

Messenger and Visitor.

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An awakening in Corsica.

The following petition from the president of a league in the island of Corsica, which was established for the purpose of securing equal religious rights for all, has been presented to M. Combes premier of France and is very significant:

'We the undersigned, * * * beg to submit the following points to your consideration:—(1) That the doctrines of the Catholic church are contrary to reason and knowledge. (2) That we, our wives, and our children disapprove of these doctrines, and no longer visit the Roman Catholic church. (3) That the teachings of the Protestant church are in accordance with our views. We have the honor therefore to ask you to suppress the office of Catholic priest in Aultern, and to place a Protestant pastor in the place of the priest.'

What the premier will do in this case, it is hard to say; but as there are similar requests coming to him from other parts of France it is more than likely that the time is not far off when the people will be permitted to choose their own religious teachers and worship God according to the dictates of their own consciences.

The Assouan Dam.

The building of this dam across the Nile is a great triumph of engineering skill. It is the greatest work of the kind ever attempted. It is nearly a mile and a half long, thirty-eight feet high and it has a hundred and eighty sluice gates, which are opened and shut by machinery, and regulate the flow of water in the river. The cost of construction was more than \$25,000,000. The supplementary dam at Assiout, some few miles up the river, is intended as a reinforcement of the great dam, to assist it by breaking the force of the spring freshets, and retaining them in a reservoir which is capable of storing more than 1,000,000 cubic feet of water. By means of these dams the surplus waters will be stored in the rainy season and released in the time of drought. By this system of irrigation, the cultivation of vast areas of what is said to contain the richest soil in the world, will be made possible. A new era is dawning upon Egypt, and others beside Joseph and his brethren may be led to go down into Egypt for food. The arrangements for the dedication of this Dam are completed. The Duke and Duchess of Connaught with the Khedive are to take part in the inauguration ceremonies. This consists in laying the last stone and opening a number of sluices to let the water flow down the river. The event is to take place on the afternoon of December 10th. This will be another mark of the beneficence of British rule in the land of the Pharaohs.

The Panama Canal.

This canal is demonstrating the wisdom of De Lesseps and others who sought means to get from the Atlantic to the Pacific ocean without doubling Cape Horn. It is believed that the Panama route is preferable to that of Nicaragua. The question has arisen as to whether the Panama Canal Company could give a clear title, in case the United States should wish to purchase. The Attorney-General has reported to the President, that 'a good, valid and unencumbered title to the property can be given.' It is expected that the President will exercise the authority given to him by purchasing the Canal Company's property if satisfactory arrangements can be made with Columbia. The revolutions which are almost chronic in that country have prevented any agreement being reached. It is hoped now, that a congress will soon be elected and the necessary legislation consummated. Just what bargain this country may wish to drive is hard to say. The commerce of the world wants the canal. The United States is the only power that can control

it and so we may expect in a few years to see the Panama canal like that of Suez, one of the highways of the world.

South Africa and Mr. Chamberlain.

It has been officially announced that the Colonial Secretary, Hon. Jos. Chamberlain is to visit South Africa and thoroughly investigate on the spot the many and grave problems that have arisen in regard to the settlement of affairs since the war. There is no doubt that matters in South Africa are in a disturbed state, and the best course to pursue is by no means easy to determine. Now that the war is over the loyal Dutch claim that the Government is dealing most unfairly with them, by what they are doing for those who were openly hostile. Loyalty, in their judgment, in Cape Colony, does not count for much, and elsewhere the industrial problem is becoming almost acute. It is possible that the views of Lord Milner may be so strong on some of these questions that the Government has felt it best to learn for itself the true condition of affairs and the best means of dealing with them. At any rate the Prime Minister has given his assent to the movement, even though he shall lose the active support of Mr. Chamberlain, in the passage of the obnoxious—to the Non-conformists, Education Bill. The Colonial Secretary will leave England about the last of November, and does not expect to return until next March. This action of the Government is commented on most favorably by the leading journals of the empire, and it is suggested that a visit to other colonies might be of great benefit to Great Britain, and be another link to bind the colonies to the mother country. This will come in time. The day for ruling the colonies from Downing street is passed.

The Danish West India Islands

The bill for the ratification of the treaty of the Danish West India Islands was defeated in the Landsting (or Upper House). The readers of this journal will remember that there was a majority for the sale in the Lower House. It was thought there would be a majority for the bill in the Upper House as well. But the vote stood 32 to 32. The opponents of the treaty made every effort to marshal all their forces. One member, 97 years old, 150 miles from Copenhagen, who had been seriously ill for some time, accompanied by physicians and nurses was brought in, in an ambulance and carried in a chair to the Hall, and an attendant stood at his side to tell him when to vote. Another representative 87 years old and bedridden was brought to his place in the Hall with great difficulty. Great excitement prevailed in the city. The announcement of the result was greeted with cheers and hisses. A commission is to be appointed to investigate the conditions of the islands with a view to their improvement. A company with a capital of \$1,000,000 has been organized, to establish steamship service from the Baltic to the Islands and Central America. It would seem as if the popular sentiment was favorable to the sale. We gather from American sources that the inhabitants of the islands themselves are very much disappointed at the adverse vote of the Landsting. Denmark has little to gain by retaining them and unless the conditions improve, the transfer to the United States is only a question of time.

Acadia Iron Mines.

It is a cause for congratulation that the Acadian Iron mines have fallen into the hands of such enterprising and progressive capitalists as the Messrs. Drummond and their associates. For some years they have been

idle, and the pretty village that grew up when the mines were worked has almost fallen into decay. It used to be a busy place, but in recent years the people who could get away have done so. The work that is to be carried on there now will surpass anything that has heretofore been attempted, and the village will enter upon a new era of prosperity. Hundreds of men will be employed in the works that will be rebuilt and in others to be erected, and no busier spot will be found in these Provinces or in Canada than will be seen in this place twelve months hence. All industries of this nature are of great value not only to the community itself where they are located, but to the surrounding country for miles. This is a boom for Londonderry. May it long continue and be greatly prospered.

Halifax and Railway Extension.

It has been announced that the N. S. Eastern Railway Co. is soon to begin the construction of the Railway which is to connect Halifax with Musquodoboit, Guysboro and the Strait of Canso. The grant from the Local Legislature will be \$500 a mile and the Dominion subsidy will be \$3,200. As this will give \$8,200 a mile, construction ought to be soon an assured fact. Dartmouth will be the terminus of the road. The Narrows will be bridged however and for all practical purposes the city of Halifax will be the real terminus. Then there is the South shore line from Halifax to Yarmouth, which will connect with the I. C. R. about seven miles from Halifax pass through Hammonds Plains, Hubbard's Cove, Chester, Mahone Bay, Bridgewater, Mill Village, Liverpool, Shelburne to Yarmouth. These roads will run through fine sections of the Province, which have not been developed because of their isolation, Shelburne and Queens counties in the West will be brought into closer relations with other parts of the Province, and Guysboro in the East will also secure a much needed opportunity for the development of her fine mineral and agricultural resources. The building of these railways will be of great advantage to the metropolis of the Province, and with her magnificent harbor ought to materially assist in the increase of the volume of trade, already large, of this goodly city by the sea.

The Pacific Cable.

The completion of this cable on the 30th of October was an event of great significance. By it Australia, New Zealand and Canada are brought into direct communication, and each with the mother country. The terminus in Canada is Bamfield creek, Vancouver Island and Brisbane, Queensland and Australia. From Brisbane as a starting-point the line runs to Norfolk island, thence to Suava in the Fiji group, thence to Fanning Island and thence direct to Bamfield creek. The section between Fanning island and Vancouver is the longest in the world. At Norfolk island connection is made with New Zealand a distance of 518 miles. The actual time required in the transmission of a message from Vancouver and Brisbane will be less than five minutes for a short message. This time will be spent largely in its transmission from one station to the other, there being four of these. Congratulatory messages have passed between the Canadian, New Zealand, Australian and the British Governments. As this is an English cable, it is easy to see its importance not only to Great Britain, but to Greater Britain, as well. The consequences may be far-reaching in their effects and the idea of an Imperial Federation of some sort is among the possibilities of a near future.