

12 ton guns, complement 155, Cyclops, Gorgon, Hydra, Iecate, 3,430 tons, 4 18 ton guns, complement 150.

The above named turret ships have an aggregate displacement of 61,117 tons, carry 49 guns, and are manned by 2,894 officers and men. From this class the Royal Sovereign, 5,080 tons, has just been removed as unserviceable; but there are three more powerful ships of this type now being brought forward, and ordered to be built, viz., the Inflexible, of 11,165 tons, carrying 48 ton guns, complement of 350; and the Ajax and Agamemnon, which are to be improvements on the Inflexible, though of somewhat less tonnage.

In taking leave of the ironclad portion of the fleet it should be stated that there are two armour-plated floating batteries of an old pattern, the Erebus and Terror of 1,840 tons, but at present unprovided with modern guns.

It may be well to give here a few particulars of the heavier naval artillery at present in use, and which have been already referred to. They are the.

	Weight of Shot.	Heaviest Charge.
38 ton 12 in. ...	698½ lb. ...	110 lb.
35 ton 12 in. ...	695¼ lb. ...	110 lb.
25 ton 12 in. ...	600½ lb. ...	85 lb.
25 ton 11 in. ...	535½ lb. ...	85 lb.
15 ton 10 in. ...	404½ lb. ...	70 lb.
12 ton 9 in. ...	255½ lb. ...	50 lb.
9 ton 8 in. ...	186½ lb. ...	35 lb.
6½ ton 7 in. ...	116½ lb. ...	30 lb.
4½ ton 5½ in. ...	116½ lb. ...	22 lb.

And the 64 pounder, throwing a shot of 66½ lb. with a full charge of 8 lb. of large grained powder.

The Merchant Service and the Navy.

Captain J. G. Wilson, R. N., read a paper at the Royal United Services Institution on the 7th inst., on the question, "Is our merchant service any longer a feeder to the royal navy?" Captain Wilson said that it was no doubt true that the mainstay of our navy fifty years ago, was the merchant service, but times had changed, and he considered that reliance must no longer be placed on the mercantile marine as a feeder to the regular Service, unless some very radical changes took place, although it still contributed to the Naval Reserve. Before the Russian war the navy was almost entirely dependent on the merchant service for men, but as that source signally failed, continuous service was introduced, with the system of training boys to keep up the supply, thus superseding the old plan so entirely that for some years past the entry of men from the merchant service had been considerably under one hundred per annum. Various reasons were assigned for this falling off—the scarcity of men caused by the abolition of apprentices, the increase of wages in the merchant service as compared with the pay in the navy, and the easier terms of service in the Royal Naval Reserve. We had at present, as the result of our training and continuous service system, but 12,000 able seamen in the fleet out of our force of 19,000 blue jackets. Our navy, as at present maintained, was not able to train as sailors all the men it required; and as sufficient ships were not kept at sea to carry more three-fifths of the number the seamen like qualities of our seamen were rapidly deteriorating. There could be no doubt that the navy should train as many of its men from boyhood as possible; but there was a

limit to its power of so doing, and that limit ought not to be exceeded. Some 1500 boys per annum could be conveniently and advantageously disposed of in the ships usually kept at sea, but any excess of that number only injured the sea training of them all. As to how the remaining 1200 of 1500 needed to keep the navy effective were to be found, the gallant captain expressed his opinion that the mercantile marine must again become the nursery from which we should draw a proportion of our seamen—men to be disciplined and moulded into men-of-war's men in barracks before being embarked. It was bad policy to alienate the merchant service entirely from the navy, and yet our present naval reserve system had that injurious effect. In order to obviate that difficulty, there ought to be established means of easy interchange between the reserve and the regular service. Three years in the former ought to be considered equivalent to two in the latter, and in the fleet a qualifying service should be required both of officers and men. The whole should be linked to a comprehensive system of training boys for the merchant service under proper Government supervision. Be that as it might, it was certain that our navy, if kept up at its present number, could not long continue to make its own sailors without aid from without, and attempting to do so would prove most injurious to the Service. It was no new idea to form our reserve from men who had passed through the reserve, and many good authorities might be quoted in favor of that course. The link between that force and the flag must be made stronger. It would be no hardship but much to the advantage of the young men coming on, to qualify themselves by serving a few years under the pendants before going into the reserve, and the same might be said of the young merchant officers. These gentlemen when sub-lieutenants in the reserve, should be required to serve for six months in one of our Channel or Mediterranean ships before being qualified for promotion to lieutenant's rank, the report from the captain they were under to be considered in combination with their other services before they received promotion. We could not expect great results at first, but if the matter were taken up with energy, if naval recruiting parties and rendezvous were established at our principal seaports, we should in due time succeed in entering all the men we required. The continuous service system should be maintained in full force within proper limits—at from 14,000 to 15,000 men—the remaining 3000 or 4000 to be short service men, qualifying for the reserve. As the time required of a reserve man to entitle him to a pension was long, he might be allowed to earn a part of it when unable to serve for it all—thus, if a man had after ten or fifteen years to leave from any good reason, he might be granted a proportionate pension at the age of fifty.

Some discussion followed, and there was a general expression of feeling in favor of developing the system of training boys for the navy, as well as of establishing a more satisfactory connection between the navy and the mercantile marine.

A vote of thanks was awarded to Captain Wilson for his able and interesting paper.

The Spanish Cortes, in an address to the King, after referring to the vanquished Carlos, hope that the difficulties with the United States may be easily settled, and desire that an arrangement be come to with the Vatican consistent with mutual rights.

Parliamentary.

The Minister of Militia, on Monday last introduced a Bill to amend the Acts respecting the Militia and Defence of Canada.

On Thursday last Mr. Pelletier asked whether it was the intention of the Government to change the system of Military Exercises; and whether—the formation of Camps in each Military District is to be continued? Hon. Mr. Vail replied that it was not the intention of Government to change the system of Military exercise; the camps however would be discontinued during the present year.

Mr. Dewdney asked whether any proposition has been received by the Dominion Government from a private company to construct the Nanaimo and Esquimaux Railway; if so, what is the amount of money asked for per mile, and do the Government propose to entertain the proposition?

Hon. Mr. Mackenzie said a proposition had been received within the last few days, but it would require too long an answer to furnish details, and he should move for it in the usual way.

Mr. Cunningham asked whether it is the intention of the Government to appoint a County Court Judge for the district of New Westminster, British Columbia; and if so, when is the appointment to be made?

Hon. Mr. Blake said there had been some correspondence upon the subject between this Government and the British Columbians, but he could not reply to the question within the limits of an ordinary answer. The correspondence would be brought down if moved for.

Hon. Mr. Tupper asked whether the contract for the cases and frames for the Canadian Department of the Centennial Exhibition was given out by tender or by private arrangement; if the former, who was the successful competitor; and if the latter, with whom was the arrangement made?

Hon. Mr. Mackenzie said that 317 cases had been made by Mr. Craig, of Montreal, by private contract at \$70 each. The cases were to be brought back from Philadelphia and set up in the patent room for use.

Mr. Robitaille moved for a Select Committee to enquire into the possibility of establishing a submarine telegraphic system in the waters of the Gulf and River St. Lawrence, the committee to comprise Messrs. Langevin, Mitchell, Ray, Short, Blain, D. A. Smith, Jones (Halifax), Workman and Robitaille.

A discussion ensued.

Messrs. Gilmor and Kirk objected, believing the expenses of such a committee were not equalized by corresponding benefits.

Hon. Mr. Tupper said that a proper consideration of the question was of vital importance.

Hon. Mr. Smith approved of the committee and said he would aid the mover by every means in his power to further the investigation.

Hon. Mr. Mitchell was strongly in favor of uniting the outlying islands and ports. It was in the interest of commerce that such a committee as proposed by his honourable friend should investigate the matter.

Mr. Devlin was in favor of the motion.

Mr. Jones (Halifax), regretted that the Atlantic coast of Nova Scotia was not embraced in the motion. He drew the attention of the Government to the necessity of employing a steamer on that coast to assist vessels coming into harbor.

The motion was granted.