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MEDITERRANEAN STEAMBOATS.

THE events which are occurring in the east of Europe are calculated to bring into increased notice the efforts made to provide the Mediterranean with efficient steam navigation. Hitherto, these efforts have not been crowned with as much success as might be desired. To say nothing of the very defective character of the boats and crews in the pay of the Turkish government, even the French and English steamers have been found wanting in many of those requisites which encourage travelling. Hitherto their mode of construction has not generally been such as to make them fit for competing with the splendid vessels which carry on the American trade. But much has been done, and is still doing, in the way of improvement.

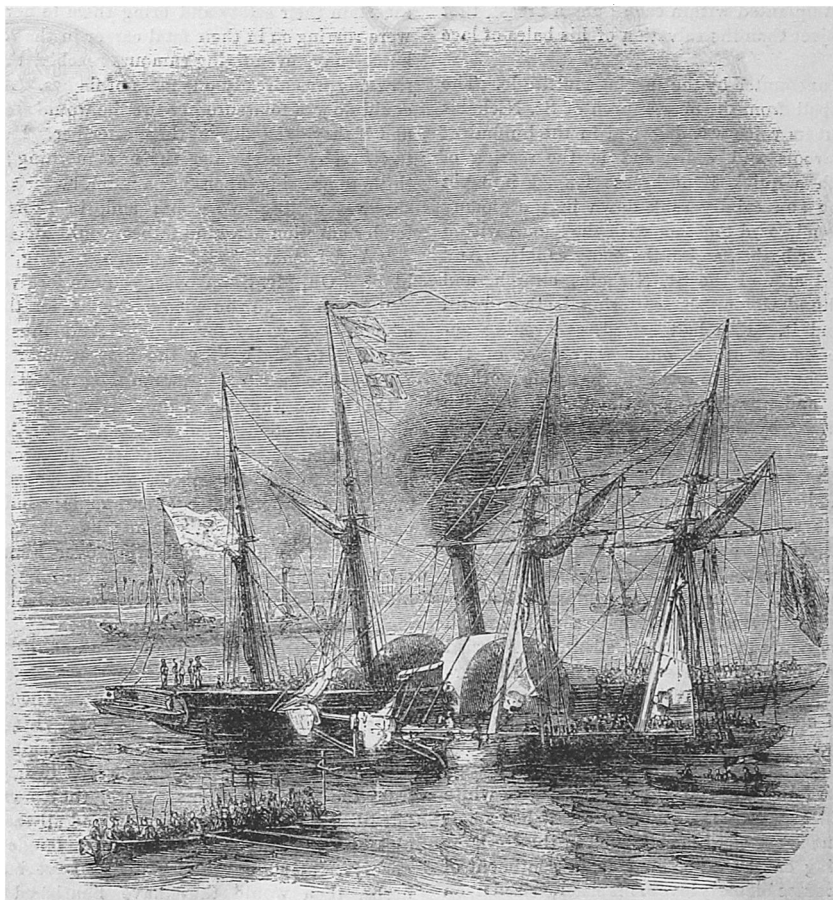
One of the best steamers that ever entered the Mediterranean was the "Vassitei Tidjaret," built for the Sultan, or rather

was, however, of little use, for she was soon in about the same state as an Irish swine-boat, or a Newcastle collier, says an English traveller, who was on board of her for some time.*

An Armenian proposed, directly he saw her, to make her a transport ship for horse-beans, as a yacht was useless to the Sultan, who could not leave "his womens."

The vessel was unlucky the first time she went out, knocked her flag-staff against the bowsprit of a frigate, or something of that sort, and her fate was sealed. No Turk would go aboard of her again. There was a *kismet* against her.

Several of the steamers employed by England, France, and the Austrian Lloyds are splendid boats, and there is some talk of putting some such vessels on the line as the "Argo," belonging to the General Screw Steam Navigation Company, a vessel which went round the world, 27,900 miles, in 112



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for his mother, the Sultan Validé, by Messrs. White of Cowes, in the Isle of Wight, and fitted up under the active superintendence of Mr. Edward Zohrab, the Turkish consul.

It was a graceful, beautiful vessel, with admirable engines by Messrs. Maudslay, the eminent English engineers. She was in every respect a very different affair from the old "Hilton Jolliffe," the first steamer ever seen by the Turks, who, along the coast as she steamed up, were as alarmed as the Hindoos on the Ganges. The formidable novelty was afterwards purchased by the Sultan, and for many years was the only steamer in the Ottoman Empire.

On the first voyage of the "Vassitei Tidjaret," she took in recruits at Smyrna for Constantinople. It was the first taint the beautiful vessel had. It took all hands and a dozen Maltese, with brooms, buckets, and holy-stone, and tons of water, to get rid of the dirt and vermin they left. The clearing

days, and rode out a fearful storm without some of the passengers being disturbed from their peaceful slumbers.

The time is soon coming when vessels will run, without stopping, a distance of 6,000 miles at a speed of 20 miles per hour. Already, the West India Company's steamer "La Plata" has run 4,000 miles at 12 miles an hour, in a most tempestuous ocean.

No man who remembers what human ingenuity and skill have effected will venture to fix any limits to the future progress of mankind in scientific discovery or mechanical improvement. We only hope, whatever discoveries and improvements are made, may be as beneficial to mankind as those connected with steam navigation.

The vessels designed above are a recent addition to the Mediterranean service.

* Macfarlane: "Turkey and its Destiny," 1848.