

were little acquainted. This knowledge they so far improved, by sometimes siding with the *Dutch*, and sometimes with us, that in the space of less than twenty years, they found themselves able to encounter either nation, and in 1676, actually beat the *Dutch* and the *Spaniards* in the *Mediterranean*, and killed the famous admiral *de Ruyter*^d.

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^d The inquisitive reader may find a succinct view of the rise and progress of the French naval power, under the reign of Lewis XIV. in the 7 chap. of the xiv. book of father Daniel's *histoire de la milite Françoise*. But, to place this matter in the clearest light, and to give the English reader a competent idea of the French force at sea, as well as to enable him to judge for himself, (which none of our naval writers have done) of the comparative strength of English and French fleets and squadrons, I shall here give an exact abstract of the state of the French fleet, as it stood in 1681; and it was yet in a better condition at the beginning of the war, to which recourse may be had on all occasions.

ABSTRACT of the FRENCH FLEET.

Rates.	Force.	Number.	Cannon.	Superior Officers.	Naval Officers.	Seamen.	Soldiers.	Whole Crew.
1	120 to 70 guns	12	1080	108	1232	4132	2486	7850
2	70 to 56	21	1518	189	1719	4470	2661	8850
3	56 to 40	36	1928	251	2350	6142	3008	11500
4	40 to 30	26	1088	156	1167	2713	1570	5450
5	28 to 18	20	608	119	681	1427	682	2790
Total		115	6222	823	7149	18884	10407	36440
Light frigates 20 to 16		24	400	125	446	937	497	1880
Bomb vessels and fireships		8	74	16	80	160		240
Barks		10	43	20	90	190		280
Flutes		22	341	44	190	447		637
Total		179	7080	1028	7955	20618	10904	39477

Exclusive of thirty gallies, on board which were above three thousand men.