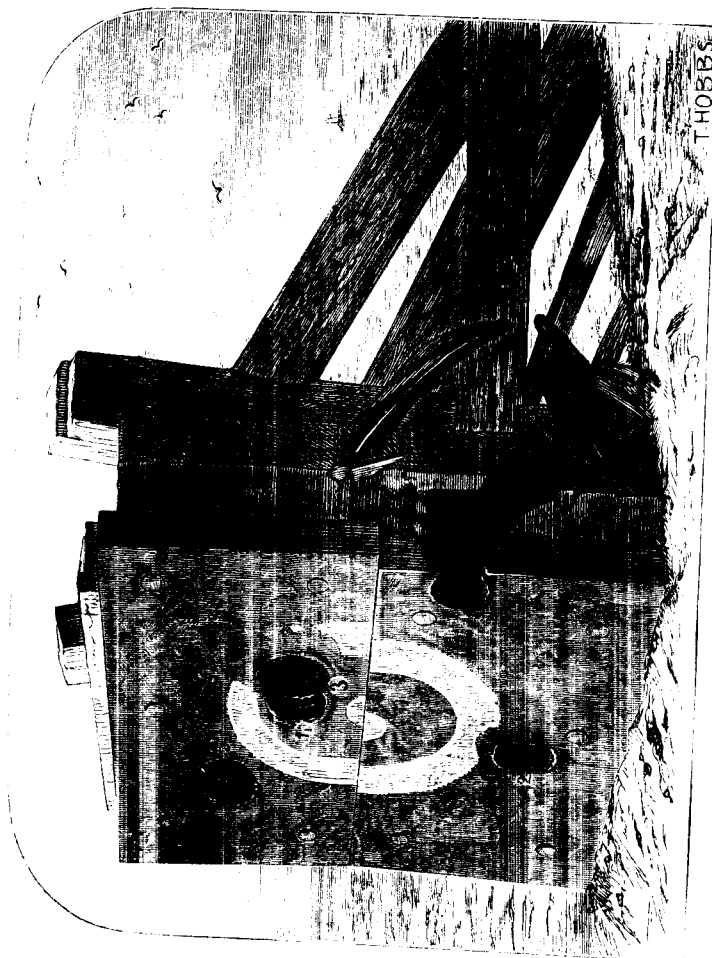


FRONTISPIECE.



No. 1 Shot passed
82 yards beyond.
No. 2 Shot passed
440 yards beyond.
No. 3 Shot passed
185 yards beyond.

No. 4 Shot passed
1475 yards beyond.
No. 5 Shot passed
384 yards beyond.
The charge in all
cases was 30 lbs.

THE AGINCOURT TARGET.—EFFECTS OF THE MACKAY GUN AT 200 YARDS.
The Target comprises the frame and skin of the iron ship, faced with 9-inch teak and $\frac{7}{8}$ -inch armour plates.



SHOEBURYNESS

AND

8/20/9
32.

THE GUNS:

A PHILOSOPHICAL DISCOURSE.

BY

P. BARRY,

AUTHOR OF "DOCKYARD ECONOMY AND NAVAL POWER;" "THE DOCKYARDS,
SHIPYARDS, AND MARINE OF FRANCE," ETC.



"The Commons, faithful to their system, remained in a wise and masterly inactivity."—SIR J.
MACKINTOSH, *Vindictæ Gallicæ*.

"When you wish to walk, do you stand motionless until you have a confused notion of all the
sciences connected with the laws of locomotion."—*Tut for Tat*.

LONDON:

SAMPSON LOW, SON, AND MARSTON, 14, LUDGATE HILL.

1865.

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A

Dedication.

TO

EARL DE GREY AND RIPON, SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WAR,

I BEG TO DEDICATE THESE PAGES.

BECAUSE MY RELATIONS WITH THE WAR-OFFICE HAVE BEEN ALWAYS CORDIAL.

BECAUSE I BELIEVE

HIS LORDSHIP IS ANXIOUS TO DISCHARGE HIS DUTY.

AND BECAUSE I BELIEVE

HE STANDS IN NEED OF THE STRAIGHTFORWARD TESTIMONY WHICH I, AS A MEMBER
OF THE FOURTH ESTATE, HAVE GIVEN

LONDON:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM GORHAM, BURLING STREE
STRAND, W.C.

PREFACE.

I have advisedly appended the term philosophical discourse to the title to set myself right with the public. The books which I have written on dockyards and this book on guns are not off-hand criticisms, but serious, although humble efforts, to rescue the great public questions with which I deal from the lofty pretension, the unmeaning words, and the mystification of those who desire to appear learned, and who find it advantageous, professionally advantageous, to practise imposition. A philosophical discourse is a true discourse, representing fact as it is, and not as it appears to be, nor as it may be conceived to be. It takes truth as it finds it, and presents to the understanding the material for a sound, a common sense, and an exhaustive judgment. The man who reads this book will know as much of guns—that is, the use of them—as Sir William Armstrong, Mr. Whitworth, the Director-General of Ordnance, or Lord De Grey.

It is an ungracious task discussing the subject-matter of this book as I have done. I will have made to myself no end of enemies, and very likely not a single friend. But it is something, indeed it is a great reward,

to feel that the discharge of a public duty, without fear or favour, and in a truly conscientious spirit, is calculated to change a corrupt and effete system of administration and control, and by so doing raise the freest, happiest, most frugal, and laborious nation to that pinnacle of power from which in the course of the past few years it has strangely fallen. England in the hands of wise administrators might easily become, with fewer burdens than those at present borne, the mistress of the world; while England as it is, is only powerful in comparison with itself at previous periods—when there were no ironclads and no patriot army of Volunteers. Against England at this hour the United States could array an overwhelming force on land; marshal an army almost to our regiment; and on the sea bring six efficient ironclads against our one, firing 100lb. of powder against our 16lb. Against England at this hour France could bring to bear a system of administration and control of which the Emperor has a right to boast. It is a system for the combat whenever the battle-note is sounded; ours a system to be buried whenever the sword leaves the scabbard, and to be remembered to the shame of living Englishmen in monumental brass within the precincts of Westminster Abbey.

Who are the administrators of the power of free and happy England? I answer, without fear of contradiction, and from the information of a well-stored mind, the administrators of the power of free and happy England are the unfittest, and, in the main, the unworthiest, men in England. A friend of mine, for

whom I entertain high esteem, remarked to me the other day that there are three classes of persons never privileged to cross his threshold—parsons for their inconsistency, doctors for their ignorance, and officers for their immorality. Without endorsing his exclusions, the time, I think, has come when the honour of the army might beneficially be enlarged to include public abstinence from the grosser vices which degrade mankind. To that question I have felt called on to direct the attention of his Royal Highness the Duke of Cambridge and Lord De Grey. So much for unworthiness. What next, of the fitness of the administrators of the power of free and happy England? The administrators are chiefly officers; and the duty of administrators, whether of the army or of the navy, in the field, on the sea, in the garrison, or in the harbour, is the commonest kind of business routine. The man of business is, therefore, the *beau ideal* of an administrator. And if this is so, who will affirm that officers have had any training for the duties of administrators? They are obviously the wrong men to employ; and it is to their employment that I attribute the whole of our administrative inefficiency, misrule, and waste. The employment of officers as administrators is, I think, one of the most shortsighted economic fallacies of the time—giving an idle class of men important State work to do, because they happen to be idle, and shutting our eyes to their extravagance, and to the misery and dishonour they may some day soon occasion us. On this point I may, without presumption, claim to speak

with some authority. The other day I was employed by the representative of the United States, Chief Engineer J. W. King, to furnish, with other matter, all the information and advice I could give for the construction and organisation of the new arsenal below Philadelphia.*

* I sent the following letter to the *Times* on the occasion of the allusion, in a leading article, to Mr. J. W. King's report:—

"CHIEF ENGINEER KING'S REPORT.

"To the Editor of the *Times*.

"SIR,—In case that too much or too little importance should be attached by you or the public to the report of Chief Engineer King of the United States navy, it will be well for me to say that his report is, in substance, my report.

"On Mr. King's arrival in this country he placed himself in communication with me, and, in addition to receiving all the information that I could give him about France and this country, all his notes were placed in my hands for consideration and revision. Further, such investigations as he could not pursue I prosecuted for him; and my investigations for him continued after his departure for the New York Navy Yard.

"I mention these things that I may be heard in explanation of one or two matters of fact.

"First—America is a wood, not an iron, country; its iron production is as yet limited; and that limited production has been subjected to the extraordinary demands of war. That is why the American contractors have failed in the turning out of iron or iron armour ships within the contract time; the terms of the contracts not admitting of enlargement to correspond with the higher price of iron. But there has also been a great disturbance in the labour market, operating in the same direction, and so powerfully as to interfere with the satisfactory carrying out of even wood ship contracts.

"Second—The United States Government design the arsenal below Philadelphia chiefly to obtain security without having to resort to the construction of fortifications. Convenience and economy likewise suggest the possession of armour mills, foundries, and engine shops on the coast near the Pennsylvania coal and iron fields. These are the objects of the new arsenal; and I am warranted in adding that the popular form of the United States Government precludes the possibility of the Navy Department adopting our English dockyard manufacturing system.

"Third—I found that Mr. King was strongly biassed in favour of Government establishments; and it is within my knowledge that at Chatham his strong prepossessions were greatly strengthened.

"Trusting that my close connection with Mr. King's report will be a justification for this intrusion,

"I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

"P. BARRY,

"Author of *Dockyard Economy and Naval Power*.

1st February, 1865.

Last year the Council of the Royal United Service Institution requested me to lecture before the members on Dockyard Administration.* Then, I may add, that

The following correspondence was published in the *Morning Herald* and in the *Standard* of the 5th January, 1865; and a portion of it previously in the *Morning Post*—

"Whitehall-yard, August 9, 1864.

"DEAR SIR,—I have been desired by the council to ask you, as the author of 'Dockyard Economy and Naval Power,' if you will kindly consent to favour the members of the Royal United Service Institution with a lecture next year on 'Dockyard Administration.' The lectures and papers after their delivery are published (at the discretion of the council) in the journal of the institution. I shall feel obliged by an answer at your earliest convenience.—I remain, yours faithfully,

"B. BURGESS (Captain), Secretary.

"P. Barry, Esq."

"Nov. 8, 1864.

"Mr. P. Barry presents his compliments to the secretary of the United Service Institution, and begs to ask the following question:—

"Mr. Barry, in dealing with the subject of dockyard administration, will subject to criticism the workshops, machinery, tools, &c., of the Royal dockyards, and of some private establishments, and for the sake of clearness it will be necessary to make a few simple chalk tracings on a black board, or to prepare drawings.

"Will, therefore, the council of the United Service Institution be content with the chalk tracings of Mr. Barry as the lecture proceeds, or will the council sanction a moderate outlay for drawings?

"Mr. Barry avails himself of the opportunity afforded him in asking this question to state, for the information of the council, that since the request to deliver the lecture all the Royal dockyards have been specially visited; further inquiries have been prosecuted in the public and private establishments of France, and official information has been received from the United States.

"General principles of dockyard administration will accordingly be laid down with an approach to certainty, and also special principles applicable to England, France, and the United States.

"Care will be taken to render the lecture concise and interesting."

"Whitehall, Nov. 8, 1864.

"DEAR SIR,—With reference to my letter of the 9th August, I am directed by the council of the Royal United Service Institution to inform you that, on reconsidering the proposed arrangement for the ensuing lecture season, they regret that they are now unable to avail themselves of the lecture which you so kindly consented to deliver.—I remain, yours faithfully,

"B. BURGESS (Captain), Secretary."

"Royal United Service Institution, Whitehall-yard, Nov. 8, 1864.

Lieut.-Colonel Alcock presents his compliments to Mr. Barry, and cannot allow the