlled by a Company which was unwilling to dispose of its rights except at a very extravagant price. It is believed now that the Panama Company would sell its rights at a reason-

able figure, and if so, it would seem not improbable that the United States Government will adopt the Panama route as the more feasible, at the same time forestalling the possible construction of a rival canal at Panama in the future.

Marconi and His Work.

One of the most noted men of the present time is Signor Marconi, who, if not the discoverer of the principles involved in wireless telegraphy, has done more than any other man to turn the discovery to practical account. Marconi is a young man, about thirty years of age, it is said. His birthplace is Bologna, Italy, and his father was an Italian, but his mother was an English woman, and since 1893 he has himself been a resident of England. For about seven years, it is said, he has been at work upon the subject of wireless telegraphy. He had been experimenting for some time on the family estate at Bologna before he discovered that electric waves generated by a sparking apparatus of the kind used by the German physicist, Heinrich Hertz, would not only carry to long distances, but were unaffected by intervening hills or other natural obstacles; but, up to 1896, two miles was the maximum distance of communication which had been attained by the wireless method. In that year Mr. Marconi went to England and succeeded in getting the patronage of the British postal officials, under whose auspices he carried out signaling experiments on Salisbury Plain and at Penarth. Since then he has gradually improved both his methods and his records, the distance traversed by his etheric signals being increased successively from fourteen and a half miles, between Alum Bay and Bournemouth, to eighteen miles (Alum Bay and Poole), and thirty-two miles, obtained between two stations erected on Dover Cliff, close to the South Foreland lighthouse, and at Wimeraux, near Boulogne. In September, 1899, he gave an exhibition of his wireless signalling at Dover Town Hall, at which period he asserted his ability to flash messages a distance of eighty miles. Since that year Marconi has steadily improved his system, and increased its practical field of usefulness, chiefly in the direction of communication between passing ships at sea and between the shore and incoming and departing vessels. Regular ship reporting stations have been established on the Irish coast, and at Nantucket. The time of isolation from the outside world experienced by the great transatlantic steamships has been shortened nearly a day, communications passing between the vessels and the Marconi stations a long time before the steamers reach their destinations.

More About Marconi and Wireless Telegraphy.

Credence appears to be quite generally given to the statement that signals were sent from Cornwall, England, and received in Newfoundland, by means of wireless telegraphy. Of course there are some doubters, although probably no one is disposed to question Mr. Marconi's good faith in the matter, and the wonderful success he had already achieved in wireless telegraphy naturally disposes to confidence in his opinions and conclusions. Still there are a good many naturally cautious persons who will feel more confidence in the statement that the signals sent from Cornwall were actually registered in Newfoundland, when the statement shall be confirmed by further experiments. The signal agreed upon between Marconi and his assistants at Poldhu station in Cornwall was the letter S which is indicated by three dots or impressions. Mr. Marconi has himself said that the signals were fainter than he had hoped for, and the doubters feel that there is some room for question as whether he might not have been deceived as to the source of the impres-

sions registered by the instrument in Newfoundland. The fact of the greatness of the earth's curvature between two so distant points, as compared with the height of the signalling stations, is no doubt one principal reason for this skepticism. A straight line drawn from Cornwall to St. John's, Nfld., would be at its central point, it is said, a hundred miles beneath the surface. It is, indeed, a debated question whether, in wireless telegraphy, transmission is through the air or through the earth. Marconi's system, however, evidently proceeds upon the assumption that the transmission is through the air. In consequence of the claim of the Anglo-American Telegraph Company to a monopoly in Newfoundland Mr. Marconi has been in Cape Breton during the past week for the purpose of ascertaining if a suitable site for a station could be obtained on that Island. He was met in Sydney by Premier Murray of Nova Scotia and Mr. W. Smith of the Dominion Postal service, who it is understood were anxious on behalf of the Province and Dominion Government to afford him any facilities in their power for the prosecution of his experiments. A place near Louisburg has been spoken of as probably the most favorable point in Cape Breton for the establishment of a station for communication with that at Poldhu, Cornwall. Table Head and Northern and Southern Heads, near Port Morien, are also said to be under consideration. It is understood that on the invitation of the Dominion Government, Mr. Marconi has gone to Ottawa. After that it is said he will return to England.

The War.

Up to the 20th of December Lord Kitchener had been able to report a number of successful movements against the Boers. His report reads: "Monroe and Soobell, in the northern district, have reduced Fouche's and Myburg's commandoes to about 200 mounted men. Bentinck and Doran have driven Kritzing's remaining followers from the Camdoo mountains. Methuen has captured 36 Boers. Col. Steele, on December 18, surprised a laager west of Bamanskraal and took 32 prisoners, including Field Cornet Schoeman. Celebrander has captured 62 Boers, including Commandant Adrian Nigel." But on Christmas eve a force under the command of Colonel Firman in the northeastern part of the Orange River Colony, sustained the most serious reverse that has befallen British arms in South Africa for some time. The blow was administered by General DeWet. Colonel Firman's column, consisting of four battalions of yeomanry, were guarding the blockhouse line from Harrismith to Bethlehem, when they were successfully rushed by a considerable force of Boers under DeWet's leadership. Firman had two guns which apparently were captured by the Boers. The list of casualties issued by the War Office in connection with the affair shows how serious it was. Six officers and fifty men were killed, eight officers were wounded and four are missing. The numbers of the non-commissioned officers and men wounded have not yet been received, but the number must be large. The prisoners captured by the Boers have been released and have returned to Bethlehem. Lord Kitchener reports a recent minor success of the South African constabulary, who raided Bothaville and captured 56 Boers.

The Zionist Congress.

The Zionist Congress met on Thursday last in Basle, Switzerland. Delegates to the number of 300 were present from all parts of the world, including Canada and the United States, but half of them came from Russia and many from Germany. Doctor Herzl in his Presidential address contended that the Jewish question could only be solved by the Jews themselves. He could not say how soon the Zionist plans would mature, but he had pleasure in announcing that he was authorized by the Sultan to state that in him the Jews had a friend and well-wisher. Doctor Marmorek mentioned that several new Zionist societies had been formed, including one among the American Jewish soldiers now serving in the Philippines. The congress sat far into the night, discussing the question of a Jewish colonial bank.