

Her displacement is 6,300 tons, length 290 ft., beam 64 ft., draught 22½ ft., speed 17 knots; her armament is to be two 10 inch, six 6 inch, and 25 machine guns.

The *Maine*, a similar ship, has dimensions and armament slightly different. Her tonnage is 6,000 tons, length 310 ft., breadth 57 ft., draught 21½ ft., with an armament of two 12-inch, six 6-inch, and 21 machine guns, and also with the estimated speed of 17 knots. These two are the only armored ships as yet designed apart from the monitors, but they will be very powerful vessels, and fitted with every possible modern scientific appliance. Their heavy guns will have an extreme range of about nine miles, with a 500 lb. projectile and a charge of 250 lbs. They are turreted, and will have 11 inches of armor, but no sail power.

The next largest vessels are the unarmored steel cruisers *Chicago* (nearly completed) *Baltimore*, and *Philadelphia* (both building.) These are of 4500 tons, 334 ft. length, 48 ft. beam, 19 ft. depth, 16 knot speed, and 12 guns.

Next in order come the *Newark* and *San Francisco* (both building) of 4,100 tons, 328 ft. length, 49 ft. beam, 19 ft. draught, and an estimated speed of 18 and 19 knots. They will carry twelve 6-inch rifled guns, eleven machine guns, and six torpedo tubes.

The *Charleston* is of 3,700 tons displacement, length 320 ft., breadth 46 ft., depth 18 ft., speed 19 knots, armament, six 6-inch, two 8-inch, and fourteen machine guns. She was launched in July, and was built after the plans of a Japanese cruiser, constructed by the firm of Armstrong, in England.

The *Boston* and *Atlanta* are 500 tons smaller, displacing 3,200. They are sister ships, with a length of 283, breadth of 42, and depth of 17, feet, and carry an armament similar to that of the *Charleston*. The *Boston* is nearly completed, but the *Atlanta* has made several cruises, and given satisfaction in every respect, being a good sea boat, and furnishing a steady gun-platform. Her maximum speed is 16 knots, and it may be here remarked, that no ship ever yet launched, especially men-of-war, ever came within a knot or two, and often more, of the speed expected of them.

The *Yorktown*, *Bennington*, and *Concord*, are smaller sister ships, of 1,700 tons, 226 ft. length, 36 ft. beam, 14 ft. draught, and estimated for 17 knots. All the smaller ships are looked upon by the Americans as "commerce destroyers," and both these and the larger ones stow a supply of coal which would enable them to steam from 5,000 to 9,000 miles, and keep the sea for from three to five weeks. The armament of these three ships is six 6-inch, six machine guns, and eight torpedo tubes.

The *Dolphin*, 1500 tons, is a despatch boat, armed with one 6-inch, and six Hotchkiss guns, 3 and 4 pounders.

When we think of our wretched little gunboats like the *Reuly*, of 450 tons, it is significant to find the *Petrel* of 870 tons, 175 ft. length, 31 ft. beam, and 12 feet draught, spoken of by the American writer as a "small gunboat."

The Americans are well satisfied with their guns, and it will be seen that in a year or so, they will possess a fleet, which though, as Lt. Fullam says, it is only about one-tenth the effective force of England or France, will yet be of very superior ships of their respective classes, which the skill and dash of American naval officers would make formidable enough.

The completion of all the ships now building will give the United States seven iron-clads and fourteen unarmored ships of different sizes.

#### FOR FREE SPEECH.

A few weeks ago the *Morning Post*, perhaps the chief conservative organ in London, declared that England would not resist the mature decision of Canada either for union with the United States or for independence. Still more recently in an interview with Mr. Goldwin Smith, published in the *N. Y. Sun*, the professor uses these words:—"So far as I am acquainted with the mind of the English people or of British statesmen on these subjects, I should say that the political destinies of Canada were entirely in her own hands." There is in fact no doubt that these opinions are true, and that no English government will ever stultify itself by attempting to hold by force a reluctant population numbering over five millions, and separated by an ocean from the British Isles. Whenever Canada wishes to part in any honorable and friendly way, the probability is that she can do so not only without opposition, but even with a parental blessing on the part of Britain.

As, then, it appears to be quite open for Canada to decide upon her future state, and as it is quite clear that the present dependent and precarious condition cannot last for ever, it seems to be not only the right, but also the duty of Canadians to weigh thoroughly the advantages and disadvantages of the alternatives awaiting their choice. These are independence, union with the United States, and closer union with the Empire. The first is attainable by simply choosing; each of the last two requires the consent of a second party. But that consent will probably be given willingly in either case.

But how is the choice to be made intelligently if the merits of each alternative are not debated fully and freely? And how can they be so debated, if every one who argues for annexation is to be shouted down by cries of "Traitor!" A traitor is a betrayer, of some country, some cause or some person to whom he owes loyalty and faith. And treachery is usually an underhand as well as a hostile act. Does it follow that a man must be base enough to betray the empire secretly and as an enemy, because he argues in favor of separating from it openly and as a friend? There have been innumerable instances of men who, after deciding to emigrate for their commercial advantage and to put their families and themselves under the protection of a foreign flag, have yet, before leaving their native country, not only declined to co-operate with its enemies but even risked their lives in its defence. And beyond a doubt there are many Canadians who believe

in separating from the Empire for the supposed good of their native land, of their mother country, and of friendly relations between English-speaking nations, and who meantime are ready to fight for the British empire and never to abandon it except honorably, openly and in time of peace. Are these men to be branded as traitors? What is it that they are going to betray?

And why are those who advocate independence less traitorous to the imperial flag and imperial crown than those who advocate union with any friendly power? Canadians need have no fear that, after annexation, they may have to fight for the United States against the British Empire; for the only things that the States and the Empire are at all likely to disagree about are Canadian rights and interests.

"The feeling of our people on the subject" (of union with the United States) says Goldwin Smith in his interview with the *Sun* correspondent, "has never been tested or even allowed free expression. One hears the most contradictory estimates. \* \* I repeat that in the absence of any test and while expression is muzzled, all speculation must be mere guess-work." It is highly desirable that this muzzling should cease, that we should have some means of counting who is for independence, who is for imperial federation and who for union with the States. To make an intelligent decision, it is necessary that we should hear each other's arguments; that we should confute them if we can, and, if this is impossible, that we should be convinced by them.

Let us reason with those who have different aspirations as to the future of the Dominion; let us ridicule them occasionally if we choose; but let us not drive them into concealment by simply calling names. This is the way to breed a bitterness that may beget genuine traitors—men capable of conspiring with the enemies of the Empire and of deserting and betraying it in its time of need.

Of course those annexationists who try to further their cause by misrepresenting and running down their country, by inviting the United States to "put on the screw," by stirring up ill-feeling between the mother-country and the Dominion, or by equally base and traitorous methods, deserve to be handled without gloves. But we protest against the notion of some ultra-loyalists that to argue for annexation is traitorous *per se*, and outside the pale of tolerance.

#### ALCOHOLIC HEREDITY.

The good which will in the long run be accomplished in the world by abstainers and prohibitionists will be found to be due, not to arbitrary legislation or to arrogant presumption, but to education, christian persuasion and good example. The efforts of those who see so clearly the evils of drink that they can see little else in the all broad horizon of good and evil, compass at all events, this great benefit to the state, that a generation of increasing numerical strength, has grown up, not only in the avoidance of liquor as a principle, but without taste for it. The leavening of the body social by this legitimate process is of the highest import, and is already producing the fruits which might be expected of a wide-spread beneficial example. But while this great voluntary reform pushes steadily onward to its good end, it is not amiss to direct attention to considerations which ought to appeal to the dullest spark of intelligence.

Probably the most far-reaching in its consequences are those of the effect of alcohol in excess on the system immediately subjected to it, and its broader effects in heredity.

Desjardin-Beaumetz considers that a man weighing 120 lbs. might take the equivalent of two ounces a day of alcohol for years without injury, and the experience of any observer will broadly confirm this opinion. But if this fairly reasonable sort of quantity be habitually exceeded, there ensue fatty degeneration of the liver, congestion, or a dropsical state of the brain, inflamed and degenerated stomach, and diseased kidneys. The first and last of these deteriorations of structure have been demonstrated by dissections in the dead house of the Philadelphia hospital to exist respectively to the extent of 90 and 99 per cent.

But this is as nothing to hereditary consequences; alcoholic excess, as proved by very complete experiments and observation, entails on the progeny of its victims weak-mindedness, idiocy, hydrocephalus epilepsy, and the tendency to criminality incident to weakened powers of self-control, and inflammation of body. "Fortunately," says the *New York Forum*, "for the community, the stock blighted by the curse of inebriety ultimately dies out, but often the malign influence extends through three or four generations before becoming extinguished in sterility and death.

Even in his sober intervals he whose nervous system has been shattered by alcohol is liable to have a degenerate or diseased offspring. The conclusions are based upon abundant statistics, for instances of which we have not space in this article. But the fact is worth mentioning that two eminent Frenchmen have actually carried out series of experiments on dogs which afforded the most direct confirmation. Among them was one in which, a dog being coupled with a drunken partner, of six pups born three only were living, and these were all dull and stupid. One of these, when grown up, was mated with a healthy partner. Of three pups which were the result, one had congenital disease of the spinal cord, one a deficiency of the heart and circulation, and the third a generally arrested development.

If those whose enthusiasm in a good cause is too often coupled with deficiency in judgment, instead of courting ridicule by propounding theories about the nature of scriptural wine which rival those of Mr. Donnelly on Shakespeare, would publish and circulate a few well selected instances of the results of sober science as to the really terrible effects of intemperance, but without the prejudice and exaggeration which excites so much disgust, we think they would find fitted to their hand a weapon of no small efficacy to the use of which no reasonable person could possibly object.