

official investigations and reports, and what do we find there? We find that Sir W. Armstrong himself never claimed to offer to the government anything more than a large rifled light piece (*grosse carabine rayée*), loading at the breech, and discharging a 12-pound ball, which corresponds to our calibre 4; but when, after the success of this piece had been established to the satisfaction of the government, he was pressed to make a gun of 32, he replied that he was not prepared, and requested 7 or 10 years to study the question. If he has meanwhile attempted still greater calibres, it has been under the pressure of government, and not with his own good will, except that he did not wish it to be said he had declined a service which others believed themselves able to render. His language on all these points is as modest as it is sensible. Let us pay respect to his patriotism, but let us not launch headlong on the course the English government has so rashly pursued. If this course was the correct one, the Turks, with their big guns of the castle of the Dardanelles, ought to be considered the first gun-makers in the world. To recur at the present day to their traditions seems to me as little reasonable, as if we were to let ourselves be influenced by what the Americans relate of their iron-clads, and were to abandon the magnificent ships which have given us such unexpected results in order to copy the *Monitors*, which cannot keep the sea, or the *Weehawkins*, which founder in the smooth waters of a roadway, or the *Héoluks* which are sunk at 750 yards distance by the round balls of General Beauregard, who refused the guns said to be 800 pounders which they wanted to send him from Richmond.

In order to complete our task, it would have been necessary to compare the results obtained by our ironclads with those obtained by the English; but the means of this comparison are wanting. The English government has not, to our knowledge, published any report of the two cruises that the *Warrior* and her mates made in the same seas as our own. Whenever the government has been questioned on the matter, it has replied that the reports were very satisfactory, but beyond this, its reserve has been almost complete. We cannot then institute this comparison, but, after what has been said, we think ourselves authorised in asserting that our navy need not fear any comparison; that its progress has been continuously in advance, and that its works, while being developed as they have been, from the *Gloire* and *Solferino*, and incessantly enriched by the adoption of every valuable invention, preserve a harmony and unity which are also very precious qualities. Certainly we have not reached perfection, but it seems to me that it is not presumption to believe, that if we had our choice from the navies of the whole world of the best they can offer, we should not find five ironclads which could do all that the five ships we have been speaking of have done, and especially with the same uniformity. It is only just to add that a great part of this success has been due to Admiral Pennaud and the officers under his command. The activity, talent, and good-will which have been displayed are worthy of all praise, and we are happy in the acquisition of such men to teach us all that the works of our naval architects are worth.

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