

Naval Force of England.

From the Times, January 6.

In the present state of affairs abroad it becomes a matter of general interest to the people of this country to ascertain, as far as possible, the condition of the effective naval forces at our disposal: and, from the increased activity which has been visible for some time past in the dock-yards, we have no doubt that the Admiralty will be prepared to meet with the utmost promptitude all the demands which may be made upon the service. We understand that it is the intention of the Government to raise the number of seamen and marines for the current year to 53,000 men, which is an increase of about 8,000 on the number voted for last year, and a further addition to the 6,000 men raised under the orders of Lord Derby's Administration. The total increase in the navy since 1852 may therefore be estimated at about 13,000 men. Of the force now to be raised for the service of the fleet 38,000 will be seamen and boys, and 15,500 marines. The unabated demand for ships and seamen in the merchant service, which is attributable to the extraordinary increase of our exports and imports, may render it a work of some difficulty summarily to raise so large an additional force, but on the other hand, the improved condition of the seamen under the last regulations of the navy, the chance of prize money, and the call of the country are additional inducements to volunteer for the service. A large proportion of our seafaring men are always abroad, and probably not more than 20,000 seamen, except those serving in the navy, are at any one moment in England. Some time must therefore elapse before the demands of the service are known to the class of men whom they most concern; but the manner in which 5,000 additional seamen have been raised in the past year, without any extraordinary stimulus, warrants the belief that the sailors of England will not be wanting to the flag of their country.

The present moment is remarkable for other reasons in the annals of the naval service, since it is destined to witness the transformation of the fleet into a steam navy. No one of the tens of thousands who were present at the naval review at Spithead could doubt the expediency and necessity of the application of steam power to the largest ships. Already on that occasion a considerable squadron of line-of-battle ships moved by screw propellers were collected; but this force has since been largely increased, and our readers will peruse with interest a list of the line-of-battle ships and frigates now afloat and moved by this powerful mechanism.—

Guns, &c.

Duke of Wellington	130	700	Western Squadron
Royal George	120	400	Devonport.
St. Jean d'Acre	101	600	Western Squadron
Agamemnon	90	600	Bosphorus.
Cæsar	90	400	Not in commission
Cressy	80	400	Sheerness.
James Watt	80	600	Not in commission.
Majestic	80	400	Not in commission.
Nile	80	500	Not in commission.
Princess Royal	80	400	Portsmouth.
Sanspareil	70	350	Bosphorus.
Ajax	58	450	Cork.
Meinheim	60	550	Guardship (Portsmouth)
Hogue	60	450	Ditto (Devonport.)
Edinburgh	58	450	Ditto (Portsmouth)
Arrogant	47	350	Western Squadron.
Imperious	50	350	Western Squadron.
Amphion	34	300	Western Squadron.
Horatio	24	250	Guardship (Sheerness)
Tribune	30	300	Western Squadron
Dauntless	24	580	Portsmouth.
Highflyer	21	250	Mediterranean.
Euryalus	20	400	

The above are all screw steamships; but to these may be added the following, among the most powerful paddlewheel steamers now afloat:

Guns &c.

Terrible	21	600	Bosphorus.
Sidon	22	560	Bosphorus.
Odin	16	560	Western Squadron.
Retribution	28	400	Bosphorus.
Valorous	16	400	Western Squadron.
Furious	16	400	Bosphorus.
Leopard	18	560	Portsmouth.
Magicienne	16	400	Devonport.
Penelope	16	650	W. Coast of Africa.

We omit vessels of an inferior class, and those we have named all deserve to be ranked as powerful frigates.

In addition to these lists the following screw steamships are building, and will probably be afloat in a few months:—

	Guns.	Horse Power.
Royal Albert	120	600
Marlborough	120	
Compteur	100	
Orion	90	600
Repulse	80	600
Hannibal	80	450
Algiers	80	450
Exmouth	80	400
Hero	80	
Forte	50	
Chester	50	
Curacoa	30	350
San Fiorenzo	50	

It appears from these returns that setting aside the whole sailing fleet of England, we have at present about 11 steam line-of-battle ships, soon to be increased to 20, 5 guardships with auxiliary steam powers, and 7 frigates fitted with screw propellers, which may be considered (with one or two exceptions) the finest vessels ever launched of their class. Of these screw line-of-battle ships, only two (the *Sanspareil* and the *Agamemnon*) are in the Turkish waters, and the former of these two vessels does not, we fear, altogether answer to her name. The greater number of those already in commission belong to Admiral Corry's division, which is termed by the Admiralty the Western Squadron, though it may be considered to be on an experimental cruise; and four are still waiting for commission. So that, independent of the British squadron now in the Bosphorus, that portion of the fleet which is not in the Mediterranean consists of an equal number of newer and more powerful ships than those under the command of Admiral Dundas. This result is already creditable to the Admiralty, and it has been accomplished within the last few months on what is still a peace establishment. Among those politicians who distinguished themselves at an early period of the dispute now pending in the East by loudly recommending a prompt appeal to arms, there may be some who will perceive with satisfaction that we are far better prepared to meet such an emergency at the present time than we were last spring. At that time the Baltic was open, our naval resources were not collected, and our coast were comparatively undefended. We have now had time to prepare against the danger. Our armaments, indeed, are still of a very limited character, and cannot be compared to the stupendous exertions of the Emperor of Russia, who has set the whole army of his empire in motion, has 40 line-of-battle ships in commission, has raised four millions and a half of money from the church, and commenced operations on a scale worthy of the campaign of Moscow. But no one will complain that Great Britain has been less violent and precipitate in her demonstrations of hostility, partly from her reluctance to surrender the last hopes of peace, and partly from a just confidence in that power which has never yet failed her. The Admiralty has constructed a fleet of magnificent ships, armed with all that modern science has done for navigation. We trust that young, able and energetic officers will be selected to command them; and we venture to affirm that, with good ships, good officers, and good treatment, the blue jackets will not fail to do their part in their country's battles.

The Russian common soldiers have recently treated the unfortunate inhabitants of the Pruth with far greater rudeness than at the period of their first entrance. They appear to believe that the Moldo-Wallachians have applied to the Czar to free them from the Turkish yoke, as they use such language as the following:—"Good for nothing *Moldovanaki*, give me as much as I please to eat and drink, for on your account I have been obliged to come into this country and risk my life.

To the PRESS GENERALLY.—The Emperor Nicholas wishes an *erratum* corrected in the next edition of our dictionaries. He begs to say that he has discovered that an ottoman is not a thing upon which you easily and comfortably place your foot.—*Punch*.

Late News.

TURKS AND CHRISTIANS.—A letter in the *Gazette de Mill* assigns the motive which actuated the Slick-ul-Islam at Constantinople to support the propositions for renewing the negotiations:—"We adore Allah," said he, "one God, the head of the law. The Christians also adore one God, who is our Allah. We ought, therefore to consider them as our brethren, for the name of *glaour* (infidel), says the Koran ought not to be given except to those who do not adore only one God."

GENERAL PRIM'S SPEECH TO THE SULTAN.—General Prim, Count de Reuss, who has left Constantinople, went on the 13th ult., accompanied by his suite, and by Captain Rhodes, of the English army, to the Sultan, to take his leave. He, on that occasion, addressed the Sultan as follows:—"Sir,—About to leave for Spain, in order to give an account to my gracious Sovereign of the mission which she deigned to confer on me, my first duty is to take leave of your Imperial Majesty, and to receive your sovereign orders. Will you permit me at the same time, sire, to address to your Imperial Majesty my most sincere thanks for having permitted me, as well as the officers under my orders, to be present at the operations of your valiant army of Roumelia, whereby I have been able to appreciate all the brilliant qualities of the Ottoman soldier. In all the marches and in all the labours of a campaign, I have seen him indefatigable; in privations and sufferings of all kind I have seen him resigned; and I have seen him brave and enthusiastic when, in the name of your Imperial Majesty, he fought against the enemies of his country. The illustrious captain to whom your Majesty has deigned to confide your army of the Danube, by his intelligence, his activity, and *sang froid* in the moment of danger, is worthy, sire, in my humble judgement, to command such soldiers as yours. I leave with the hope of returning in the spring. Then, your Imperial Majesty will be at the head of your brave armies, and we shall have the happiness to witness the glorious triumphs of your Imperial Majesty, for God alone knows, sire, all that your soldiers will be capable of doing on the day of battle, when they shall be commanded by your Imperial Majesty."

Keschid Paslia, in the name of the Sultan, said that his Majesty had heard with satisfaction the judgement of General Prim as to the good qualities of the army of Roumelia, and his favourable opinion of his General-in-Chief, Omar Paslia. His Imperial Majesty, he added, was much pleased with the conduct of the general and his officers whilst they were with the army—of which he had been informed by official reports by his aide-camp, Moustapha Bey. Finally, his Majesty charged the general to express to Queen Isabella his sentiments of friendship for her, and to tell her that he was most grateful for, and would never forget the kindness she had shown him in sending him a mission composed of such distinguished officers.

THE BRITISH COAL TRADE.—At the present time, when the exceeding dearthness of coals is much felt by all classes of consumers, the following detail, from the *Durham Chronicle*, will be found very interesting:—"To such an extent has our coal industry been developed, that not less than 37,000,000 of tons are annually raised, the value of which at the pit's mouth is little less than £10,000,000; at the places of consumption, probably not less than £20,000,000. The capital employed in the trade exceeds £10,000,000. About 400 iron furnaces of Great Britain consume annually 10,000,000 tons of coals, and 7,000,000 tons of ironstone, in order to produce 2,500,000 tons of pig iron, of the value of upwards of £8,000,000. For the supply of the metropolis alone 3,600,000 tons of coals are required for manufacturing and domestic purposes our coasting vessels conveyed in 1850, upwards of 8,360,000 tons to various ports in the United Kingdom, and 3,350,000 tons were exported to foreign countries and the British possessions. The extent of the coal areas in the British Islands is 12,000 square miles, and the annual produce 37,000,000 tons; of Belgium, 250 miles, annual produce, 5,000,000 tons; of France, 2000 miles, annual produce, 4,150,000 tons; of