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The Volunteer Review,

AND

MILITARY AND NAVAL GAZETTE

"Unbribed, unbought, our swords we draw,
To guard the Monarch, fence the Law."

OTTAWA, TUESDAY, JUNE 16, 1875.

TO CORRESPONDENTS.—Letters addressed to either the Editor or Publisher, as well as Communications intended for publication, must, invariably, be pre-paid. Correspondents will also bear in mind that one end of the envelope should be left open, and at the corner the words "Printer's Copy" written and a two or five cent stamp (according to the weight of the communication) placed thereon will pay the postage.

LIEUT. J. B. VINTER, of Victoria, and Captain H. V. EDMONDS, of New Westminster, are our authorized Agents for British Columbia.

In the opinion of most people the British Navy is not only the largest, but in proportion to the interests to be defended the most efficient, taking the British Isles alone, this may be true enough—but if the principle is extended to her Colonial possessions and dependencies, it is most erroneous and unwarranted, as the following will conclusively show:

"A pamphlet has appeared in Vienna giving statistical details of the present naval strength of the principal European nations. By it Austria is stated to have altogether, 47 vessels, furnished with 250 guns, extent of coast 240 miles. England, 475 vessels, carrying 6,250 guns; extent of coast (excluding small islands), 800 miles. Germany, 50 vessels, with 438 guns; extent of coast, 216 miles. Russia, 297 vessels, with 1,663 guns; extent of coast (not including the Caspian and Glacial ocean), 681 miles. Italy, 74 vessels, with 610 guns; extent of coast, 718 miles. France, 336 vessels, with 1,666 guns; extent of coast (not including Algeria and other colonies), 465 miles. Holland, 113 vessels, with 981 guns; extent of coast, 80 miles. Spain, 75 vessels, with 835 guns; extent of guns (excluding colonies), 370 miles. Portugal, 48 vessels, with 238 guns; extent of coast, 130 miles. Denmark, 33 vessels, with 291 guns; extent of coast (ex-

cluding Iceland, Greenland and small islands), 320 miles. Sweden and Norway, 53 vessels, with 491 guns; extent of coast, 760 miles. Turkey, 110 vessels, with 1,282 guns; extent of coast (excluding Crete, the Archipelago, Asia Minor and Barbary States), 333 miles. Greece, 20 vessels, with 210 guns; extent of coast, 250 miles. The proportion of expenditure on the navy to the rest of the expenditure is, in England, 13 04 per cent.; France, 5.55 per cent.; Russia, 4.62; Turkey, 3.75; Germany, 3.51; Italy, 3.07; Austria, 1.69."

From this it would appear that, while Austria has one war vessel and about five guns to every five miles of her coast line; Germany, one war vessel and eight guns to every four miles; Russia, one war vessel and five guns to every two miles; Italy, one war vessel and nearly twelve guns to ten miles; France, one war vessel and nearly four guns to every mile and an half of her coast; Holland, two war vessels and nearly twenty four guns to every three miles; Spain, one war vessel and fifteen guns to every five miles; Portugal, one war vessel and seven guns to three miles; Denmark, one war vessel and nine guns to ten miles; Sweden, and Norway, one war vessel and nine guns to fourteen miles; Turkey, one war vessel and ten guns to every three miles; Greece, one war vessel and ten guns to every mile and one-fourth, while England has one war vessel and about thirteen guns to every mile and three fourths of the coast line of the British Isles.

In the event of a general European War she would have against her:

Germany.....	50 ships	438 guns.
Russia.....	297 do	1663 do
Austria.....	47 do	250 do

Total.... 394 do 2341 do

It would be reasonable to imagine that Eastern interests would band those three powers against her while she would have,

Her own fleet...	475 ships....	6,250 guns
France.....	336 do	1,666 do
Italy.....	74 do	610 do
Holland.....	113 do	981 do
Spain.....	75 do	835 do
Portugal.....	48 do	288 do
Denmark.....	33 do	291 do
Sweden, &c....	53 do	491 do
Turkey.....	110 do	1,282 do

Total.... 1,317 do 12,694 do

Leaving out Greece of 20 ships and 210 guns as likely to be neutral in any contest. But in reality the coast line of England, or rather the British Empire is twenty times as large as that with which she is credited in the above category, and she will be bound to defend every inch of it. Still, her strength lies in the diplomatic effect it produces as a factor in any possible contest. She is more heavily armed than her neighbors and knows how to use her weapons better. We cannot therefore, sympathize with the alarmists at home as to the possibility of a German invasion of Great Britain, nor of any chance for repeating VAN TROMP's celebrated achievement two hundred years ago when Holland had a larger Naval Force than England then possessed. The following

from *Broad Arrow* of 8th May shows the style of articles and danger apprehended by the writers:

"Mr. Gathorne Hardy has assured us that our 'first line,' the fleet, is equivalent to a continental army of 300,000 men. As our second line is, to say the least of it, a good deal less numerous, would it not be as well to strengthen the first by every available means in our power? It is some two centuries since the Dutch sailed up the Medway, and, approaching Chatham, carried consternation into the very heart of the Empire. That was at a time when our fleet was as powerful, according to the science of the day, as it is now. It should never be forgotten that such an event as that to which we allude has occurred in the history of this country, and every means at our disposal should be employed to avert the recurrence of such a disaster. We cannot help thinking that the employment of river and harbour gunboats of an improved pattern would double our 'first line' of defence, or, to be moderate, would make it equivalent, according to Mr. Hardy's eccentric mode of calculating, say to half-a-million of men. The Germans are greatly pleased with the happy thought which they have had of putting a couple of monitors, which are practically small moving fortresses, on the Rhine. The details of the construction of these vessels, as given by the *Colonge Gazette*, are interesting. They are armoured with plates twenty-four centimeters (about a foot) thick, and have each a revolving cupola containing two heavy bronze breech-loading guns. The vessels are forty six metres in length, and the engines are of 163-horsepower. They are really formidable boats, and we should like to see a few similar to them on the Thames, the Medway, the Mersey, and other inland waters."

If ever the British fleet is compelled to run up British Rivers—the real defence of the capital and towns situated as it is will not rest on what our neighbors of the United States rather irreverently term *polly wags* (tedpoles), but on heavy Artillery mounted on Moncrief gun carriages and fortifications on his plan—the guns to keep the vessels of the enemy from entering the river at all, or if he does so, to make his return impossible—as the proposed system of fortification would be *rifle pits* on a large scale without parapets, embrasures, embankments or glacis—no seaman in his senses will carry his vessel within range, no matter how well she may be armed. It is easy to understand how useful such boats as described would be on the Rhine, the St. Lawrence, or any frontier River, they would give the owners its command from tide water upwards, and effectually prevent military operations or concentration within five miles of the shore; for any other purpose they are of little use, and would be a doubtful advantage on narrow streams like the British Rivers. From the fact that no general combination of European powers can be formed as against Great Britain similar to the armed neutrality of the last century, it would appear that she is holding her own as a Naval Power, relatively to her neighbours and rivals, as she is mistress of more than one fourth of the war ships and nearly half the naval artillery afloat: and she can in a very short period double