

Some of the good folks, whose strongest aversion is to see Canada united and prosperous, add to other dismal forebodings the prediction that the Dominion can never become a nation until all its people speak one language. Even the Toronto *Globe* is moved to invite its readers to consider the case of Switzerland, in which republic three official languages are recognized: German, French and Italian. It is pointed out that Germany, France and Italy are close at hand, yet that the Germans, the Italians and the French of the different cantons have no aspiration towards the nations whose languages they speak, and that the Swiss with no language of their own have so intense a love for their own country that "when one thinks of Switzerland he thinks of patriotism, and when one thinks of patriotism he thinks of Switzerland."

It is alleged that a silver swindle of great proportions is being perpetrated at the expense of the Dominion by a shrewd combine of German-Americans, whose operations are said to find their field between Michigan and Ontario. It is asserted that large quantities of American silver have been converted into Canadian coins within the past year and circulated in those districts. They are said to contain the standard weight of silver, and to be *fac similes* of the Canadian coin. As the issues are said to be very extensive, Canadian silver will become a drug in the border States, and will be sent to Canada by the American banks for redemption, by which process it is estimated the silver operators will extract from Canada a profit of 40 per cent. on the value of the silver. The attention of the Dominion Government has been drawn to the matter.

We have had recalled to us by a short editorial in the Wolfville *Acadian* how absolutely sickening are the reiterated recriminations of papers of opposing political parties. Not a move can be made, good or bad, but it is the subject of virulent comment, and every occurrence, however wide of party signification, is made the topic of abuse by one set of journals, and of unstinted praise by another. The *Acadian* puts the grievance—for it is a crying public nuisance—so well that we are induced to quote it. "A contemporary refers to the *Acadian* as 'an independent paper,' taking the side of no political party and little part in the political discussions of the day. That hits us. We take very little part in the political discussions for the reason that they are not worth it. We do not believe the people are any better informed or happier by taking part in party bickerings. We believe the nonsensical editorials of rank party papers are doing as much as anything else to injure and hinder the advancement and prosperity of this Canada of ours."

Another United States Senator has conceived an original and comprehensive scheme. He thinks the negro problem may be solved by the United States Government taking steps to obtain a share of power in the Congo Free State, and encouraging negroes of a higher class to emigrate there, where, he imagines, they might attain a social standing not open to them in the States. Ultimately he has in view a general emigration. We apprehend there may be some obstacles to this fair-sounding programme, as there have been found to be to annexation and other grand and sweeping theories broached by members of the U. S. Senate. In the first place the wealthy blacks would very likely decline to go. In the second their civilization, which the Senator considers wasted in America, but likely to elevate the country he desires them to seek, is far more likely to deteriorate there, the examples of Hayti and Liberia being ever before us in this respect. In the third place, the emigration of the more cultivated colored people would leave to the United States a residue which the rest of the South would probably scarcely appreciate.

Committees appointed by the British Association and by the Royal Society of Canada are at present engaged in urging upon the Dominion Government the importance of making systematic observations with the object of determining the unknown currents in the coast waters of Canada. Dr. J. G. MacGregor, writing to the *Herald* on the subject, alludes to the recent wreck of H. M. S. *Lily* in close proximity to a signal station, and adverts the wealth of information available to the navigators of British waters from tide tables, recorded observations of currents, manuals of coast pilotage, etc. The same information may be obtained for the coast waters of Canada by a comparatively small expenditure, and Dr. MacGregor remarks that "it is obvious that the committees referred to should receive the support of all our shipping people in urging its importance upon the Government. The matter is being energetically taken up," Dr. MacGregor continues, "in the Upper Provinces. Boards of Trade are passing resolutions in favor of the proposals, and pressing upon their representatives in Parliament its importance. The shipping firms of Montreal have held a meeting to discuss it, and are to send a deputation to Ottawa to present a memorial in its favor to the Government. It must be noted however that what they are urging on the Government is the making of tidal and other observations in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Unless, therefore, the shipping interest of the Lower Provinces takes similar action, there is danger that the Government may think these observations less necessary in our waters and provide only for making them in the St. Lawrence. I would therefore venture to suggest that the shipping firms of all our principal ports, Halifax, St. John, Pictou, Yarmouth, etc., should follow the example of the Montreal firms by sending memorials to the Minister of Marine, and urging their representatives in Parliament to press upon the Government the importance of making provision at once for obtaining for our coast waters information as to currents similar to that provided by the Admiralty for the British Islands." The subject is of such importance that we give it the publicity our circulation affords.

It would appear that the hitch in the arrangements for the Australian auxiliary squadron must have been got over, as it is announced that five cruisers, the *Pandora*, *Pelorus*, *Persian*, *Phoenix* and *Psyche*, with two gunboats, are building in English yards. Commenting on these names, *Imperial Federation* aptly suggests that these vessels might have been more appropriately named after Australian cities, classical names being more suited to the Mediterranean than to the Pacific. This question recalls to us an idea we have long held that it is time that the Admiralty did away with a number of these old world and out of date classical names which they repeat in the nomenclature of the Navy *ad nauseam*. A few pre-eminent ones, such as Achilles, Hector, Agamemnon and some others, should always be retained, as they convey a distinct idea to every one, but the great mass of them ought to go. Besides the names of men-of-war should be selected for euphony and grandeur as well as association. On this ground so good a name as *Sarpedon* might be retained, and, as an example, Poseidon might be substituted for Neptune, Greek being almost always preferable to Latin names.

The attention of the Philanthropists who are engaged in righteous efforts for the suppression of the slave trade in Africa has recently received an impetus in another and perhaps equally important direction. The Cretan disturbances and the outrages on native Christians in Armenia have led reformers to consider the magnitude of the slave trade of Constantinople, and its peculiar obnoxiousness as being carried on in a European country and being shielded by the power of its sovereign. There are ninety regular slave dealers in Constantinople, and thirty houses where slaves are dealt in as any other sort of merchandise. The city is a head centre for the traffic, and slaves are exported to Egypt and other eastern countries where there is a demand for them. The prices for slaves are quoted in the same way as the ruling rates for any article of commercial value, just as if human beings were not the victims of the hideous trade. It is said that the institution is contrary to the law of Mahomet, whether it be so or not the consideration of the continued existence of the iniquity in Europe has led to the suggestion that the Governments of Europe should bring pressure to bear upon the Sultan to abolish it. Suggestion often leads to action and action to success, and we trust it may be so in this case, but we fear the Padiashah will be found impracticable on the subject until he is compelled either to take the required measures or abandon his European Empire.

There are probably many who do not know much about the recent Delagoa Bay Railway squabble between Great Britain and Portugal. The *Militia Gazette* very successfully describes the situation, and for the benefit of the unposted we quote that journal's description, partly on account of the humorous way in which it is put.—"Some four years ago Portugal granted a charter to an Anglo-American company authorizing it to build a railroad fifty-eight miles long, connecting Delagoa, in Portuguese Africa, with the Transvaal gold fields. Fifty-four miles were completed more than a year ago, and have been open for traffic ever since; but the remaining four miles lay in an extremely difficult country, and could not be finished within the time limit contemplated by the charter. On this account the Portuguese Government declared the concession forfeited, and apparently attempted to take possession of the road without regard for the rights of the company. But this was not so easy. England took the matter seriously, and promptly arranged to send a gunboat to the point threatened. We seemed to be on the eve of a railroad war between England and Portugal. But more peaceful counsels prevailed. The gunboat frightened the Portuguese more effectively than a general freight agent could have done. This is not because a gunboat is in itself more dangerous than a general freight agent. On the contrary, we are convinced that more property has been destroyed in the last ten years by general freight agents than by gunboats. But a gunboat, armed with modern weapons of precision, usually hits what it aims at, while a general freight agent, armed with irresponsible authority, does not. We commend the study of this distinction to presidents who think of engaging in railway wars."

It is intimated in a telegraph despatch to the New York *Tribune* that when the men who were nominally to make the contracts for the Atlantic fast mail service were sent to Ottawa from London to carry out the formalities with the Dominion Government, obstacles were at once placed in the way by the existing steamship lines. The Allans were promptly there, and the Grand Trunk took a hand, pressure of all kinds was brought to bear on ministers, and just enough doubt was thrown on the project in the right financial quarters on the other side to discredit it and frighten capital, always found in the wrong place, from investing in any company that might be launched, or from affording the necessary facilities to finance the scheme in any shape. There is very little doubt that this is true, and it is only one instance of the way in which, while British capital is poured with reckless prodigality into the United States, there is so little inclination to seek investments in Canada, and so great an indifference to learn her resources. That there is, however, a growing disposition in England to know more of the Colonies is evinced by the success which is reported of the supply to the free public libraries of Great Britain by the generosity of Mr. O. V. Morgan, of the weekly edition of the Toronto *Empire*. The number of libraries which, on investigation, have been found to have taken advantage of Mr. Morgan's liberality is so satisfactory that that gentleman has decided to renew his offer for another year. On the other hand, if English newspapers would pay to the great questions of Colonial policy as much attention as they give to the petty intrigues of Queen Natalie of Servia, or to details of the *trousseau* of the Crown Princess of Greece, another source of knowledge of the Colonies would be opened to the British public.