

his uncertainty whether Canada may not ' by mere force of attraction drift into the Union. She will either be annexed or form a part of the Imperial Federation.' Our present status does indeed seem both parasitical and precarious."

The above paragraph is not our own, but was sketched out by the ablest of our occasional contributors. We have, we think, elsewhere indicated that, if the idea of Imperial Federation should become desirable to the Canadian people, contribution on the part of Canada to the expense and extension of the Imperial Navy (in the way in which it has been carried out in Australia) would be the imperative and practical first point. It would probably be also the last and only point.

As to whether Britain would stand by Canada there is no real doubt, though her support would in all probability be withheld if Canada were to commit herself to a bumptious and unreasonable policy. That the tail-twisters are convinced of the certainty is obvious enough from the spurious utterances, palmed off on the people of the United States as those of English newspapers tending to the contrary idea.

We are not by any means inclined to discuss the question of war, believing, as some one else has expressed it, that if these great Christian and civilized nations find themselves in the hands of statesmen unable to adjust a mere commercial difference, the sooner they discover and commission a new set of statesmen of a higher-minded stamp the better.

It is well to bear in mind that, after all, England and the United States are the only countries which practically acknowledge the obligations of morality, and the arbitrations which have been already carried out, ought to inspire hope and confidence in the future, while it ought always to be borne in mind that, if a nation does not think it has obtained full justice at the hands of arbitrators, there is at least no disgrace in submitting to the award with dignity and resignation.

The present difficulty does indeed bring sharply before us the fact that our position is "precarious." "Parasitical" is an unpleasant word, but, in view of our anti-British tariff, it cannot be said to be unjustified. It might occur to some that existing complications point to the expediency of Canada having conceded to her the right of treaty-making on her own account with the United States; yet that would be tantamount to independence, and it has been due on more than one occasion to the counsels of the English Government that that of the Dominion has moderated its claims.

It is true that "circumstances alter cases." The bulk of American aggressiveness is undoubtedly due to the traditionally fostered dislike of England, and if we were to suppose a Canada enjoying (if it would be any enjoyment) its own treaty-making power, or in fact independent, much of that dislike would entirely vanish, and it is more than possible that an acknowledged weaker power, on whose part the idea of war would be madness, might find itself, on the whole, in a better position to secure from the stronger conventions which must almost necessarily be based on reciprocal friendliness and interchange of commercial facilities.

The difficulties of diplomatic dealing with the United States lie chiefly in the peculiar powers of the Senate, which may at any time thwart the best intentions of a reasonable President and Cabinet.

#### PREVENTION BY INOCULATION.

The success which has been attained abroad in preventing what were once some of the deadliest diseases by inoculation ought to stimulate explorers in the fields of medical science to find some preventative for the scourge of yellow fever now ravaging Jacksonville, Florida. Jenner long since robbed small-pox of its terrors. Pasteur has perhaps done some good in respect to splenic fever and chicken cholera, though his theory of hydrophobia is essentially empiric, and his experiments have not only resulted in about 140 deaths, but in most cases lack the basis of fact, as to the existence of true rabies. Gamalcia, a Russian doctor, claims to have chained up the Asiatic cholera. Who will discover the yellow fever vacillus, and give the tropical and semi-tropical world immunity from that dread visitation?

It is sound doctrine that "some things can be done as well as others," and there appears to be no good reason why some skillful scientist should not discover the way to withdraw yellow fever from the list of incurable, and place it on that of curable, diseases, just as the scientists named have done with others which were once regarded as fatal as yellow fever itself.

It is, however, well to bear in mind that, with our present knowledge, much, if not all, depends on drainage and cleanliness. It is stated that the present epidemic at Jacksonville was caused by disturbing filthy sowers, etc., during the hottest part of the season, when noxious gases and vapors are specially volatile.

Previous to the war between the North and the South, New Orleans was annually visited by "Yellow Jack," and many Southerners openly boasted, when the Federal troops occupied that city, that they would be wiped out by it when the summer came. But General Butler, with the prescience that distinguished his executive administration, prepared against it by thoroughly cleansing the city in the cool months, and afterwards keeping it clean by stringent regulations that all knew would be enforced. The result was that during the war, and for years afterwards, not a single case of yellow fever occurred among troops or civilians in the Crescent City. By attention to drainage and cleanliness, Memphis stamped out one of the severest visitations of yellow fever ever witnessed in America, and to her continued attention thereto may be reasonably attributed her continued immunity from the scourge. Jacksonville would, no doubt, have had equal success had efforts been made in time.

It may be useful to study what relations exist between yellow fever in the hotter, and typhus and typhoid fevers or diphtheria in the colder, portions of this continent. All appears to be, if not caused, at least aggravated

and made more active by bad or imperfect sanitary conditions, and may it not be possible that these diseases are, so to speak, cousins german to each other, or different forms of the same disease, the development of which depends on climatic or other influences that have never been scientifically thought out?

Whatever, therefore, may be accomplished in the way of discovering palliatives, curatives or preventives, to this class of disease, let nothing be done to discourage that surest preventive known, thorough cleanliness.

#### SOCIETY AND CULTURE.

A daily contemporary had an article last week on social and intellectual culture which was, in the main, extremely well-written and embodied a great deal of just observation, but it waxed unduly wrath over Halifax Society and the Services. That there exists a greater devotion to "frivolities" than is desirable is true enough, and perhaps "the higher claims of the intellectual culture of the city and province" are too little regarded. There is some truth also in another allegation, only that, if a Halifax girl marries a soldier or a sailor, the chances are very small that she marries a "snob," but neither service deserves the stigma implied in the words "vulgar society of a military outpost" and "petty and uneducated officers of a second or third rate standing in the service." The implication goes beyond facts. It is impossible in these days, and it has been impossible for many years, that a naval or military officer should be "uneducated," and, as to "second or third rate standing," the meaning of the disparagement is far from clear. A man must be a lieutenant before he can be a general, and a midshipman before he can be an admiral. In other respects he may be of more or less mark than his comrade either by native ability or by opportunity of showing it; but from first to last he has the standing of a gentleman, and rarely does anything to discredit it. In far the greater number of instances he is as kindly and modest a gentleman as most civilians, and generally quite as courteous. No doubt Dalhousie should be "a centre of intellectual life for the city," and we are far from doubting the general intellectual aspirations of her sons. These do not, it is true, show out with any remarkable conspicuity in a set of ordinances (if they be genuine) for the treatment of Freshmen, which was published in one of our evening papers of the 26th ultimo, yet it would be absurd as well as impertinent to ascribe to Dalhousie a general character of rowdiness.

Bitter generalizations seldom hold water. There are good and indifferent, and mostly the former, in all classes, and it is mostly lack of mutual experience which inclines men to the expression of hard thoughts of each other.

#### THE AMERICAN NAVY.

A good deal is written from time to time about the weakness of the American Navy, which is at the present moment rather misleading. Lieut. Fullam, U. S. N., has an instructive article in the *American Magazine* for September, which sets before us the true state of the case.

It is true that from 1865 to 1883 "not a single ship of any power was added to the U. S. Navy." Five double-turreted monitors were begun in 1875, but never completed, and "the small sum of \$5,000,000 appropriated in eighteen years, only permitted the addition of a few new wooden, and two small iron ships to the list of obsolete war-veterans, armed with old smooth-bore guns and a few converted rifles."

During the last administration, however, a bill was passed forbidding repairs to old vessels where the expense would exceed 20 per cent. of the original cost. This amounted to a revolution, with the result that, in six years, only four of the old cruisers will remain, while in nine years all will have been condemned.

Since 1883 votes have been passed for the completion of the five monitors, and the building of two sea-going ironclads, and fourteen unarmored steel ships, all to be armed with new high-power rifles and modern weapons.

Most of these ships are built after the models of the latest and most successful foreign cruisers. The Vesuvius, the great floating gun-carriage, (for her three 15 inch, 24 feet, dynamite guns are fixed like mortars at an elevation of 18 degrees, we very briefly described in THE CRITIC of 7th September. The great novelty of this craft is that the accuracy of range and aim will depend on the position taken up by the vessel, and the manipulation of her helm. This is of course untried, but there is probably no serious theoretic probability that guns so worked may not be directed with good average correctness as we believe, small mortars have been in large ship's boats. The guns themselves would seem to be of a very formidable nature. A schooner experimented upon was utterly shattered at a distance of over a mile by a charge of 55 lbs. The Vesuvius is 252 ft. in length, and has a beam of 26 feet, her deck is only 5 feet above water, and she is designed for a speed of 20 knots. Her light draught, only 9 feet, and her great speed, will enable her to manœuvre in shoal water, although that facility might fail to exempt her from the long ranges of the heavy guns of a large cruiser were it not for the very small target she will present. The high angle fire of the guns may be useful in many ways, and it is further suggested that short dynamite guns may be built into the bows of ironclads for use at short range when ramming.

We have adverted to the difficulty of hitting a vessel only showing five feet of broadside above the water. The five monitors show much less, the Puritan 30 inches, the others but 25 inches.

In the matter of tonnage it should be a strong hint to the British Admiralty that the Puritan (double turret) has a displacement of 6000 tons, while the Miantonomoh, Monadnock, Amphitrite and Terror, sister ships, are of 3,815 tons.

We shall continue this subject in our next issue.