

EDITORIAL.

In this issue space is devoted to an article copied from the Brooklyn Eagle the reprinting here of which is urged by several reasons believed to be obvious to the average reader. The article doubtless contains some facts, but, as is too often the case where strangers undertake to represent conditions in these islands without proper knowledge of them, or experience upon which to base conclusions, a great part of it can be accepted only by those blessed with considerable imaginative alertness. It is thought well that the public be afforded opportunity to know something of those alleged to have their welfare at heart, and publishing the sentiments and impressions of such persons seems a good form of introduction.

No advantage having been taken of our invitation to discuss the fish question, it may be concluded that those who pressed us to bring this matter forward have nothing to say. The Food Commission is "as deaf as a post and mute as a stone", and is possibly taking shelter behind the old adage "a wise head keeps a still tongue" even though there is no evidence of wisdom in this case. However, as far as this paper is concerned, we conclude by suggesting that the wet season being here and the haul of fish abundantly increased thereby, all the fish might be sold at a price within easy reach of everybody rather than be kept on hand to be corned as is alleged to be the case. Corned fish does not command the price of fresh fish and it may probably prove more economical to dispose of the fresh fish at a fair figure and be done with it.

LOCAL.

The Industrial Band played in the bandstand last night to the entertainment of a fair gathering.

The Creole arrived from St. Thomas last night with local mails; will be dispatched on the return trip at 8 a. m. tomorrow, and mails will be closed accordingly.

Race Hatred Grows On Virgin Islands, Writes Dr. Rutan.

New American Territory in Serious Condition, Due to Preachings of Black Boss.

In addition to the territory of the three islands which the United States obtained when it purchased the Virgin Island

NOTICE.

THE repairs of the Bridge on Spring Gut road, 'East End Quarter' having been completed, the road is again open to traffic.

For the Road Commission.

F. LUNNEY.

group from Denmark for \$25,990,000, Uncle Sam fell heir to a racial and labor question quite as involved and quite as difficult of solution as anything of the sort which already troubles him within the 48 States on the mainland of the North American Continent.

Writing from Santa Cruz, the largest of the three islands, the Rev. Waldemar Ivan Rutan of 725 Park pl., Brooklyn, curate of St. Paul's Church of the Holy Cross, Upper Love, in Santa Cruz, describes the complicated forces and the difficult conditions which the representatives of the American institutions have to overcome in making an American possession out of this negro island still governed by Danish customs and laws.

"Things are a little mixed up in the Virgin Islands," the Rev. Mr. Rutan writes, "and the American Government is not doing overmuch to straighten them out." The territory is officially American, and its inhabitants are living under the American flag. But the Danish laws were in effect up to Aug. 1, and the transition has not yet been completely made. At the time of writing the American dollar compared to the Danish dollar issued by the "National Bank of the Danish West Indies," was worth about \$1.09, giving the Danish dollar a purchasing value of approximately 92 cents.

Although rich in soil, and having a semi-tropical climate, so that corn, cotton; potatoes, yams, rice, oranges, pineapples and bananas can be and actually have been grown with great success, and even wheat, oats and other grains could be raised with proper application, lack of capital and lack of American enterprise have kept the islands entirely dependent on the United States for their food. The chief product of the islands is sugar; but even that is sent to New York for refining, and reshipped, so that the Islanders pay the New York price plus an exorbitant freight reight.

Besides these general industrial difficulties, the more subtle and more serious difficulties with which the Americans who are assigned the duty of making this an American community are confronted concern the inhabitants of the islands. They were very recently, still within the memory of the great majority of those now alive, under a system of slavery in every way as tyrannical as anything recorded of the ante-Civil War days of our own South. Although legal

freedom has come to the natives, they have not yet become acclimated to the new air of liberty; and conditions which discourage the Northerner travelling for the first time through our own South, only far worse, are everywhere prevalent.

There has been little advance since the slavery days. Housing conditions that rival anything we know here in lack of sanitation and lack of adequacy are an everyday matter. Whole families of many children live in one-room shacks, sleeping on old bags of straw on the floor or in cramped positions in chairs. While this continues, the "moral tone cannot possibly be improved," the Rev. Mr. Rutan writes:

"The immorality of the island is dreadful."

The two questions which keep the island in a seething condition of unrest and dissatisfaction are the race question and the labor question. The natives are negroes, but until recently have been satisfied to continue on a basis of live and let live with their less numerous white neighbors. They are also laborers, while their employers are almost exclusively the whites. Within the last few years, according to the Rev. Mr. Rutan, the feeling of discontent and hostility toward the white man and the employer has grown until it forms a lively danger to the continued peace and development of the islands.

There are two labor unions in Santa Cruz, or St. Croix. One of these is the Federal Labor Union, led by Morris Davis and affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. This was formerly connected with the "St. Croix Labor Union," but separated from it on account of the radical proclivities which the latter began to show.

The "St. Croix Labor Union" the Rev. Mr. Rutan considers as a very vicious organization. It is led by a fairly well educated and energetic negro, D. Hamilton Jackson, whose influence he finds to be of the most malignant sort in both the industrial and racial quarrel.

"He is constantly preaching the equality of the black man with the white, and even telling the servants to refuse to call their employers 'master' and 'mistress'. In fact, he has been known to tell the women servants to call their mistresses by their Christian names, if they (the servants) are called by their Christian names. * * * And I know of one case where this actually occurred.

"Jackson is always writing articles in his paper—the Herald, published in Christiansted by the United Danish West Indian Printing Plant, Inc.—which would not be tolerated anywhere else. He has been able so to overawe the whole island including the Governor, that everyone seems to be thoroughly afraid of him. In at least one instance, when a matter was placed before the Governor regarding a serious breach of the law by one of