

now they have the chance of being rendered immortal by Mr. Patterson's brush.

The British Navy League is an organization to which I have great pleasure in commending the notice of my readers. It is proposed under its auspices to form branch societies all over the British Empire of those who recognize the importance to the Colonies and the nation at large of Britain's maritime power. A letter from Admiral Vesey Hamilton on the subject appeared in the *Mail and Empire* last week, and Mr. H. J. Wickham, room 61, Canada Life Building, may be written to by any who think of joining a branch of the League.

DIOGENES.

Parisian Affairs.

THERE has never been till now any individual responsibility for the construction of war-ships in France. That duty devolved on a commission, whose members were generally at loggerheads, with the most disastrous results for the out-put of ships. The French admiralty has now adopted the English plan, and makes one person responsible for the construction. The French are to construct a new class of war-ship, the "Corsair Cruiser," that will be a kind of greyhound of the seas, and will make it appear to England terrible. Before the vessels are completed England will have a dozen more of them. Half the misunderstandings between France and England are the consequence of the statesmen of the Boulevards not having the slightest idea of the naval strength and resources of England. They view a volunteer cruiser fleet of seven vessels, owned by Russia, the means to knock the British navy into a cocked-hat, totally oblivious that Cowes alone has thousands of steam yachts excellent for scout-duty—the great aim. In addition England owns all the marine cables, and the best and most convenient naval stations all over the world. Naturally that makes her a great object of jealousy. Russia may swell in dimensions, and France try to follow suit, but for England to do so would be a crime. Neither France nor Russia can maintain a large army and a powerful navy concurrently. Russia has but dry-land sailors, and the naval reserves of France include dock-laborers and porters, barge men, etc. For the moment England has to re-organize her naval reserves. That done, she may take the world easy. A powerful navy, the federation of her possessions, such are the two cardinal ends of England's foreign policy.

The French follow nearly as intently as do the English themselves the general elections. They know that a large Unionist majority means no walking over the diplomatic course, as has been the case hitherto with the foreigner. Impartial judges here, who coolly look on the unrolling of events, estimate the Salisbury Cabinet will score a majority of between 60 and 100. If so, that means grit in the handling of foreign questions. Opinion expects some very bold schemes in connection with the navy, and few doubt that the colonies will be welded with the Mother Country on a base of Anglo-Saxon defence and trade. As for the race after China for railway concessions, the Celestials having commenced the innovation will not likely stop half way. The country prepared to invest capital in railway projects will be given plenty and a very free hand. Curiosity is anxious to see how the Russo-Chinese loan will bite; what nations will most subscribe for it, and what will be the concrete results. The world, and China herself, must gain by these enterprises, but the Son of Heaven ought to insist that unless a fair commencement of the works be made within a certain date, the concession will become cancelled. Nor ought the lines to be converted into foreign monopolies. By the close of the current year, people will see clearer into the background of all the reigning intrigues—only the latter will pay.

There is not much sign of preparation for the keeping of the coming national holiday; there is no superfluity of cash to expend on amusements. However, the fête will be noted this year closely, to ascertain to what extent the Russian flag will be employed for window decoration. It will be a kind of plébiscite upon the Russo-Franco alliance. What damps the latter is, the freedom of England between the opposite alliances and her firm resolve to look after her own hand, backed up by all that can give her weight and strength. The naval demonstration in honour of the Italian fleet does not make the French very happy. They have laboured hard to run down,

or sit upon the Latin sister—"mother" would be more historically accurate—not so much out of jealousy of her springing into greatness, as in the expectation of breaking up the triple alliance by crippling the Italians. That plan of campaign is well understood. The best reply to all the attacks on Italy is to note that her funds keep up. The Italians will never again suffer—and in this respect they row a bow oar in the same boat with Germany—any foreign interference in their country. Hence the importance of the navy courtesies the Cronstadt fraternization between England and Italy. There is another cause that damps the French enthusiasm for the Russian alliance, not the fact of an important minority in France being opposed to it, but the impossibility to clearly perceive where Russia can come in to the aid of France, in the present cost of the powers. Despite all their political friendship, Russia and France shrink from briefing a case against England, and calling a congress to listen to the awful wrongs the British occupation of the Nile Valley has caused, not the Egyptians (they are now great, glorious and free), but to the French, who are kept out in the cold.

The American Ambassador here, Mr. Eustis, has got himself into a mess, by an extra-diplomatic utterance. In an interview with a leading journal, he expressed himself, as if simply a private individual, on the annexation of Canada to the United States, and of the sympathy of his country for the Cuban insurrection. Brief: Clear the British out of Canada and the Spaniards out of Cuba—then the world will wag better. As yet the American Minister has not comprehended his blunder by falling back upon the usual hole of extrication, that the interview is wholly imaginary, and the out-put of the heat—the thermometer is now in the nineties—oppressed brain of the journalist. The certainly uncalled for diplomatic opinions have offended both English and Spaniards in Paris; the Premier from his intimacy at the British Embassy, and the welcome guest at all English gatherings, was considered likely to end his days as a British subject, just as do Radicals in the House of Lords. Clearly the times are out of joint.

How can you blame Frenchmen for occasionally kicking against the Code, when the law is so openly violated and defied, in the matter of bull fights in France? On Sunday last, at Arles, near Marseilles, a bull fight was held and six bulls were killed. If a pickpocket commits an offence the law is down upon him without pity, but to destroy half-a-dozen bulls in an arena, to make a Gaelic holiday, is not at all heinous.

Nothing in the way of violation of laws is permitted by the Excise. Perhaps after a rag-picker, the next humblest or lowest employment is that of the "Mégotier" or the picker up of the cigar butts in the streets, especially in front of cafés and restaurants. They are a class of men in the last stage of social "done up." They have a light stick with a thin, sharp-pointed nail at the end and when they see the cast away bit of a cigar they harpoon it and drop it into their abyss coat pocket. In the morning, on some public seat, say in the place du Carrousel, they unravel the residue leaves, rub and mix up and leave the mass to partly dry in the sun, or in winter before the fire of a low pub.; then the tobacco is made up into small packets and sold to the proprietors of rum holes. That industry, limited to the picking up of unconsidered trifles, it appears affects the revenue—which had a drop of six million francs during the month of June—as the authorities say that that strangely manufactured weed, selling at a lower price, competes with orthodox trade. In the shape of cigars the remnants have already paid the tobacco tax. Hygienically the plan of smoking—though fire is said to purify everything—the refuse of what has been in diseased mouths is not good. In any case the industry has lived: henceforth beggarman manufacturers of compound smoking "mixtures" of navy "cut"—that is plugs, quids thrown away or rejected ends of cigars, if caught picking such up will themselves be "picked up."

Here is a *fin de siècle* way for a doctor to obtain payment of his fees. He resides at Neuilly, a suburb outside of Paris, which is largely occupied by English and Americans—of the cycling world especially. He sent in his bill, 408 frs., to an architect and a married man, for attendance on a Miss Johnson during her accouchement. Meeting with no attention the doctor wrote to the architect's wife, enclosing a copy of the bill for attendance on "Signoria" Johnston and her little stranger, and giving the address of the girl—