

while the English Government proposed for 1872-73 11,000 tons, and for 1873-74 11,000 tons, while the French are employing over 25,000 workmen in their dockyards, we have only 15,000 provided for in the current year's estimates for all our dockyards, including Malta. The main fact for which Lord Haver Lambton contended strongly, that the French Government was pushing on their programme with the utmost activity, and that they possessed the necessary staff to give effect to their proposals—was not denied by Mr. Sturgeson, though he took exception to Lord Haver Lambton's classification of the French dockyards, as well as to some of his disparaging the progress of the French Navy, and pointed out that the French Government often fell short of the programme given in their Estimates by as much as five thousand tons. In this last particular it is to be noticed that the English Government is not much more successful than the French, although Mr. Sturgeson seems to hold opinion that the Estimates prepared by the Admiralty are almost invariably evaded by it. What we are disposed to complain of in the Admiralty is its almost inevitable failure to perform the promise in this respect. We make this remark in no Party spirit, for it applies in no greater degree to one Party than the other, and indeed the present Board of Admiralty is entitled to the credit of having successfully struggled against this defect of the dockyards. But the fact remains, as we learn from the Dockyard Expense Accounts which were presented in Parliament a day or two ago, that only on five occasions in the last twelve years has the programme been accomplished, and on only five occasions has the amount of shipbuilding, as shown even in the programme for the year, reached the total of 25,000 tons since 1850 when that amount was given by Mr. Osborne to be the minimum which should be added annually to the Navy. This standard quantity is again exceeded by Mr. Sturgeson as the rule by which the Admiralty is, or should be, guided in preparing its estimates of work, and upon this the Admiralty has this year acted. But if this is an accurate estimate of what should be the normal rate of increase, in order to supply the wants in the Navy and to maintain it in a state of efficiency, it follows that in during the last twelve years only 100,000 tons have been built, there is a deficiency in the Navy amounting to not less than 1,000,000 tons. This deficiency ought certainly to be made good, and it can only be supplied by building to a far point in excess of the normal amount.

Mr. Sturgeson did well to put in a word on behalf of the maintenance of our existing fleet in a state of the highest possible efficiency, in order that it might be ready for immediate action in case of need. There is always a danger in the conflict of Parties but this particular duty of the Government should be suggested; there is no work more credit to be gained by building war ships, and selling our names to the *Wing* List, than the temptation to spend the money available for naval construction in this way has before now proved irresistible. This was no more which Mr. Sturgeson, perhaps, rather he would to avoid during his administration, and even if it be admitted that he sustained a policy of construction to one of equal, it will also be admitted that the opposite plan is equally reasonable. Such a plan is the one which the present Government, pressed as it is by critics like Lord Haver Lambton, have too many temptations to adopt, and Mr. Sturgeson's warning, which was given in no hostile spirit, and with the usual moderation, was therefore not ill-timed. There can be no doubt but that whenever a war does break out it will prove almost entirely upon us, having little else to depend on, as was the case with the Franco-German war; there will be no more time for the repair of old ships, or the construction of new ones, but the existing Fleet will have to take action immediately upon its being ordered to do so.

then to witness the two weighty volumes of those who, either in its entirety, or in all its essential features, adopt it as the correct approach to truth which we can at present obtain. In some respects the conclusions of the theory has verified by the consent of the author's disciples. Mr. Darwin was one of the most cautious of observers, the most tentative of theories. Some of his speculations were so surprising that younger minds, less jealous than his, were started away by the very direction of a difficulty which he surmised. It required his warning voice before they willingly drew out in their heading course. They would be told that such and such a remark "is only a suggestion"—it is unaccepted by the necessary facts, or logically leads to this or to that important point. "Better, therefore, go on observing and gathering facts, before accepting the idea for more than its true value." Whether Darwinism will hold its own, or give way to a sounder explanation of the points which the origin and distribution of plants and animals, recent and extinct, present, it would be rash to prophesy. Once on a time Lamarck proposed a theory nearly as surprising, and the new language "Vestiges of Creation" was for a few years almost unpopular, or at least, as Mr. Darwin's disciples. But neither of the theories accorded with those nature was compatible with the one which took their place. They were supported by facts, while Mr. Darwin's "hypothesis"—to use the new almost discarded name which the men of letters think best applied to it—is backed up by such an extraordinary series of facts that, though many of its conclusions must for ever remain unconfirmed, it almost deserves the position claimed for it as a sound induction, the main inferences from which no future Darwinism can ever derive. In that as it may—and there is still a wide diversity of opinion on the subject—only very narrow or very ill-defined people suppose it as an attack on the fundamental truths of revealed Religion. Good men and women have now come to see that whatever may be the error which inflicts curbs from the facts of Nature, it is no lowering to the Master of Life to have imprisoned on a few species the power of describing their number by taking advantage of favourable chance as to consider him a heathen. True, who destroys one species only to create another. Nature is ever unending, and to Darwin, quite as much as to Sturgeson, we are indebted for a nobler idea of the attributes of "Nature's God," though some of Mr. Darwin's friends might have wished "the theory" to emerge not from its application, when the facts of life supplied him to create a region "where angels fear to tread."

What man's false pretensions may stand to the illustrious naturalist who has left us it is hard to say, a greater than he may write. The opinions of mankind may swing round the circle in another direction. Darwinism may be made to the depths of the ocean, or in those deep rocks that Lamarck so aptly termed "the laughter of time," which may prove that Darwinism was all an accidental dream. Forgetting is possible, but these things, judging from the facts which are every day coming to light, are not probable. The long sea freighter at one time believed that he had shot his arrow between the joints of the Darwinian system, but, as the master himself demonstrated, Sir Wyville Thomson, by not quite understanding the idea which he had studied, only confirmed instead of refuting them. The Galapagos was to have got its end in Darwinism. But, as Mr. Sturgeson proved so conclusively in his lecture on the "Coming of Age of the People of Spain," every link that of the Paleozoic—though only strengthened more thoroughly the chain of evidence by supplying the long sought for missing links. Darwinism was, indeed, a happy invention of a clever man. A more of history led up to it. The influence of a British intellect is somewhat was the foundation, or rather it was built. The author of it had

