

were under discussion. They even blamed the English Premier for his warmth. A few also blamed him for concentrating so many troops at home. Foreign critics have echoed their own words. A German semi-official organ has made light of England's strength and security. What has been the answer? One of scorn and semi-defiance. Germany is answered that even without allies we can hold our own, and endure a long and serious war, with every prospect of success. Pulling sentimentalists have evoked the answer to their own cowardly taunts. We have been driven to take stock of our resources, and we issue from the process without weakness and without dismay.

Again Russia has tried to play upon the old string of "identity of views," this time not about Turkey, but about Central Asia. She professes to be satisfied with her researches. Count Schouvaloff has been purring at every court on his way home. But we find no purring in Russia. When journalists are forbidden to discuss, there is usually something unpleasant to reveal. The Count came under colour of negotiating a Royal marriage; he retires under colour of having exchanged views respecting the universal bugbear—the International. We happen to be better informed than to believe all we hear from St. Petersburg. Matters have very materially changed since November, 1870, when Russia withdrew from the Black Sea Treaty. We are by no means effaced. The rules that made judgment go against us at Geneva are now binding upon the United States. The *Adamas* of the Hudson are no longer feared. The Navy of the United States, as we have disclosed in these columns, is in a state of rotten inefficiency. Seen afar off, through the intervening horizon haze, raised by Mr. Reed, *Peter the Great* looked a monster. It is no longer a terror, either to John Bull couchant or John Bull rampant. England is in a position to make her influence felt. Russia tries it on, and "identity of views" is not so apparent, though again professed. Earl Granville is a being very unlike Lord Aberdeen, in whose "moderation and good sense" Prince Menschikoff so firmly believed. Mr. Gladstone is not a fighting Premier, but he has shown that he knows how and when to put his foot down, and he does not rate England's Empire in India so lightly that he can allow it to be imperilled out of "consideration" for imprisoned Russian traders.

Unless Count Schouvaloff be the veriest diplomatic dolt in existence, he must have felt the pulse of England during his short stay in this country. It has been beating firmly and steadily all the time he was here, without intermission and without cessation. The absence of the "moderation" expected is now lamented by the *Official Gazette* of St. Petersburg. The demon is raised, and cannot be so readily laid, even with bell, book, and candle. Peace partisans find it difficult to resist the tide. Arbitrationists would hardly consent to refer the question of the frontier of Afghanistan to any court or arbitrator. Fighting for "a sick man" and fighting for the security of our Indian Empire, are seen to be wholly different things by the most obtuse and doltish. No matter how we have acquired our Indian possessions, they are in our keeping, and we cannot consent to part with them, or to expose them to the cunning of Russian intriguers.

Few persons are so sanguine as to believe in the absolute sincerity of Russia's intention to stop short of the actual conquest of Khiva. If not now, at some other time the proper excuse will be made. She might have arrested her course in 1864, when she

had mastered the Kokands, occupying Douliette, Turkestan, and Chomkond. But in the following year Tashkend was attacked, lest it should fall into the hands of Bokaria. The capture of Samarcand succeeded. Since then Khiva itself has been threatened only to escape for a time. Russia's real intentions get more apparent. She wishes to make her frontier contentious with our own, for purposes we may easily guess. Heavy embargoes have already been laid upon our commerce in the newly-acquired regions. The Khanates are practically closed to us. Shrewd observers have not expected any thing else. Her ulterior object is to weaken our hold upon India, and to play upon our weakness so as to produce "identity of views" upon European questions, and reach Constantinople in the rear. It is of no use mincing matters. Russia, no doubt, would like India well enough, if she could get it, and the possibility of getting it does not seem so difficult to her as to us.

But we should relish nothing better than a defensive war against Russia. We could meet her in India perhaps better than we did in the Crimea. Events have changed somewhat since the Central Asian question was last stirred to its depths. Afghanistan has not been annexed, as recommended by the Russophobists of Calcutta, but the next best thing has been done. The Ameer has been made our ally. Lord Lawrence laid that little matter in proper order before he left India, and Lord Mayo settled the business. Lord Northbrook has so far continued the right policy that he refused to be drawn into a premature entanglement by promising the requested assistance to the Khan of Khiva. The native races of India would like a little fighting. Sikhs leave the Army in disgust because there is nothing to do. The Abyssinian campaign has restored our prestige. Russia has never yet had more than 4000 troops in the field in Central Asia, and we could place six times that number on the Afghan frontier before the Oxus had been crossed. Mr. Cardwell's home concentration would prove useful in a new sense, and war would settle matters for a few generations. Russia knows all this very well, and hence she draws in like the touched leaf of a sensitive plant. She has no notion of provoking us in this direct manner, and there is accordingly all the more need for firmness and circumspection on our part. We believe they are both being exercised, and in a way to bear substantial and permanent fruit. Events will speedily show whether we are mistaken or not.

Quite independently, however, of any precise definition of the decision arrived at—a work of some difficulty at present—it is noticeable that we have "peaked up" in a manner most surprising to some sentimentalists. Dr. Arminius Vambéry, who cannot justly be so styled, rejoices in our awakening. He is pleased to behold the fruit of his own labours. Others might justly be as proud at the defeat of their own vaticinations. The removal of the American difficulty has really cleared the political air like a thunder-storm. We see and breathe more clearly. The panic of 1870 has passed away. Germany may boast, but we do not fear her. She has yet to square accounts with France and she is just as much interested in curbing Russia as we are; if anything, rather more so, because Russia is a neighbour, and might become an enemy, either by alliance with France or Austria. In our own way, we are preparing for any emergency that may arrive. Our Army will presently be more efficient than it has ever been in the whole course of our history—better armed,

better drilled, better trained. Our Navy, in spite of much to complain of, is without a rival, and it grows every year. The spirit of the people is unbroken by reverses, unflamed by successes. Whatever non-interventionists may say and do, they find it hard to induce the people to kotow to any foreign authority. If we succumbed in 1870, it was because we had ceased to rely on a mere paper guarantee. Let Russia repeat the experiments that preceded the Crimean War, and she will understand the meaning of our non-effacement. Our material resources are abundant. What little discontent we have at home is not national but local. The heart is sound. Our very reserve as a first rate Power renders us all the more potent when we speak out, and there has been some round and plain speaking during the last few weeks. With a good cause Great Britain would be as strong and as valiant as ever; and those who imagine that because we do not ask people to tread on the tail of our coat we have no fighting left in us, commit as great a mistake as if they were to interpret a moral epilepsy to be moral strength and fire-breathing to be fierce genuine valor.—*Broad Arrow*

### THE BRITISH NAVY.

In the last fifteen years we find that there has been spent in erecting what was expected to be really efficient Navy, the enormous sum of between £30,000,000 and £40,000,000, and with what result? Simply that we find ourselves now in almost the same state of transition as regards the form or construction of the ship as when in 1861 the *Warrior*, steamed proudly down the Thames. The increasing power of artillery was the primary cause of the revolution in the construction of war-ships. For when Russia, in that terrible and successful attack on the Turkish fleet at Sinope, proved the penetrative and destructive effect of the then modern artillery the problem was at once created as to how far a ship could be constructed capable of resisting not only the penetrating shot, but also the still more terrible shell. And from that day to this, first the ship, then the gun has gained the upper hand. In those days the 68 pounder caused most disastrous results. Now it is the 35 ton 700 pounder gun that sends its mighty messenger of destruction, not simply through the unresisting side of the old three-decker, but penetrating the armour of the very finest specimens of naval modern architecture. For instance, the guns of the *Devastation*, can pierce the sides of the *Hercules* at a distance of over 2000 yards.

We are led to return again to this most vital question of our naval supremacy owing to a very able article having lately appeared in the present number of the *Quarterly Review*. And we conceive, as we peruse the article in question, that it is one likely to attract considerable attention, for the simple reason that it supplies such an array of facts that carry the greatest weight; and though we might reasonably wish for more information still the remarks we refer to are worthy of special attention.

The simple "battle of the guns" is not one the article in question wishes particularly to consider. And yet we may be pardoned the remark when we assert that the gun, being the very arbiter of war, our Navy can never be satisfactorily reconstructed until its true effect is considered.

Our naval supremacy is the ground of comparison the *Quarterly Review* takes up, and in comparing foreign navies with our