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It is announced that the C. P. R. will build their next iron steamship at Owen Sound. This is a very satisfactory announcement, and the Railway authorities are doing a good thing in initiating iron ship building on the Lakes, where, as on the Ocean, iron is supplanting wood. With the splendid resources of Nova Scotia in iron, surely there ought, by this time, to be a beginning of iron ship building in the Maritime Provinces.

The war scare continues to develop itself in England. It is now said that both the French and Russian Naval Departments are furnishing their Commanders with minute descriptions of every British fortification, and that these powers have matured joint plans to land forces simultaneously at different points on the coasts of Britain in the event of war, with more about the English Government having been long aware that the French and Russian Embassies have been actively engaged for years in procuring information through secret agents employed in the dockyards, arsenals &c., about all which there seems to rest an air of incongruity. Probably a good deal of it is sensational make up.

Mr. Labouchere is a very amusing and entertaining gentleman, but he has the malice and love of mischief of a monkey. Not, we suppose, seeing any other opening at the moment, he “goes for” the Canadian Voyageurs, the value of whose services Lord Walseley so freely acknowledged. According to Labby they were composed largely of boys who had emigrated from England, and misconducted themselves at Malta. These gratuitous aspersions were immediately flatly contradicted by Lord Chas. Beresford and Col. Duncan, both speaking from personal knowledge. Probably Col. Fred. Denison, of Toronto, will also have a word to say to Labby, the name of whose organ is its chief title to the possession of the quality of “Truth.”

A minister named Pendleton is reported to have furnished the Worcester (Mass) Telegram with certain scandalous reports of the domestic discomforts of Mrs. Cleveland, and the debauchery of the President. Mrs. Cleveland's attention having been called to the matter by a friend, she has written to that lady an indignant and emphatic denial, which has been published. It is difficult to imagine a minister so disgracing his profession and himself, and it is not improbable that the whole thing is an invention to serve the purposes of Mr. Cleveland's opponents in the Presidential campaign. If so, such tactics, tho' exciting even more contempt than disgust, are very likely to hoist their authors with their own petard by inducing sympathy instead of reprobation.

Imperial Federation perhaps somewhat suffers from a certain obscurity as to its principles, we are therefore glad to reproduce a definition furnished to a city contemporary, which has been endorsed by the English official organ of the League. Reciprocity of obligations, not of tariffs, is by this, defined to be the cardinal principle of the movement. “Federationists,” says the writer, “hold that the responsibilities of the various parts of the Empire to each other should be reciprocal. Most Canadian Federationists feel that this Dominion is not now an infant plantation, that, to be entitled to the full rights of an adult nation, it should assume the duties and responsibilities of one; that the time is at hand when it must no longer be a ‘dependency,’ but a co-ordinate and equal partner, if it is to continue in the Empire at all; that at present it perhaps does not deserve, and certainly does not get, the protection and backing of the Empire as fully as the three paying partners, and that, to pass from this humiliating and parasitical state, only three courses are open to it—to support diplomatic, naval, and military services of its own, or to subscribe to those of the United States, or those of our British Empire. And, weighing the probable cost and worth of each, they believe the last course is the best.”

IS IT THE BEGINNING OF THE END?

“The coming weapon of civilized warfare will not be an explosive bullet, but a chemical one,” is said by a New York paper to have been the remark of a scientific gentleman. There have in fact been many suggestions of something of the kind. The late gallant and venerable Earl of Dundonald (the famous Lord Cochrane of the last days of the Napoleonic wars, and of South American fame) propounded some such invention to the Admiralty many years ago. Lord Dundonald, who was Commander in Chief on this station from 1848 to 1851, was not only the most dashing officer of his day in the Navy, but was also a scientific inventor. He was allowed to construct a steam sloop, both ends of which were bows, and which was appropriately called the “Janus”; and he claimed to have made a discovery, which he asserted would annihilate a considerable force—at least so it was said, but of what nature the annihilation was, whether of destruction or stupefaction, was never known. As the Earl was a very kindly man, it was supposed to have been the latter in some shape or other. Whatever it was, the Admiralty of the

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The editor of THE CRITIC is responsible for the views expressed in Editorial Notes and Notes, and for such only; but the editor is not to be understood as endorsing the sentiments expressed in the articles contributed to this journal. Our readers are capable of seeing or disapproving of any part of an article or contents of the paper, and after receiving due care as to what is to appear in our columns, we shall leave the rest to their intelligent judgment.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

The French Chamber shows bad judgment in handling General Boulanger. If he were treated as if he were altogether unimportant, he would probably collapse.

Monstrous turtles are now the fashion in the columns of our contemporaries. One caught in Iowa had an inscription dated 1847, cut in its shell. Another, captured at Charleston, weighed 365 lbs., its head was “several feet” larger than a man's, and its mouth “enormous.” If we should ever (intendre, to find) a turtle, we should dispense a date this side the food, and laugh to scorn any weight less than 5,000 lbs.

Russian journals have protested that their great railways through Central Asia are not built for warlike ends, but to subserve those of peace and commerce, but it would be simplicity itself to assume that Russia, a nation so strictly military before commercial, will not refrain from strengthening her military facilities by their means. Neither Russia nor China are at this moment in a very good humor with England, and an alliance of both against us is by no means beyond the bounds of possibility. Again and again, whenever signs of danger appear in the direction of Russia, we find ourselves impelled to wonder why England should feel it incumbent upon her to go on pursuing the traditional but irrational policy of thwarting the natural growth of a great country, unnaturally pent up, for outlet to the Mediterranean.

The amount of inventions the gullible public will swallow is astounding, at least we suppose they swallow and like them, or a mendacious press would not find it to its profit to continue publishing them. No sooner do the prorogations of parliaments afford space than the newspapers reek with absurdities. Hens that lay eggs producing phenomenal chickens; kittens with two heads, three tails, and ten legs; serpents of great size that are reared by children in the woods, flying thro' the air without visible means of propulsion; fiery hands appearing in the heavens with a finger pointing to the doomed city—probably more particularly to the newspaper offices in the streets of all sorts and conditions of incredibility. The curious question is, are there people who believe these things? If there are not, why does the public tolerate them?