

CURRENT EVENTS.

The threats of armed rebellion in the north of Ireland, against Home Rule, which would give Ireland a separate parliament such as we have in Canada, became so alarming that the British Government began to move troops to the northern counties as a precautionary measure. Then it appeared that many of the army officers objected, and would rather resign their commissions than aid in suppressing a rebellion in Ulster. This immediately raised the question of whether parliament should rule the army, or whether the army should take control, as in the days of Oliver Cromwell; and the crisis has led to the resignation of the Secretary for War in the British Ministry, and also of Sir John French, chief of the general staff of the British army, and Sir John Ewart, adjutant-general of the forces. With the consent of the King, Premier Asquith has placed himself at the head of the War Office, and will go back to his constituents for re-election. So the month ends with the Prime Minister out of Parliament for the time being, and with threats of a mutiny in the army as well as an Orange rebellion; and yet nearly everybody believes that nothing very serious will come of it all, except, perhaps, a reorganization of the army, to bring it more fully under the control of the civil authorities.

After a week of heavy fighting in and around Torreon, there is no certain news of the result of the attack, but there are rumors that Villa's army has been overwhelmingly defeated. It is also reported that Zapata, the leader of the revolutionists in Southern Mexico, has been killed in battle with the Federal troops in another part of the country.

The United States Congress is still debating the question of repealing the Panama Canal tolls exemption, at the request of President Wilson, in fulfilment of the concessions made in the Hay-Pauncefote treaty.

The work of building the city of Canberra, the new capital of Australia, will begin at once, and will probably be finished in about three years, so far as to make it ready for occupation. One remarkable feature of the new city is to be a series of artificial lakes or basins, of considerable extent, which are expected to have a moderating influence on the climate.

Sonjatin is the name of a new substitute for rubber tubing which comes from Germany. It is not only cheaper, but more durable than rubber, and resists higher pressure.

Cellophane is a new substance resembling transparent paper, and said to be insoluble in water, and unaffected by ethers, alcohols, and alkalis.

Recent experiments with the wireless telephone have given wonderful results. A conversation was kept up between two Italian battleships, until they were forty-five miles apart, and the signals from a Canadian wireless station were heard at a distance of over four thousand miles.

A bill before the British Parliament will prohibit the importation into the United Kingdom of the plumage of wild birds, and forbid any person possessing or being concerned in the sale of such plumage.

A widow's pension bill is before the New York state legislature. It is based upon laws adopted in several countries of Europe, and provides a certain monthly payment for widows, who have children to support.

In Japan, they punish the parents of boys who smoke cigarettes, as well as those who sell to the boys.

The Suez Canal is to be deepened to a depth of thirty-nine feet, and other costly improvements will be made to enable it to compete with the Panama Canal. It has the great advantage of affording the shortest route from Europe to the Far East; and it has no locks and no tides.

The great barrage of the Euphrates, which is to restore by irrigation the fertility of Mesopotamia, and thus add an enormous area to the corn lands of the world, has been completed and formally opened for use.

The actual work of construction of the Panama Canal is now completed. The work yet to be done is chiefly dredging made necessary by the numerous landslides.

Inquiries into the death of Benton, the British subject killed in Mexico, seem to have established beyond a doubt that he was killed in the presence of Villa, and that both Villa and Caranza sent out false stories in respect to his death. The immediate result of the investigation is that the rebels of the north, who, partly because of their well chosen name Constitutionalists, have had the sympathy of many in the United States, are losing that sympathy.

Castro, the former military dictator of Venezuela, is in Trinidad, where he is supposed to be planning another Venezuelan revolution.

The situation in Brazil is not clear; but there are indications that the uprising, or threatened uprising, is over for the present.

Very heavy military expenditures in Russia are causing alarm in Austria, as well as in Sweden. Many think that another Balkan war is impending, and that Russia is preparing to move in that direction.

The Canadian government has sent the steam whaler, Herman, to search for the lost ship Karluk, of the Stefansson expedition. The Russian authorities have been notified that the Karluk is supposed to be drifting westward, and may reach the Arctic coast of Siberia.

The number of immigrants to Canada last year was more than four hundred thousand, and one hundred and fifty thousand of them were British.

New York City is celebrating the three-hundredth anniversary of its settlement, the Dutch having established a trading post there in 1614.

A special commissioner sent by the Canadian government to examine the place reports in favour of the development of St. Croix Harbour as a winter port. This harbour is at the head of deep water navigation on the St. Croix, and just above St. Croix Island, where the French made their first settlement in 1604. After the lapse of many years, Champlain's selection of a port seems to have been justified; though the milder winters and the better soil, which the early settlers found in the Annapolis Valley, were sufficient reason for their abandoning St. Croix and making their permanent settlement at Port Royal.