

Little, therefore, has been accomplished by M. de Lesseps; and no wonder that his declining credit and the critical condition of his company should take him to Panama in order to show the way to M. Rousseau. The evident purpose of the present trip is, as in the first trip six years ago, a huge *réclame*. The shareholders, who are called upon to pay up £3,000,000 between the 1st and the 5th of February, will hear that M. de Lesseps is affronting the displeasure of crossing the ocean at this season, and they will be comforted.

M. de Lesseps takes with him, and at the expense of the Panama Canal Company, several delegates of French Chambers of Commerce. These provincial gentlemen are expected to report what they will be shown by their brilliant and kindly host. But that is not all. At the meeting of the Academy of Sciences, in Paris, held on Monday evening, M. de Lesseps made a formal declaration that he was going to Panama, "accompanied by the delegates of several Governments and Chambers of Commerce whose competence and character will place above any doubt the judgment that they shall pronounce. As for me," he added, "I am sure that in sixty days I shall repeat to you with all authority that the canal work will be ready, at latest, during 1889."

It is almost incredible and painful that this respected octogenarian should have become so reckless. But such statements are believed in France, and, what is worse, are propagated as facts by those on whom it is incumbent to verify them. Thus, for instance, the Paris correspondent of the *Times* announced some days ago that M. de Lesseps would be accompanied by representatives of the Governments of France, England, Germany, and Holland. Who are such delegates? Who are the English ones? Can anybody tell their names?

Some time ago France had two great men, each of whom the world might truly call "grand Français"—V. Hugo and F. de Lesseps. One is dead. The other is worse than dead: he is trying hard to thrust himself from the high pedestal on which his genius has been consecrated by the veneration of mankind. It is a pitiful spectacle indeed, and a terrible lesson as well.

[Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, nil; printing (1,350 copies), £8 Os. 6d.]

---

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1886.