HEAD HOUSE AND BUILDINGS AT ROCK CREEK SHAFT.

Work on It Being Rapidly Pushed by Col. Miller.

REPLACING THE BAD WORKMANSHIP

A Star Reporter Makes a Trip Through Some Sections.

WORKING UNDER DIFFICULTY

Work on the aqueduct tunnel is being pushed rapidly, 350 men working in eighthour shifts night and day. Prospects are that the project will be completed inside of a couple of years and within the estimated limit of cost of \$863,000. When the last lick is struck a notable addition will be made to the city's water facilities, and the northern and eastern sections of Washington will receive an increased flow of Potomac water.

Every Washingtonian remembers the famous "Lydecker tunnel," that great cavern under the city, stretching from the reservoir west of Georgetown to the Howard University reservoir, just south of the Soidiers' Home, a distance of four miles, and which was abandoned ten years ago, when it was discovered that faulty construction

rendered it practically useless.

For ten years the tunnel lay idle, filled with water and muck, the timbering of the shafts rotting and falling in. About two years ago Congress directed an examination of the tunnel by a board of experts to determine whether it would be feasible to complete the work and get some return complete the work and get some return from the large expenditures originally

pumped the water from the tunnel, cleaned out the muck and made a thorough exami-nation, with the result that they concluded the tunnel could be utilized by the expenditure of about \$863,090. Congress authorized the work to commence and to proceed under the direction of the chief of engineers of the army.

Col. Miller's Work.

Col. A. M. Miller, corps of engineers, U. S. A., the officer in charge of the Washington aqueduct, was placed in charge of the project. He undertook the work with enthusiasm and is pushing it steadily. He makes personal visits to the tunnel several rock. times a week and receives daily reports from his assistants of the progress of the operations. Celonel Miller chose as his assistant and active director Mr. R. C. Smead, a civil engineer, who has had wide experience in tunnel and mine construction, William Gain and Harry Bolac were made

us work 180 feet below ground. Colonel Miller commenced the job a year ago last July. The first thing to be done was to pump out the tunnel, which had filled again since the examination by the board. They pumped out 27,000,000 gallons is a mixture of sand and cement, of a board. They pumped out 27,000,000 gallons of water in three weeks, 16,000,000 gallons coming from the section under Rock creek.

The creek had broken through the partition of the creek had broken through t tion of earth and through fissures in the grout hardening as the water recedes rock had poured into the tunnel. Most of

this flow has been stopped, but up to a little

while ago they were still pumping 500,000 gallons a day from the tunnel.

The next step was to repair the shafts,

five in number, and put in holsting appara-tus. The repairing was very difficult and dangerous work. The shaft timber had

bulged inward nearly a foot, and when the

men were at work they never knew what n.hute the whole mass would fall in. This task was accomplished with safety, how-

ever, and the engineers set to work to clean

An Awful Mess.

They found an awful mess. They took

out about 40,000 tens of muck and stone

and seventy-two cords of timber, which had

been used by the contractors as "backing"

to the brick tunnel, instead of rubble ma-

sonry as stipulated. There were chambers

back of the lining, thirty feet high and fifty feet long, into which cord wood and pine

**REW LINING SHOWING CENTERING STATION 29, CHAMPLAIN AVE. EAST.** 

AQUEDUCT TUNNEL timbers had been thrown. All this space will now be filled with rubble masonry and the interstices grouted.

will now be filled with rubble masonry and the interstices grouted.

When the tunnel was thoroughly cleaned the engineers laid a railroad track its entire length, upon which they run smail cars to carry brick, mortar and stone. Two acetylene gas plants have been installed and a three-inch gas main runs through the tunnel, supplying light at noints where the workmen are engaged. Artificial ventilation is not needed and the only thing necessary in the way of maintenance is to keep the pumps going and prevent the water gaining headway.

A considerable portion of the tunnel, side the workmen have found a cleft in the A considerable portion of

cavern toward the manhole, and on one side the workmen have found a cleft in the

Several sections are passed where similar operations are being conducted, the fore-men standing on watch to see that the

duty is not shirked and that the spaces are solidly filled. When the hole is closed the bricks are replaced in the roof of the lin-

ing and a framework set under them until

Putting in the Iron Cylinder.

The Rock creek section is then reached,

where the iron cylinder is being put in, the

cylinder being cast in sections, which are

bolted together. Here the noise of the fall-

ing water is like a young Niagara, and the

with little streams pattering on their backs

as they bend over to their work.

Once again a plunge is made into the black void beyond the little area of lighted

space, and the car goes rumbling along. Occasionally a point of light booms up in

his miner's lamp in his cap and his face grimy with the smoke, stands against the wall to allow the car to pass. The tunnel

goes up grade and down, and at one point makes a curve to the right for some un-known reason. The original workmen seemed to have run their lines without much regard to level or instrument. East of the Champlain avenue shaft the

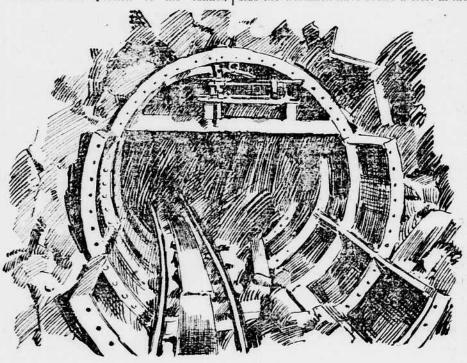
are putting down the invert or floor of the tunnel. There is no water here, and the

brickwork presents a smooth, clean appear

the darkness ahead, and a laborer,

backing has been completed and the

the arch is set.



IRON LINING UNDER ROCK CREEK.

from the large expenditures originally made.

A board was appointed, consisting of Major William L. Marshall, Capt. James L. Lusk and Capt. D. D. Gaillard of the corps of engineers, U. S. A., and A. Fetley and Desmond Fitz Gerald, civil-engineers. They he foundation of the present arch, where it rests on muck or soft rock, and bring the ide walls down to solid rock connecting

The Greatest Work.

The greatest labor, of course, will be on the backing. Holes have been cut in the roof of the arch at every few feet, leading into the open spaces back of the arch, ranging from small crevices to great caverns. Rubble masonry will be hoisted through the holes and laid until a solid mass extends from the brick lining to the

It is estimated that 5,000,000 brick will be required in the construction. Colonel Miller has found a superior quality of brick with little streams pattering on their backs which is almost as good as vitrified brick, and it is being laid by expert masons At a point directly beneath Rock creek the lining of the tunnel will be of iron, instead of brick, on account of the tre-William Gain and Harry Bolac were made day and night superintendents and John Green and Taylor Cronin, two young engineers of this city, were put in charge of the instrument and surveying work.

The laborers on the project are hired by the day and are directly under supervision of the office, no contractors or subgentractors being permitted to take a hand. The laborers are principally colored men, big stout, husky fellows, who do the arduous pressure exerted there and the treacherous nature of the ground. An iron cylinder 500 feet long, of a size uniform with the brick tunnel, is being put into position. This will be lined with cement, and is expected to stand the required strain.

A good sized stream of water, evidently from the creek, now pours through an aperture in the cylinder, but this will be stonged by an ingretious method when the round. stopped by an ingenious method when the type time comes. A force pump of great power done will be attached to the aperture and a

tunnel the other day by one of the offi-

cers in charge, and witnessed the men at labor in the different sections. Entrance to the tunnel was made at the Foundry

branch shaft, west of Georgetown, and exit

at Champiain avenue, the sections tra-versed being those where work is being ac-

A visitor to the tunnel is equipped with a pair of high rubber boots, a suit of old clothes and a miner's hat. A hand-lamp, such as used in the coal mines, is provided, and thus fitted out the visitor steps into

the cage and is lowered down the shaft

to the tunnel opening many feet below the

surface.

A rush of cold, damp air greets you as the tunnel is reached. One sees the roof,

the tunnel is reached. One sees the roof, the side wails and then two feet away is nothing but pitchy darkness, out of which

comes the sound of falling water as it drips

tively carried on.

ance. The men are working westward from this point to meet another gang coming eastward.

Returning to the Champlain avenue shaft, the visitors step into the cage and in a jiffy the steam hoisting drum lifts you 180 A Star reporter was taken through the feet from the gloomy cavern below to the blessed light of day again. A trip through the tunnel will, at any rate, give one the tunner will, at any rate, give one a feeling of respect to those who spend their working hours in that black hole, toilling in mud and water, lying on their faces in the stilling crevices and pulling and haul-ing through the darkness. That is a man's work, and it takes a man to do it.

IN THE CHURCHES

The Laymen's Association of the Baltimere conference, M. E. Church, with which the churches of the denomination in this city are affiliated, has sent to all the conferences which meet this fall copies of a circular urging the election of "provisional delegates" to the general conference, which meets next year in Chicago. This action is regarded as very important.

The circular in part states: "The dawning of the nineteenth century witnessed the birth and development of a new religious denomination in the young and vigorous American republic. Its marvelous growth and adaptability to reach

the masses were equaled only by the genius of this famed land. "The dawning of the twentieth century finds our church equipped as a giant for the fray. A mighty call is given to every member of this great church to arise and buckle on the armor of warfare against

"The methods of 100 years ago will not "The methods of 100 years ago will not suffice for the work now before the church. Because of her vast enterprises, some revision in her polity is now so clearly apparent that ministry and laity are united in purpose and desire to consummate the essential changes at the earliest practical moment.

mement.
'It is with gratitude, not pride, that we "It is with gratitude, not pride, that we point to our ministry, to whom so much is justly due; to our great number of churches, with a vast army of members and Sunday school children; to our publications, general and local; to our universities, colleges and schools; to our educational and church extension societies; to our missions in home and foreign lends; to our missions in home and foreign lands; to our orphanages for children and asylums for the aged and infirm; all of which require for their highest and best develop-ment the combined wisdom, energy, ex-perience and beneficence of both ministers and laymen.

"Our bishops and leaders are planning "Our bisnops and leaders are planning larger things for the very near future. We must therefore adapt our polity to measare up to these increasing opportunities for advancing the Master's kingdom.

from the roof. Two chairs on a hand car, which is to be propelled by a couple of workmen, furnish the means of transportation. The lamps are lighted, the car is

mously adopted the Rock River conference amendment, providing for equal ministerial and let representation in the general conference. There is no reason to doubt that this action will be promptly ratified by the general conference when it assembles in Chicago in May, 1900. When this is accomplished there can be no further barrier to the general conference seating all 'provisional delegates' immediately after the constitutional change has been effected, provided the electoral conferences entitled to increased representation shall have duly elected such 'provisional delegates.'

"The right of seating these delegates belongs exclusively to the general conference, and any controversy upon this question prior to the meeting of that august body of ministers and laymen appears to us to be

clearly unnecessary.

"We, therefore, most earnestly and fra-ternaily urge all the electoral conferences interested to electrisuch number of deleinterested to elect' such number of delegates as shall equalize their lay delegation with that of their ministerial. May we not also request all electoral conferences not entitled to additional delegates to memorialize the general conference, asking that all 'provisionally elected delegates' be seated without unnecessary delegate. without unnecessary delay?"

The district conference of Washington district, M. E. Church South, will convene at Hamilton, Loudoun county, Va., September 5. The opening sermon will be delivered at 8 p.m. by Rev. C. H. Buchanan, following which the formal organization of the conference will take place. The following committees have been appointed:

For Reense to preach and for recommenda-For license to preach and for recommenda-tion to the annual conference—W. F. Locke, J. H. Light and C. H. Buchanan. For local deacons' and elders' orders—C Sydenstriker, W. S. Hammond and F. L. Day.

Information has reached this city that the name of Rev. C. F. Thomas, rector of the Cathedral, Baltimore, who is well known to and highly esteemed by the Catholic clergy of Washington, has been sent to Rome for appointment as bishop of Savannah, to succeed the late Rev. Dr. Thos. A. Becker. Since Father Thomas has been rector of the Cathedral, it is stated, he has displayed much executive ability, and it is displayed much executive ability, and it is believed his wide experience will aid him in his episcopal labors. As a preacher he in his episcopal labors. As a preacher he is fearless, never hesitating to express his views at the proper time in unequivocal language. He is reserved in manner, but is highly regarded by all who know him.

Father Thomas is a native of this arch-diocese and was born in 1858. He was educated at St. Charles College, Howard county, Md., and at St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore. He has been rector of the Cathedral for about six years. dral for about six years.

The early arrival in Washington of Rev. James Buchanan is looked for. Mr. Buchanan is a Baptist minister of South Africa who was born not far from Washington. He left his native home sixteen ngton. He left his native nome sixteen years ago. For some time he labored as a sailor and finally landed at Cape Town. Two years ago he was ordained at Cape Town by Rev. R. A. Jackson and was sent as a missionary to Middle Drift, about 1,000 miles from the coast. Mr. Buchanan now has a congregation of about 300 members and is building a brick chapel. He will return to South Africa in

a month or two. The death a few days ago of William H. Wehn removed from mission work in this city and elsewhere a rather remarkable figure. It was affirmed by many that he was a religious fanatic, and that in his efforts to follow in the footsteps of the Man of Galilee he at times departed from the sphere of worldly equilibrium and existed in a sphere of pseudo-spiritualistic temperament.

Whatever may be said in regard to his career, there is no doubt entertained that he accomplished much good. He built and maintained missions in many cities. That was his idea of religion—to carry it as nearly as possible to the very door of the poor and the iow and the squalid. To this end he devoted much of his time. Wehn was a carpenter, and this fact had much to do with his fervent consideration of his calling after his conversion to the Christian faith. Christmas day, in 1890, his infant son died. Wehn was then convinced that he had led a wayward career, and he espoused the cause of Christianity. Believ-ing himself thenceforth divinely commis-sioned, he started on an evangelistic tour and preached in the streets of nearly every large city in America. To him the high and the lowly in worldly circumstances were equally perverse and sinful. He preached to the denizens of the slums and the scarlet ways a future state of destruc- Rico proper and had the Culebra Islands the scarlet ways a future state of describe.

Incomplete the following state of describe.

From the back alley he went to the street corners overshadowed by the palaces of corners overshadowed by the palaces of hundreds of acres of rolling land rising.

The animals are allowed to run out all the hundreds of acres of rolling land rising.

Much regret has been expressed by the Much regret has been expressed by the members of Grace Baptist Church, Capitol Hill, that Rev. A. F. Anderson has resigned the pastorate of that church. For five years Mr. Anderson labored there, during which time he succeeded in having built a fine house of worship. His resignation was described by the feet that the feet have a first that the feet have the feet and tion was due solely to the fact that he sires to further pursue studies at a theological seminary.

A meeting will be held at Carroll Hall Monday evening next for the purpose of completing arrangements for the dedicacompleting arrangements for the dedica-tion of the new Franciscan monastery at Brookland. The event will, it is expected, be notable in the history of the Catholic Church in the District of Columbia. Car-dinal Gibbons has consented to conduct the mass, which will begin at 10 o'clock cardinal will also have charge of the dedicatory exercises.

A feature of the program will be a pro-cession of the Knights of Columbus, in which all the members of the order in the District will participate. Other organica bistrict will participate. Other organiza-tions have been invited to unite with the knights in the parade, and it is expected that many of them will be represented. The procession will form in Brookland at 9 o'clock, and march to the monastery.

The interior of St. Aloysius' Church is be ing repainted and renovated. There will be several important changes made before the church is thrown open to the congregation. Each of the two side altars will enlarged so as to make them small chapels, and two new altars will be placed therein These are to be of white marble, presented by the members of the Sodality of the Blessed Virgin and the League of the Sacred Heart. It will take about months more to complete the improve-ments, and in the meantime services are being held in the lower church.

No Jurisdiction.

From the Atlanta Constitution. A couple applied to a rural justice of the peace for total divorce. The justice called the bailiff aside and asked in a whisper: "What's the law on that p'int?"

"You can't do it," replied the bailiff, "it don't come under yer jurisdiction." "We're willin" to pay cash fer it," replied the husband, not understanding the nature of the consultation. "I've got the money in this here stockin' The justice looked grave. Then, adjusting

his spectacles and addressing the man "You knowed fore you came here that 'twarn't fer me ter separate husband an' wife, an' yet you not only take up the time o' this here valuable court with yer talkin'.

but ackchully perpose ter bribe me with money! Now, how much has you got in that stockin!?" 'Bout six dollars an' a half, yer honor.' "All right then. I fine you \$5 fer bribery an' a dollar an' a half fer takin' up my time with a case what my jurisdiction is out of, an' may the Lord have mercy on yer

Insult to the Pug.

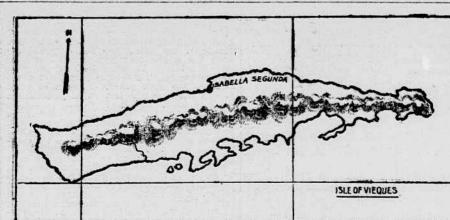
From the Chicago Post. "In this flat building, madam," said the agent, "we do not allow children." "Quite right," replied the fashionably dressed woman approvingly. "Children are a nuisance."

"Or dogs," continued the agent. "What!" exclaimed the woman indig-nantly. "Why, sir, it's outrageous! It's shameful! I'll report you to the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals; that's what I'll do. Such shameful and cruel discrimination as that shall not go unrebuked. It's actually an incentive to putting poor dear pugs out of the way. The idea!"

A Definition.

From the Chicago News. "What is a stethoscope and what is it used for?" asked the professor of the class in anatomy.

"The stethoscope," answered the pupil at the pedal extremity of the class, "is a sort of microscope used by a doctor for the purpose of looking into the chest of a patient with his ear."



Some Valuable Bits of the West Indies Now Ours.

VIEQUES ISLAND AND ITS CAPITAL

The Other Islets Which Have Fortunes in Phosphates.

MONA'S MAMMOTH CAVE.

Special Correspondence of The Evening Star. (Copyrighted, 1899, by Frank G. Carpenter.) ISABELLA SEGUNDA Isle of Vieques, August 8, 1899.

I have spent the past week in gathering information about some of Uncle Sam's inknown islands. By our treaty with Spain we secured scores of islands in addition to Porto Rico. Some of these are points of rock built up by coral insects, forming little more than spots on the face of the sea. Others are of considerable value and, among them, those which I describe in this letter. I am writing now on Vieques, the island of crabs, which lies thirteen miles east of Porto Rico and not very far from St. Thomas. It is sixty-four miles from San Juan, and is connected with the mainland by the little government steamer, the Slocum, which comes to it with supplies for the soldiers and the mail once every week. Through the kindness of the quartermaster at San Juan I was allowed a pass on the Slocum during its present voyage, and by it was landed in Isabella Segunda.

Some Islands North of Porto Rico. We began to pass islands which belong to Uncle Sam as soon as we left San Juan. We sailed by several on our way out of the harbor, and then turned to the east and steamed for hours along the north coast of Porto Rico, just outside a reef of low coral islets upon which the blue waves dashed themselves, casting up a line of white foam. Behind this snowy fringe we could see the blue mountains rising in a rolling line of beauty which was now and then lost in the clouds. We saw more clouds as we pro-ceeded. They hung about the islands, wrap-ping the mountains with their nebulous humidity. This region is very moist, and humidity. This region is very moist, and clouds are one of the peculiar features of all Porto Rican scenery. They are full of rain which now and then drops down in a needle-like spray, and at times falls in sheets and streams. There are clouds everywhere. They hang so close to the mountains as to make you think that you could by climbing the hills turn on the spigots of the heavens and have shower baths to order.

There are benches on the sides of the front doors, and altogether everything looks thrifty and clean. In the center of the town there is a plaza, with a public cistern for the poor. The people of Vieques number, all told, about 6,000. They are not like the Porto Ricans. The Island during the seventeenth eighteenth centuries belonged to the past 100 years it has been under Spanish

Our New Leper Island. We saw islands in front of us shortly

after we left the capital, and after steaming for several hours we passed Cape San Juan at the northeastern end of Porto

UNKNOWN ISLANDS come from Porto Rico into the harbor of Isabella Segunda. This is on the north coast of the island, about midway between its two ends. Vieques consists of a mountain ridge about twenty-one miles long and tain ridge about twenty-one miles long and six miles wide. It is beautifully green, and the low mountains if se and fall, forming a tolling country, in which are some of the most fertile lands of our West Indian pessessions. The toil is such that it will grow all kinds of vegetables and fruits. The island has a number of large sugar plantations, and it raises the best certile of the

all kinds of vegetables and fruits. The Island has a number of large sugar plantations, and it raises the best cattle of the West Indies.

The chief harbor is that of Isabella Segunda, although there is a port on the south which gives a better landing place. The harbor here is surrounded by hills, and it is unsafe at the time of the northerly winds. As it was, our little steamer had to anchor far out from shore, and to anchor far out from shore, and to anchor far out from shore, and the landing at the little pier which runs out into the ocean was by no means easy.

Isabella Segunda nestles among the hills right on the beach. At one side of it there is a line-colored light house, and on the

The Island of Mona. I saw something of the Island of Mona in going about the western end of Porto

This island is now owned by a Porto Rican who had a concession from the Spanish government for working the phosphate, and this has, I am told, been confirmed by our government. The property is said to be valuable, its owners claiming that the phosphates, after paying all expenses of mining and shipment to Hamburg, will net \$7 a ton there, and that there is a demand for all that can be exported.

Rico to Poace. Our government transports land first at San Juan and thence steam around the eastern end of Porto Rico through the Mona passage. This is the name of a broad channel in the ocean flowname of a broad channel in the ocean flow-ing between Porto Rico and Santo Domin-go. It is one of the highways of travel, but is not frequented as much as some of the other channels into the Caribbean sea. Mona Island lies just west of the city of Mayaguez. It is of volcanic origin, with coasts rising perpendicularly to a great height above sea level. Some of its shores are bounded with white citigs in which are



ON THE PHOSPHATE ISLANDS.

built by the Spaniards, which is now a barracks for our soldiers. The town has about 1,000 population. It is made up of square one-story cottages with galvanized fron roofs. The houses are built along wide unpaved streets, which cross one another at right angles. The streets are shaded beautifully by great trees. Many of the homes have pretty gardens about them. There are benches on the sides of the front

past 100 years it has been under Spanish rule it still has English and French among its people. It has many negroes, who speak English, most of whom have come from the island of St. Thomas to labor on the plantations. The richest of the planters are French, and the French language is largely used throughout the island.



STREET IN ISABELLA SEGUNDA.

tamination is great and so the government has chosen this Island as the exclusive home of the lepers. At present there are eleven lepers in the hospital at San Juan, and four more have been reported as living in different parts of Porto Rico.

As we passed the Culebra group I could see the island which has been chosen. It is known as "Louis Pena." It rises about 400 feet above sea level, contains 400 acres, is covered with a dense growth of tropical vegetation. About one-half of it can be cultivated, and there are now cattle and goats upon it. It will raise all kinds of vegetables and the tropical fruits peculiar to Porto Rico. There are plenty of fish in the waters about it. Its woods contain parrots and also game birds much like our American pheasants. There are also tur-American pheasants. There are also tur-tles and shell fish in the waters about the coast, and it is believed that the leper colonies will be largely self supporting. The government expects to build a hospital on the island. It will give the lepers houses and will supply them with seeds and farming tools, and will stimulate them in every way to form a society of their

The government boats will visit the island at regular intervals with supplies for the lepers, but otherwise the colony will be completely isolated from the rest of the world.

Down the East Coast of Porto Rico. Sailing by this island, our little steamer skirted the Island of Palominos, steaming southward toward Vieques. Afar off in front of the ship we could see Vieques, a hazy blue line of low mountains floating. as it were, upon the sea apparently about twenty or thirty miles away. We did not go direct, but first entered the harbor of the town of Fajardo, on the northeastern coast of Porto, Rico, and then made our way south to the harbor of Humacao. We way south to the harbor of Humacao. We were so close to the mainland that we could see the sugar plantations which line the shores. They were great squares of light green shining out of the brown fields about them. Back of the green rose the navy blue mountains of the Porto Rican backbone, with the peak El Yunque, the highest mountain of the island, towering above them. At the port for Humacao we came to anchor in a bay surrounded by cocoanut trees. Here we landed a hogshead of ice for some of our army officials, who are stationed about six miles back from the coast, and then turned and who are stationed about six miles back from the coast, and then turned and steamed eastward toward Vieques. It took us little more than an hour to

like mountains out of the sea. One of them is of especial interest just now, because it has been chosen as a home for the leper population of Porto Rico.

There are a number of lepers scattered throughout the country, and Uncle Sam is doing all he can to gather them together and Isolate them. The lepers are very secretive, and it is difficult to find out just who they are. The poor herd together to such an extent that the danger of contamination is great and so the government. ing than those of Porto Rico. They have some imported stock, Durhams and Herefords being not uncommon. A few weeks ago several cows were given to diers of Company I of the 11th Infantry. They proved to be very good, producin rich mllk and cream.

No Land for Sale.

I have made inquiries as to prices of land here, but am told there is none for sale. The island is owned by a few people, who are well satisfied with their condition. Among the largest owners are the sugar planters, some of whom make as high as 5,000 bags of sugar a year. Their plantations are scattered over the lowlands. There is but little good timber on Vieques, most of it having been cut off. The climate is said to be excellent. There is no sick-ness whatever, and such epidemics as attack Porto Rico do not seem to come here. At present the only Americans on the Island of Crabs are the postmaster, a Philadelphian named Lancaster; the and the signal service men, who heliograph essages from this city to the mainland, ne distance is not far and the heliograph works quite as well as the telegraph, and he sun upon mirrors from one point to the

There are quite a number of Protestants in Vicques, and among them a Lind preacher who lived for a long time in South Carolina. He is a negro, who went from South Carolina to St. Thomas and then came here. He has been a resident of Vieques for many years.

The Dead Man's Chest. Next to Vieques, the two most valuable

of Uncle Sam's new islands about Porto Rico are Mona Island and the Caja de Muertos, or "Chest of the Dead." I will treat of the Dead Man's Chest first.

The Caja de Muertos lies south of Porto Rico. It was at one time a hospital island to which incurables were transported to die, and from this fact came its name. It lies about four miles from Ponce. It is about a mile long and half a mile wide. You can see it from the Ponce harbor, for it rises abruptly from the sea and has a light nouse

hill back of the town is a moss-grown fort, from Mayaguez, although at present it is who come for a time and then go back to

Fortunes in Phosphates. This matter of phosphates is one that

will pay careful investigation. I am told that nearly all of the numerous small islands about Porto Rico have phosphatic deposits. The most of them have not been worked and many have not been prospected. Every now and then I hear of some new place containing phosphates. One of the most remarkable stories is concerning an island which lies eleven miles south of Guayama, and some distance east of the Caja de Muertos. This island has about 400 acres, which is underlaid with phos-phate rock. The rock lies in veins, like the phosphate rock of South Carolina. When analyzed it shows 61 per cent of phosphate of lime; 5 per cent of water and 5 per cent of clay. It is easily mined, but a small dock and a tunnel will have to be made before it can be gotten out to the ships.

One of the army officials who is interested in this property tells me that the company expects to ship the product to Hamburg. This same man says he he knows burg. This same man says that he knows

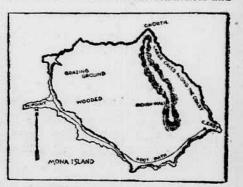
of another place where there are 3,000,000 tons of phosphate in sight, which, when in Hamburg, will sell for \$17 a ton. I believe that there are also valuable fer-tilizers on the mainland of Porto Rico. Some parts of it contain phosphates, and in my rides over the mountains I have passed square miles of stone which seems to be almost pure lime. They have here some kinds of limestone which are as solid as marble, and which can be polished like Italian marble. The marble crops out in different places all over the island. It is ragged on top, but further down it lies in solid blocks, and could be made into fine building material. Another kind of limestone is very soft. All you need to do is

to put it into an oven and fire it, and you to put it into an oven and fire it, and you have excellent lime.

There is a cement which might be of value which is found in many parts of Porto Rico. It crops out much like limestone, and when crushed it looks not unlike Portland cement. It has great adhesive power and in the heater power and in the hesive power, and in the houses where it hesive power, and in the houses where it has been used for building it stands up in ridges after the bricks have worn away. This is especially so in the pavements which are cemented with it. I asked the secretary of state of Porto Rico about it. He tells me that it is fairly good, but not as good as foreign cement

as good as foreign cement. The Caves of Porto Rico.

Porto Rico is full of natural wonders. Nearly all of the islands which I have described in this letter have caves which are worth exploration. There are wonderful caves in Porto Rico proper. On the north coast, about seven miles southeast of Arecibo, there is a rock over three hundred feet high, which is almost perpendicular, About one-third the way up from the bor-tom is a grotto, which has a number of caverns and arches. It has stalactites and



other curiosities, which are said to equal the famous caves of Luray in Virginia. The entrance to these caves is about five feet high and nine feet in width; it is now covered with brambles.

Another remarkable cave is not far from the center of the island, near Aguas Bue-nas. I have not visited this cave, but some soldiers who have been there describe it as one of the wonders of the world. It may, indeed, be called "the mammoth cave" of the West Indies. You go through a narrow passage about 300 feet long and fifteen feet high, when you enter a series of large chambers which are fairly alive with bats. It is necessary to use torches to dispel the darkness, and the bats fly in myriads this way and that, now striking you in the face, and making a rushing noise that is terrifying in the darkness. Now and then you come to a deep hole, in which you can cast a stone and hear it

which you can cast a stone and hear it thump, thump, thump, as it goes downward to unknown depths.

These caverns go on and on, one opening into another, for a long distance. They form, in fact, a natural catacomb, only a part of which has ever been explored. Enough is known, however, to be sure that they are one of the greatest of natural wonders and well worthy of a survey by our government scientis FRANK G. CARPENTER.

He Liked It.

From the Boston Herald.

Some time ago a well-known and popular Congregationalist minister received & basket of champagne from one of his worldly and wealthy parishioners. A few. days later the minister's little son was called up in his geography class to answer the teacher's question, "Where is Lake" upon it. It has some good pasture lands, but this is a small part of its value.

The treasures of the Dead Man's Chest are in the phosphates which are found in its caves and in the soil a little back from the shore. In one of the caves I am told water, and it is real nice."