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CONCERNING CANADIAN SHIP-BUILDING: ITS RECORD AND  
RESOURCES.

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“OUTSIDE of the consideration whether the United States may or may not become rival customers with Great Britain for our tonnage, there is soon to be a largely increased demand. The ‘rage’ for iron ships is being followed by a more deliberate thinking, which will soon show that, after all, they are *not* so vastly superior to their wooden rivals as has been the fashion to assert. The consideration of the great comparative cheapness of the latter, which has whilom been lost sight of, will be recognised again at its true value, that of being one of the weightiest elements in the discussion; and it is the fact, as slight observation will prove, that even much less difference of cost in favour of the wooden ship than has ever yet obtained, still leaves her quite as desirable an investment as the iron. I have commanded both kinds, and although I find the last named, all things considered, undeniably the better, yet I also have found that that superiority has a near limitation, and is not so large but that it is more than counterbalanced by her greater cost. Nor

is she, speaking without reference to that prime consideration, by any means so absolutely and incomparably preferable as the tank and boiler makers of Blackwall and the Clyde would have us believe. ‘Per contra,’ the wooden ship has *her* points of superiority, which, though fewer, perhaps, or of less relative importance, are yet, in the very nature of things, absolutely impossible of attainment by the other, in the present condition of science at least. Indeed the combination of the two—the ‘composite ship’—is a much better vessel than either, uniting, as she does, the most desirable characteristics of both, while mainly freed from the exceptionable peculiarities of either. She is, and will be, the nearest possible approximation to naval perfection, until the world can afford to build *copper ships*.

“A recent event, it will be seen, has let much of the *gas* out of the inflated ideas now current upon the great question of iron *vs.* wooden tonnage. I allude to the finding of the commission of enquiry into the case of the *Megara*, viz., that no iron ship can