

been attacked that at the present time the eight frigates are nearly all completed—the *König Wilhelm* and *Frederick Karl* are in active service—the *Kaiser* and *Deutsch* and were recently launched—the *Great Elector* is just completed, and the *Frederick der Grosse* and *Prussen* are rapidly approaching completion. All those vessels are exceptionally powerful both in armour and armament and form alone a compact and powerful squadron."

The writer then says:—"The three last named were constructed in German dock-yards; the *Great Elector* (*Grosse Kurfürst*) having been recently launched at Wilhelmshaven, the first production of that important Naval Arsenal. They are all sea-going turret ships on the same model. They carry nine inch armour plating and ten inch plating on the turrets. In each of the latter are two twenty-six centimetre (nearly 10½ inches) Krupp guns somewhat more powerful than the British ten inch guns carried by the *Hercules*, *Sultan* and *Monarch*. The *Kaiser* and *Deutschland* are broadside vessels built in England from designs by Mr. REED. They have a protected central battery and carry plates of ten inch thickness. Their armament is composed of the twenty-six centimetre guns just mentioned, and two of twenty-one centimetres (equal to 8½ inch) slightly superior in power to our own guns of eight inches. They have engines working up to an indicated power of 8,000 horses which has only been surpassed by three vessels—two in the British Navy, and one the *König Wilhelm* flying the same flag as themselves.

The *Kaiser* and *Deutschland* says the writer in the *Times* above quoted, are superior in dimensions, speed, equipment and power of resistance to any Russian vessel, and in comparison with the British Navy they are only equalled, and not surpassed, by the *Sultan*, *Hercules* and *Monarch*, that is in comparison with ocean-going ironclads of the same class."

The writer then goes on to say that four out of the six ironclad corvettes contemplated in the scheme are nearly ready for sea, that "they are not unlike our *Devastation* and it is said are only surpassed by the *Inflectible*."

Of the twenty unarmoured corvettes (*torpede-boats*) afloat, "two of them are larger than the others and are designed on the model of the British *Inconstant*." "Six torpedo vessels out of twenty-eight are finished, and several gunboats." "In estimating the force of these vessels it should be remembered that the great majority of them are of very recent construction. They are consequently designed with all the improvements that the most complete experience could suggest. Few of them, if any, are compromises between one type and another patched up and altered to suit one system, after cruising for years with fittings arranged in accordance with another. Hull, engines, armament, are all of the most modern description. Their

newness in itself is an element of strength as the period of their duration must naturally extend further into the future. This is more particularly the case as regards their machinery, and especially their boilers which so soon suffer from the ravages of time. Few of them are of wood, and in this respect they have a considerable superiority over most of the ironclads of France, so many of which are constructed of that material. Thus they represent an effective force more than equivalent to an equal number of vessels in the service of any other power."

On this last clause *Broad Arrow* makes the following comment:—

"When a writer in so authoritative a publication as the *Edinburgh Review* deliberately states that the ships of the German Navy "represent an effective force, more than equivalent to an equal number of vessels in the Service of any other Power," he states a fact which is worthy of the most serious possible consideration on the part of the Government of this country. It is not our purpose to go further into the very interesting article from which we have extracted the above observation, nor to analyse the list given by the author of the fifty or sixty vessels which form the German Fleet. We only say deliberately that if the above statement is true, it is time that some serious steps should be taken by us to remedy a state of things which all Englishmen ought to look upon as utterly wrong. We are not alarmists. We are perfectly well aware that not ships alone, but men to man the ships also, are necessary to make a navy effective. The men, to a certain extent, we have; but, in these days, mechanical appliances of all kinds, ordnance and ships, count for a great deal more in proportion than they did in Nelson's days. Will the British Government never be convinced that no expenditure—we repeat, literally no expenditure—would be grudged by the nation if it were honestly employed in keeping our Navy really thoroughly superior to that of every other nation under the sun. The pang which passes through the mind of every Englishman as he reads the above quotation amounts to a mental impeachment, not of the present First Lord alone, but of every political personage to whom, either in the past or the present, any responsibility could be at all traced. We may be accused or writing vehemently on a point which after all has not been proved. Well, let it be disproved. The statement is a challenge. We assert it to be a most serious matter that our best vessels, and even a great many of our best vessels, are not equal to an equivalent number of the German Fleet. For the moment this may not mean much, but it is not impossible that all Europe may be ablaze almost before these words reach our reader's eyes, and that Germany and England may be ranging themselves on different sides. By itself the German Fleet is still no doubt, inferior to ours, but what a magnificent naval addition to a Russian squadron a German contingent would be which consisted of a dozen ironclads and frigates, which England could not match!"

*Broad Arrow* should remember that the world does not stand still—apart from the fact that it is not necessary to follow all the vagaries of Prussia, it is questionable whether the conclusions drawn by the writer in the *Edinburgh Review* are correct. The force of

a vessel is in her armament, and if report speaks correctly, the Krupp guns with which the German fleet is armed, are anything but powerful or reliable; besides France is alive to her own interests, and the following from the *Army and Navy Gazette* is at least a little reassuring:—

"For some time after the late war the French neglected their fleet, all the national energy being directed towards the reorganization of the army. Ex-Ministers of Marine and Admirals were appointed by Parliament to sit upon military commissions, and to-day an ex-First Lord and Admiral is president of the committee which has just drawn up its report on the administration of the army—Admiral Pothuau. As an excuse for this, it must be remembered that numbers of tars fought on shore during the war with Germany. Several of the detached forts round Paris were commanded by Post-Captains and manned by sailors, whilst sections inside were placed under the orders of such Admirals as La Roncière le Noury, Saisset, etc. The fort of Montrouge lost four captains. At the beginning of the war Admiral Fourichon was War Minister at Tours. Admiral Gueydon commanded in Algeria. Several naval officers were placed in command of brigades, and even divisions. General Faidherbe, who commanded the army of the North, also commenced life as a sailor, and so did General Chanzy, who, strange to say, was wrecked when a "mid-dy" off the Algerian coast, and was cast ashore in the colony of which he is now Governor-General. Admiral Excelsmans, son of the celebrated cavalry officer of the First Napoleon, fell at the siege of Strasbourg. The Infantry Marine fought capitally at Sedan less well at St Quentin, and when the German war was over and the civil war was nearly terminated, it was Captain Treve of the Navy who first entered Paris. As the late war afforded but little work at sea, the two services got mixed up ashore, and hence many French naval officers have been dabbling in military matters. Now, however, the French Navy is looking up again, and not only has France three squadrons cruising about on home stations, but she is rapidly getting ships ready for sea. *La Tempete*, an ironclad, meant for coast defence, was to be launched Aug. 18 at Brest. She was commenced in 1872. She will be very fast, we are told, draw very little water, be very solid, be invulnerable to the attacks of the enemy, and formidable by reason of the weight of her artillery and her spur. She has also a moveable turret. *Le Vengeur*, another ship of the same type, is being constructed at the same port, and it is only to be hoped that if we send her to the bottom her fate will not give rise to such another fable as Bertrand Barrère invented with regard to the *Vengeur* for the benefit of the Convention and credulous posterity. Most Frenchmen still believe that the first *Vengeur* went down in 1794, all hands on board, and singing the "Marseillaise." It turned out on investigation that nearly all the crew were saved, and that the Captain breakfasted with the British Admiral, and for many years afterwards enjoyed a pension on the condition of remaining quiet. At Rochefort another "coast guard" of the same description is being built, and in fact the French naval yards seem to be exceedingly busy, leaving perhaps lest those of Germany may catch them up."

In all those contests the last guinea will win, and we know where that is to be found—even in England there is yet hope, for the