

Government to perform their own duty to their own interests. A great outcry has arisen within the last two years on the subject of the sacrifice of life at sea owing to the greed and dishonesty of ship owners and others engaged in mercantile transactions connected with the foreign commerce of Great Britain, and an energetic Mr. P. W. PLIMSOL has had to sustain an action at law for libel, because he was honest and philanthropic enough to denounce the nefarious and murderous traffic those people so careful of niggers carried on in the blood of the best and bravest of their countrymen. In order to restore the deteriorated character of British seamanship, not only will it be necessary for the British Government to take the crews under its own regulations and into its own service, but the building of vessels must not be left to private supervision or even design. The only remedy is for the Government surveyor at every dockyard, public or private, to be held strictly accountable for the character of the vessel, but also for her proper adaptation to the service in which she is to be engaged. This with other regulations will not only remedy the evils complained of, but it will remove from our national life a great crime and scandal—add to our naval strength, and ultimately profit ship-owners far more than any cheating of Insurance Companies or Underwriters can do. A revolution in the peculiar philanthropy of the Stock Exchange and of the Free Trade disciples is imminent as well as absolutely necessary.

OUR contemporary *Broad Arrow* in its issue of 16th January has an article on "Naval Education," which we republish because it appears to embody what we believe to be at the bottom of all the mistakes in naval and military equipment and organization which have distinguished the "reign of the political economists" in England. The article referred to quotes with approval the French system of Naval training as being better adapted than our own to produce *scientific Officers*, and condemns the practice of receiving naval cadets at the early age (twelve years) at which they are admitted into the British service—referring to an article in *Naval Science* (the writer of which must be considerable of a theorist) in support of the view taken. In the French Naval service the period of admission is from fourteen to seventeen years of age—the result, without any imputation on the gallantry of a sister service, being that *good harbour Officers* are produced. It will not be necessary to go far to illustrate this peculiar treat of *superior scientific education*. Not more than a year ago two large ocean mail steamers commanded by officers of the French Navy were abandoned by their crews in a most unaccountable manner—except it will be accepted as one of the results of superior education that the Officers

produced under its influence are too wise to risk their lives in the performance of their duties. Modern Mechanical Science has added another element to the practical application of seamanship—our fore-fathers found it necessary to have a fighting Captain and Sailing Master on board those wooden walls that made England, with all the alleged defects of its naval system, the first and greatest Naval power the world has yet seen. The introduction of steam has simply added the necessity for a Master Mechanic—as it is obviously impossible for one man to be a good practical artillery man, a good practical seaman, and a good engine builder. The idea of training youths to the theory of all those departments is on a par with Mrs. GRADGIND's idea of the 'ologies, and about as practical.

The principal necessity of the Navy is to secure good practical seamanship and a thorough knowledge of the theory as well as practice of *Naval Gunnery*. We make the distinction between the art as practiced on shipboard and ashore, because it is essentially different. Now to become a thorough seaman a lad must know to "hand, reef and steer"—accomplishments he is not likely to learn at the hobble-de-hoy age—fresh from a Naval College on shore, and like SOL GILES, chock full of science. The *monkey* age in the usual average of boyhood ranges from ten to sixteen. In fixing on twelve as the medium the old sea dogs that had the trouble of licking the young cubs into shape, knew far better than the philosophers of the present enlightened age at what period of life individuals could be best trained to specialities—and accordingly (without any knowledge probably of Mr. DARWIN's theory) when the prehensile power was best developed, taught the young idea how to balance itself on the weather end of a fore yard without the aid of scientific philosophy, and the best way to of taking in or reefing a foretop-sail without a thorough mechanical training. The results of all this may be said to have culminated at Trafalgar seventy years ago, and it is beyond our ken to discern what the new ideas—scientific, philosophical or mechanical have achieved since. History happens to teach us that seven years after we got into a little row with our cousins—in which we did not shine pre eminently as the philosophers and political economists had been very busy during the intervening period; and that "long shore man" Clark of Eldon, with the vast amount of practical seamanship a Scotch Attorney in an inland town could acquire, had forced his tactics on "My Lords of the Admiralty"—influencing the sailing orders, rules and regulations of that sapient Committee.

It is not at all the intention of the writer of this article to decry the value of scientific training or education, but this can be pushed to an absurd extent, and it has been in

the case of both Army and Navy—the younger officers of both are crammed for the purpose of figuring at debating clubs or writing essays on the *Pons asinorum* for the purpose of advertising the capacity of their crammers—the fruits of such a course of instruction and the value of such knowledge must be measured seamanship that would not be sufficient to navigate a Thames hoy, and blunders that would disgrace the mate of a Newcastle collier.

To make a Naval Officer—it is necessary that he should be trained from his earliest childhood in all the practical parts of his profession—his scientific education should commence and finish on shipboard, and his mechanical knowledge should be acquired in the dockyard and forge before he get his promotion as Lieutenant. After all the division of labour in the command of a war vessel must be as of old—Captain, Sailing Master, and now (Master Mechanic) Chief Engineer. It is the natural and proper division, the one easiest imagined, and that commends itself to common sense.

THE French system of throwing open all the offices of its army, to the efforts of its rank and file, does not appear to have borne very satisfactory fruits. It is no doubt a fine thing, for a recruiting Sergeant to tell his dupe, that "the private carried a Marshal's baton in his knapsack;" but in practice, it appears to have been out of all proportion to the ends obtained—it seems to have led to that *indiscipline* from the lowest to the highest, which paralyzed all exertion and made every individual believe that his own interest and not that of his country was the ultimate object for which he was fighting. It furnishes us with one of the most striking of those awful historical examples, which appear designed by a wise Providence to teach mankind that national laws cannot be outraged with impunity, and as a warning to others as to how they should consider before they deprived the people of their natural leaders and substituted adventitious attributes for practical objects. Soldiers of fortune have no country and no patriotism, and France for the last eighty years has been training men of that class to lead her armies—with the results so prominent to the world. In *Broad Arrow* of 20th February there is an article which we have copied in another page entitled—"General WIMPFEN at Sedan," which forcibly illustrates the position we have assumed, and is an interesting historical document besides.

LAST our readers should think we are moved by any spirit of hostility, in our description of the disorganization of the British Army, we give the following extract to show that in no case have we overstepped the bounds of firm and friendly criticism, and that we have not stated any thing unwar-