

## EUROPEAN ARMIES.

BLACKWOOD for April last has an article on the European army organizations, from which we compile a statement of the army force of England, France, Prussia and Austria—a statement that will not prove uninteresting at the present time, when there is such an abundance of rumors of war, and an almost unprecedented restlessness pervading the continent of Europe.

Commencing with Great Britain, the population of which is about 30,000,000, we find her army divided as follows:

At home.....	92,000
In the Colonies.....	34,000

126,000

Besides the above force, she has a regular reserve force, which according to the last returns is:—

First army reserve, (for general service).....	2,000
Second army reserve (pensioners &c., for home service).....	23,000
Untrained Irish Militia.....	23,000
Yeomanry.....	14,000
Volunteers.....	170,000

232,000

In addition to the foregoing force of 358,000 men, Great Britain has 62,000 regular soldiers in India.

We next turn to France, with a population of 37,500,000, and we find her army estimated as follows:—

Regular army embodied.....	400,000
First Reserve to regular army.....	100,000
Second do.....	228,000
Garde Nationale, mobile.....	330,000

1,058,000

Prussia has a population of about 30,000,000, and her army is estimated at:—

Regular army, actually in the ranks.....	300,000
Reserve to the regular army.....	350,000
Landwehr.....	370,000

1,020,000

Austria, with a population of 36,000,000, has the following armed force:—

Regular army embodied.....	255,000
Frontier troops.....	52,000
Reserve to regular army.....	545,000
Landwehr.....	200,000

1,052,000

We give the following annual cost of maintaining these armed forces:—

England.....	\$71,000,000
France.....	70,000,000
Prussia.....	48,000,000
Austria.....	41,000,000

Although numerically, the force of Great Britain is the smallest, yet the fighting power of the soldiers, man for man, is superior to the troops of any of the other powers, and history proves her signal victories with great odds of numbers against her.

## RURAL LIFE IN BENGAL.

A bit of Indian history, which throws light on the present state of rural life in Bengal, comes to us from Serampore. The well-known station a few miles above Calcutta. Six wealthy zamindars were charged before Mr. Ryland, the magistrate, with oppression towards a small landowner and ryot in their village, named Hallomudm Shuk. The ryot had a small piece of land to sell in another village, and the chief zamindar wished to buy it. But he spoke too late—it was al-

ready sold; and then the zamindar was determined to seize it without further parley. He and his labourers went to the ryot's huts, bound one of his relatives to a tree outside as a caution to the neighbours not to interfere, and at once proceeded to carry off everything the poor man possessed. The cattle were driven off, the brass pots and other indispensable articles of the native kitchen taken away. Some money and papers were also stolen. All this was openly done, and two of the zamindars were present on the scene, while the others looked on from their houses hard by. Mr. Ryland committed the defendants on a charge of dacoity, and they were brought to trial. But the native police did all in their power to suppress or mutilate the evidence, and the jury acquitted the defendants, although the judge summed for a conviction. Mr. Ryland said in his memorandum, "The difficulty of getting any independent evidence at all in such a case can only be appreciated by those who have experience of the terror exercised by an unscrupulous landlord in the Mofussil, and upon which together with a corrupt police, the offenders in this case doubtless trusted for impunity." It is quite evident that the laws have not yet put an end to the relentless tyranny over the tenant which was the rule in native life until our appearance in the country.—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

## THE FORTIFICATION SCHEME.

The report of the committee appointed in April last year to inquire into the construction, condition, and cost of the fortifications erected, or in course of erection, was issued yesterday. The work reported on are those at Portsmouth, including the Isle of Wight, and Spithead, Plymouth, Portland, Pembroke, Dover, Chatham and the Medway, and Cork. The committee express an opinion that the works have been constructed with a due regard to the conditions necessary to secure their suitability and permanency; that the failures and mistakes have been much fewer and of less importance than might have been anticipated; and that in the costly changes which have been rendered necessary by the great advance in the power of rifled artillery great skill has been shown in adapting the original design of the works to the altered circumstances of the times. The increase of cost, the committee state, is very great, and £1,091,337 more than the loan of £6,86,8000 sanctioned by Parliament in 1862 will be required, part of this increase being due to the additional strength proposed to be given to iron structures. Since 1867 the sum expended under the loan to 30th of June last amounted to £3,378,970 for works and £1,239,868 for land and incidental expenses—making a total of £5,117,838. The total amount required to complete the works is estimated at £2,832,599, and the excess in the estimate of the Fortification Act of 1897 will be £481,437.

## THE MONCRIEFF GUN.

At the last meeting of the Royal Institution Captain Moncrieff explained his system of artillery to be based on the following principles:—"Instead," he said, "of trying to meet force by force, I make my gun bow to the inevitable conditions which science has imposed; and, instead of wasting energy, money, and skill in attempts to raise a buttress against the new artillery, I employ the hitherto destructive force of recoil to recoil to lower the guns below the natural

surface of the ground, where they can be loaded and worked in security and comfort; and at the same time I have made that destructive force so much my servant that I compel it, at my pleasure, to raise the gun again into the fighting position whenever it is required. In 1855, while watching the interesting operations before Sebastopol, and endeavouring as well as I could to understand the conditions under which the siege artillery was used, I conceived the idea which is now realized. It was then that I saw the value of earth, and the importance of simple expedients. It was plain that the weak point of a battery was the embrasure, forming as it did a mark to fire at, an opening to admit the enemy's shot, and requiring constant repair, even from the effects of its own gun, which in firing injured the revolvments with which the cheeks are formed. I also came to a conclusion in my own mind that a remedy for some of these defects could be devised. The real difficulty of the thing arose from the necessity of providing for the enormous strain of the recoil. At last I hit on a simple principle that would meet this difficulty to advantage, the interposition of a moving fulcrum between the gun and the platform—then I knew the problem could be solved." The points considered in Captain Moncrieff's plan are the mechanical principle of the gun carriage, the internal and the external forms of batteries, and the selection of the ground on which batteries should be placed.

## A NAVAL LEAVE TAKING.

On Sunday the 2d inst., after the celebration of Divine service on board H.M. Reviewing Ship *Hibernia*, at Malta, the officers and crew of the flagship *Caledonia* were addressed by Lord Clarence Paget, whose period of service as Commodore of the Mediterranean Fleet has expired. His Lordship said.—"My Lords it is due to Captain Gardner, Commander Codrington, and your officers generally, that I should state to you my pleasure at being able to declare that this ship is in the highest state of discipline and efficiency. To the good example shown by all the officers of the *Caledonia* this effect is due. Two years ago when I joined the ship I had reason to form great expectations of your conduct and these have been fulfilled. I am anxious this should continue to be so. You are about to be paid off—to return to your homes—to be dispersed about the world; but I do entreat you for the short time you are together keep up your discipline, preserve that bright character which you have won. The ships here have heard of it. The Admiralty at home have heard of it. What is the test of the state of discipline of a ship's company? It is the record book. The record book of the *Caledonia* contains, comparatively speaking, so very few entries of crimes that it affords a remarkable contrast to many other ships in the navy. This is greatly to your credit, and I cannot feel it in my heart to part with you without telling you of it. Now we are about to part. I cannot be that men who have lived so long together can separate without some degree of feeling. That feeling is shown for most part among ourselves by cheering. Now I recollect when an officer—a very distinguished officer, whom you know (Captain Hopkins)—left his ship on promotion, he assembled the ship's company and told them he had no doubt they had the same good feeling for him as he had for them, and he was afraid they were going to cheer him; but, said he—'if you do, people will say you cheer because you are glad to get rid of me.'