

"Materialized in their temper; with few ideals of an ennobling sort; little instructed in the lessons of history; safe from exposure to the direct calamities and physical horrors of war; with undeveloped imaginations and imperfect sympathies—they form a community unfortunate and dangerous from the possession of power without a due sense of its corresponding responsibilities; a community in which the passion for war may easily be excited as the fancied means by which its greatness may be convincingly exhibited, its patriotism displayed, and its ambitions gratified. This is no unreal peril. Some chance spark may fire the prairie. It is a peril indefinitely enhanced by the optimistic indifference of the people at large, and their childish conceptions concerning the greatness and power of the United States as compared with other nations."

Americans seem unable to tolerate anything or anybody that "stands for discipline, good order, and obedience. The man who lets another command him, they despise." Professor Norton is justly severe on the manner and morals displayed in inter-collegiate contests in athletic sports, and says they fall little short of a national disgrace. The barbarism of the contestants is encouraged by the community at large by its indifference to fair play, and by the excess of its hysteric applause of victory won by any means, fair or foul. To this interesting but disquieting article the author adds a note saying it was written "before the issue of President Cleveland's astounding Message respecting the Venezuelan boundary dispute." This Message and the popular reception of it "have given lamentable and most unexpected confirmation" to the article.

We have received the following note from an esteemed contributor, "C," which contains sentiments which we heartily endorse:

"None of your correspondents on the use of the name 'American' as meaning the people of the United States seem to me to have quite hit upon the true reason, which is that they are so called because they are otherwise nameless. For our part we do not want the name, because we have one which is exclusively and undeniably ours, we are 'Canadians.' Of this name we may be justly proud, for it has ever been associated with honour, courage, and fidelity, whereas the term 'American,' is to most dwellers beyond seas a very wide term and comprehends a great deal which we have no desire to be associated with. By all means let us be not only content, but proud, to call ourselves 'Canadians,' and to endeavour to live up to the name."

The Coming Scientists.

Next year the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science will be held in Toronto, and already the preparations for the great event are well under way. The strong and energetic local Executive Committee, of which Dr. Macallum is the President, and Mr. Alan Macdougall the Secretary, have issued the scheme of organization and prepared an imposing list of names to form a Citizens' Committee, from which list the special committees are appointed. Efforts are being made to induce the Prince of Wales to accept the Presidency of the Association for the Toronto meeting. Other distinguished names are mentioned, notably those of Mr. Balfour and Mr. Chamberlain. As The Globe remarks, the presence of any of these would add new interest to the occasion, and if the added interest were personal rather than scientific, Toronto would not complain. We are sure that the Executive Committee will have the best support and encouragement that Toronto can give, and that the meeting of the Association here will not only be of advantage to the city and to the country at large, but that the visitors themselves will find that they will not go empty away.

## "Splendid Isolation."

IT makes comparatively little difference who the particular Canadian speaker was that first used the phrase "Splendid isolation" to describe Britain's attitude at the present time. But it makes a great deal of difference that people should fully understand the truth which lies behind the phrase, and which makes it one which may well stir British imagination. Our Oceanic Empire has been built up slowly and painfully, and sometimes it has almost seemed as if the work were done by haphazard. At last, almost suddenly, people have begun to understand how completely the task has been accomplished. So far as territorial possession is concerned, we hold the essential positions for adequate command of the sea. The growth of population in the greater Colonies has already advanced so far that the most important of these positions are practically secure against successful attack. The increase of population and the consolidation of political strength are still going on, and the day is at least dawning when Britain, facing the world from her four-square position in the United Kingdom and Canada, South Africa and Australia, to say nothing of India and the minor possessions of the Empire, can rely with confidence on her self-sufficing strength. Those who have anticipated such an outcome of the national growth have often been looked on as dreamers. The dream has not perhaps as yet been entirely fulfilled, yet the fact that Britain for once has been able to direct her diplomacy and assert her will with comparative disregard of European politics, shows how far we have gone towards its realization. We now begin to see that this "splendid isolation" rests on wide diffusion. This is the secret of the sea and of the mastery of the sea. A European Empire or an American Republic rests its safety on concentration; an Oceanic Empire on expansion. In broad political result the phrase thus understood will have as much popular effect in the Colonies as in the Motherland. Hitherto the dread of Australians, and, to some extent, of Canadians, has been lest their own countries should become entangled in the complicated network of European politics. This has been the shadow which has always darkened for timid minds the splendid picture of a United British Empire. Every proof that this danger has been diminished, or may vanish in the future, will strengthen the national bond, and give a new impulse to complete national consolidation. "Splendid isolation" may have had its genesis in patriotic enthusiasm; it may well stand as an ideal of national aspiration.

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## The Cold of a Mild Winter.

IT cannot be too much dinned into the ears of Canadians who intend to visit France or the North of Italy in the winter that the one thing they must think of and prepare for is cold. No readings of the thermometer given in the guide books are of any use to represent the effectiveness of the cold. The thermometer represents a mild day and, as a matter of fact, one's hands, which are the first thing to suffer on a winter's day at home, are comfortable enough there in kid; but for the rest, clothing that would do for a winter's day at home is not able to protect one from the insinuation of that poisonous cold. It is true that at home we walk briskly from one warmed building to another while abroad we dawdle about the streets with a book in our hands and spend an hour at a time in a chill cathedral; but these are the things we propose to do in going there, and it is these conditions we must consider in making our preparations. Moreover there is room for a reasonable theory that it is not only our habits that make us cold; that we should be cold in any case; that the cold has more effect upon us than on the natives who are born to it, for they seem comfortable enough though they go about the streets in much the same manner as we do. It is not exactly that they spend their time in looking at things, but, like all inhabitants of mild countries, they seem to have an imperfect con-