

JOURNALS must live, and amidst the crowd of competitors it is difficult for them to live without creating an occasional sensation. This may be partly the account of the panic articles about the state of the British navy published by the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which is just now making a spirited effort to push itself into the front place. Perhaps if a French, Russian, or Italian journal equally enterprising were in the same crisis of its existence, we might have a similar jeremiad over the French, Russian, or Italian navy. Invention is now so rapid that the navy of yesterday is to-day out of date; but England has probably better means of bringing herself up to the mark on short notice than any one of her rivals. Still the question is evidently serious, and most serious for Canada, which with a large mercantile marine is wholly dependent on the British navy for protection. In the discussion set on foot by the disclosures in the British press it appears to be distinctly admitted even by those who give way least to alarm that England, while she would be clearly superior in force to any one other naval power, would have difficulty in coping with two. It is also taken as certain that the ocean would, upon the outbreak of war, at once swarm with the enemy's cruisers. England can hardly be said to have been engaged in a great naval war since Trafalgar; for in the Crimean war the Russian navy was from the outset shut up in port by the combined fleets of the Allies. We have, therefore, yet to learn what difference the new invention and a warfare unknown to Nelson would make to the British sailor in an encounter with his old enemies. It can hardly be hoped that the difference would be in his favour.

SIMULTANEOUSLY with the alarm about the navy comes an alarm about overpressure in schools. In this case, too, there is probably exaggeration. The report of Dr. Clifford Browne, who has raised the cry, is held to be discredited by his preconceived opinions and by the inflation of his style. Still he positively deposes to the increase of nervous ailments since the establishment of the School Board and the institution of what was deemed their improved system. It is obvious that the mere uniformity of tasks imposed on all must entail a certain amount of overpressure in the case of the duller children. No doubt in former days the failure to discriminate between dulness and idleness, or rather the assumption that there was no such thing as natural dulness, and that every child could learn if it chose, was the source of much cruelty in schools. Apart from dulness, the languor attendant on rapid growth often incapacitates a perfectly good and willing child for mental effort. The "Bystander" is no specialist, and, therefore, his opinion can lay no claim to attention. Yet he has had some opportunities of observation, and has been led to some conclusions. He would like to see the programme simplified by striking out of it all that is pretentious, and bringing it down to that which is elementary, practical and capable of being readily taught. He would also be disposed to reduce the time, and, as far as possible, let hard work end with the dinner hour, which was the practice of the healthiest school he ever knew. The more children can be taught to help their parents at home the better; they get in this way, without detriment to their health, a training almost as valuable in its way as that which they get at school. Experience, without leading us to undervalue school training, has shown that the school by itself will not form character. In the case of mature students, at the universities or elsewhere, while there is real danger from overwork, catastrophes are often charged to that account which should rather be charged to the account of cramming at the last to make up for wasted time, heavy and unsuitable diet, smoking or late hours; perhaps sometimes to excess in bodily exercise, which is just as noxious as excess of any other kind. Late hours of study above all are fatal. Let a student rise to his work early in the morning, take some relaxation in the evening, and go to bed in good time; he will find that he can get through a good deal of reading without any danger to his health. A great English lawyer was once congratulated on the freshness of his appearance and the ease with which, at a rather advanced age, he bore his enormous burden. "Yes," he replied, "I have always worked early in the morning, never late at night. I set out in life with many friends who worked late at night; I have buried them all."

At the opening of our colleges some of the professors and students may bear in their mind the remarks made at Montreal by the distinguished President of the British Association on the study of the classics. If the President's attack is directed against the despotism of the classics which prevailed fifty years ago, he is killing the slain. He is killing the slain again, if what he means to deprecate is the devotion of two or three years of a boy's life to the weary acquisition of grammatical rules and forms. Classics are now generally optional, and are beginning to be taught in a more rational way. But there is, it may be suspected, in the minds of

some eminent physicists, a latent antagonism of a special kind to the classics as the great stronghold of the Humanities, and the chief obstacle to the inauguration of what the physicists always call a scientific education. After all, what is science? What is it but the Latin for knowledge? Why is not that knowledge of the spiritual, moral, and intellectual nature of men which can be gained only through literature, provided it be sound, just as much entitled to the name of science as the knowledge of his physical structure? It used to be said that man was the proper study of mankind. Why should it be proposed now to exclude him from the curriculum it is difficult to understand without reference to a peculiar current of opinion, which happens to be setting in strongly at the present time, but which may, like other currents before it, presently expend its force and allow the intellectual world to return to its normal condition. That the classics are the great stronghold, as well as, upon the whole, the best Manual of the Humanities, and the firmest bulwark, not against the advance of science, but against the exclusive domination of physicalism is perfectly true; and the exclusive physicist who directs his battering ram against them shows himself wise in his generation. Not that there is anything in them anti-scientific: they are pre-scientific, that is all. The Greek philosophers were the precursors of modern science, and some of them had marvellous glimpses of our latest discoveries, not excluding Evolution. Plato even overrated the importance of mathematics; but that same Plato remains beyond doubt the most formidable of all foes to exclusive physicalism, and the most powerful of all prompters to the study of that which is distinctly human in man.

It is needless to rehearse the arguments which have convinced most University men that if we wish to have anything worthy of the name of a University, with an educational area so limited as the Province of Ontario, we must combine our resources instead of dispersing them. The system of dispersion, however, had taken root not only in vested interest but in affection; it had given birth to living academical organisms with valuable associations; and the question was how, without destroying these, or divorcing University education from religious training and moral discipline, consolidation could be brought about. A solution, at once feasible and complete, seemed to offer itself in the scheme of Confederation, which, as described by the Principal of Victoria, "Would involve such a reconstruction of the Provincial University as would make the institution consist, not simply of one State College, but of a group of Colleges, as at Oxford and Cambridge, each College retaining its own endowment, powers of self-government, academic discipline, and staff of teachers." The College staff would give instruction in the subjects prescribed for the ordinary degree of Bachelor of Arts, while a separate staff, known as the University staff, would take the honour work and special subjects of the higher kind. The University, in the Senate of which all the Colleges would, of course, be represented, would appoint the examiners and confer the degrees. The existing members of all the federating Colleges would at once become members of the Provincial University. The religious character of the several Colleges and their moral superintendence of students within their own walls would remain unchanged, while they would all, through their union in the secular University, share the advantages of an adequate staff of teachers and adequate equipments of all kinds. "Confederation of all the Colleges in one University," says Principal Nelles, "implies the conservation of existing rights and privileges; it implies equality of standing in the common University; and it implies the autonomy and distinctive character of the Colleges embraced in the Confederation. It affords scope for variety, for wholesome competition, and for future indefinite development with the growth of the country." It is, of course, an essential part of the plan that University College, which is already quite distinct from the University of Toronto, should be one of the group on the same footing and under the same conditions as the rest. Confederation, not mutual annihilation, is the object in view; and a proposal to reduce Trinity, Victoria, and Queen's to the condition of mere Theological Colleges could not be for a moment entertained. The assistance of the State will be needed not only for the legislative inauguration of the new system but to compensate the outlying Colleges for the sacrifices which they will have to make in moving to Toronto. Whatever may be paid to them in the way of compensation they will soon repay by the addition of their resources to those of the Provincial University. The proposal is now, as Principal Nelles tells us, under the consideration of the Government, which has a fair opportunity of rendering a great and lasting service to the Province. There will be difficulties, of course, when things have been so long running in the old grooves; but none which, in the opinion of those who have had the largest experience in University organization, it will not be possible to surmount. Among them is not to be reckoned any narrowness,