

nations—there has ever been somewhat of the upstart, the parvenu, the “nowean riche” about their diplomacy; whatever may have been their delinquencies they have alike kept a steady eye to the national aggrandizement. When a race is progressive (I am not talking of international morality), this is the right course. This noble aggressiveness, the product of the highest qualities of the highest races England has lost. Englishmen no longer think their mission is to bend the world to their type of civilization. I do not say that the English type is faultless, or perhaps even the best, but that when the desire to extend it fails, there is a weakening of the national fire. England has long become indifferent to the glory of seeing her flag fly in all the waste spots of the earth. What she gains by war she fritters away with imbecile complacency at the first treaty. In diplomacy she is overreached with a facility ludicrous and contemptible. As against the United States she cannot be kicked into self assertion even. At the bottom of all this decadence, despite all the milk and water Exeter Hall philosophy which pervades the nation, lies simply avarice. For example let the following paragraph, cut from a recent newspaper, bear witness that I do not use too strong a term in styling the British merchant “profligate.”

“A merchant ship from Liverpool was captured the other day on the Gold Coast, loaded with 2,000 muskets, and a large quantity of powder for the Ashantees. All the muskets were of English make and marked “Birmingham.”

But much of this is digressional from the point to which the consideration of Mr. Gladstone's surplus and traditional policies led me. The policy of Russia, Prussia and the United States has ever steadily kept in view territorial extension. In the case of Prussia, whose natural aspirations of the German people for the unity of their race and territory, that policy has been, more or less, from the time of the first Frederick downwards, promoted by a means entirely consistent with the common sense, but which no other nation seems to have had the courage to imitate. I mean the wise foresight of, to some extent, anticipating the expenses of wars by laying up treasure wherewith to begin them. If England had the courage, out of the surpluses of her enormous revenues, which have been so frequent of late years, to put by a million a year as a war fund, the very net would go far to make the belligerent nations think very carefully before they provoked her. But she is too far involved with Manchester and Exeter Hall to leave a hope of so true and bold a policy. Piece by piece she has supinely permitted the United States to curtail and hem in the territory of the Dominion. She is awakening now. But so much mischief has been quietly accomplished that thinking men may well entertain grave fears whether the awakening be not too late. Had Fed-

eration and the Fort Garry troubles occurred ten years years since we should have been better welded together to-day. We have no right to impute disloyalty to the mass of the Reform party because some of their chiefs are chargeable with annexation utterances, and if the Pacific Railway be at once set on foot (if that be possible, in view of the Survey Records, which I believe it is) from the Pacific Coast and from Fort Garry, the Dominion from sea to sea will be too stubborn a fact to be set aside. But it behoves all loyal Canadians to closely watch whether results prove the sincerity of the present Government. These postulates may be safely assumed. Without the Pacific Railway the Confederation is a whisp of straw, and every year's delay increases the danger of it becoming so.

I have read with much interest Captain Colomb's paper on Colonial Defence, so far as published in your columns. The question seems to me to resolve itself into this: England cannot maintain an army sufficient for the defence of her Colonial possessions. If the British connection be deemed by her Colonies worth the maintenance, the larger communities amongst them, to wit, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, and the South African Colonies, must provide for their own military establishments. With all her wealth England is unequal to this burthen, but all her available resources should be devoted to maintain her fleet on a scale of magnitude and efficiency which has not even yet entered into the hearts of officials to conceive. If she strain every nerve (without neglecting her own army) in that direction, there is no fear but that she could guard the channel, and, at the same time maintain a squadron in every sea powerful enough to sweep the ocean, and at the same time she should not be squeamish about “letters of marque.” British Columbia depends almost entirely on the navy for protection, and were it not for the presence of part of the Pacific squadron in the harbor of Esquimalt from time to time, there is little doubt that British Columbia would not now be a Province of the Dominion.

If there is one thing in which England may triumphantly claim pre eminence over all the nations of the world (except France and Spain), it is in blundering. She has consistently blundered in her sympathies on almost every conceivable occasion that has been afforded her. The Crimean war was a huge blunder, the want of sympathy with our natural kindred and allies, the Germans, in the beginning of their resistance to French aggression, was another. The sympathy with the South was another, or if not, then was the time to have gone to war. The South erected into a separate federation, and Maine and Michigan wrested from the Union, and the boundary line rectified from the Columbia River to the head of Lake Michigan, would have been results not impossible ten years ago. Now it remains to be

seen whether we shall hold our own. The destinies of Canada are very much in the hands of the present military.

At last, the Siamese twins are dead. But it would appear from some indications of an intention to make a profitable operation out of their bodies, that the world will not yet cease to be disgusted with prurient particulars connected with them. The ready acquiescence (as reported) in this scheme, of the women who consented to become the wives and to share the loathesome lives of the abortions, is what might have been expected. It is devoutly to be hoped that a speedy corruption, will defeat the ends of the speculators, and rid the newspaper reading world of a disgusting nuisance.

“FRANC TIREUR”

DOMINION RIFLE ASSOCIATION.

To the Editor of the VOLUNTEER REVIEW.

SIR,—In common with many others I regret to find that the interest once taken in the Dominion Rifle Association has in a great degree disappeared. At present I will not attempt to account for this apathy or indifference, my object is to intimate that instead of sending home a team annually at great expense, some of the old interest in rifle shooting might be called up if an International match was a feature of our annual gathering. The original idea of the promotions of competition at Wimbledon was to lay the basis of an interchange of visits, not that the Canadians should make periodical raids on the presence of English, Irish, and Scotchmen, content if a few pounds passed into their possession. I am convinced that if a suitable prize was offered, teams from the parent country and from the States of the Republic would find their way to Canada, and a stimulus would be given to rifle competition that we have not known. Honor has been won by Canadians in England; and the funds of the Ontario and Dominion Rifle Association attest the profit of the presence on the “Common” of Canadian volunteers. Let us for a season put aside the costly visit to England and endeavour on our part to procure the presence here of representatives of the mother country. If it was intended that the visit of our shots to Britain should promote emigration, certainly the presence in this country of gentlemen from the other side of the Atlantic could not fail to prove beneficial in the same direction. Beyond this we owe it to the British volunteer and to our many very kind friends at home that an effort be made to, in part, repay them for attentions marked by the most touching regard.

I am yours truly, M.

To CORRESPONDENTS.—“Sabreur” and “Gladiator” has been received and will appear in our next.