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Evening Meeting.

Monday, May 22nd, 1871.

Rear-Admiral A. P. RYDER, in the Chair.

NAMES of MEMBERS who joined the Institution between the 15th and
22nd May, 1871.

LIFE.

Burke, Paget J., Captain Royal Body Guard.

ANNUAL.

Flood, Henry, Captain 2nd Queen's Royal.
Elliot, W. H., Major-General late R.A. .

ON THE FORMATION OF RESERVES OF OFFICERS AND
SEAMEN FOR THE ROYAL NAVY, AND THE EVILS AND
INADEQUACY OF IMPRESSMENT TO PROVIDE THE
SAME. 1871.

By G. H. GARDNER, Retired Captain, Royal Navy.

ADMIRAL RYDER AND GENTLEMEN,

I must express my regret that an abler person than myself has not been called upon to read a paper in this Institution upon so important and vital a question as the "Formation of Reserves of Officers and trained Seamen to be readily available for manning our Fleets and Coast Defences in war time without having recourse to Impressment," but having accepted the invitation of the Council to do so, I hope any shortcomings on my part will be pardoned in my endeavour to make the subject interesting to you. It will be necessary for me to make a retrospective survey, in order to compare the means adopted for manning

the Navy in the past with those of the present time, and I hope not to test your patience too much. I presume that a great deal of the information I have drawn from our past history is quite familiar to the senior members of the profession; but I venture to think that I shall relate much that is unknown to the rising generation of Naval Officers, or our "Young Navy," as they are now called.

The mass of information placed at my disposal has made it a very difficult matter to condense it, or to compress my paper into the proper length in order that I may not exceed the limit of time allowed for reading it. I have found my task deeply interesting, and I trust that the selection of matter I have made may prove equally so to you. With this preface I will proceed.

The best means for manning the Navy readily and efficiently at the prospect or commencement of hostilities and during war time has occupied the attention of this country more or less during the last three centuries, and the solution of the difficulty would seem to be as far off as ever. Every imaginable scheme has been propounded to effect the desired object, and to abolish the necessity for having recourse to impressment, but little heed has been paid to any practicable and comprehensive plan suggested during peace time. Therefore when war breaks out abroad, or the political sky becomes charged with electricity, a semi-panic arises in the public mind, and great talk arises about the unsatisfactory state of our Navy and coast defences, and there it ends. I have examined more than a hundred suggestive schemes brought forward at various times, and I have to express my thanks to the friend who has very generously assisted me by placing at my disposal the manuscripts and papers of his father, the late Captain John Hoskins Brown, C.B., R.N., Registrar-General of Seamen, an Officer who devoted many years of his life to collecting information and in endeavouring to solve the question of how to readily man the Navy without using coercive measures, and to whose suggestions the country is mainly indebted for the institution of the present Royal Naval Reserve, and through it for the removal of a good deal of the aversion of the seafaring population to taking service under the Crown. The horrors of the press-gang and the barbarous discipline on board our men-of-war, in former times, combined with the absence of good faith on the part of the Government towards the seamen while serving in the Fleet, were the chief causes of that aversion.

I will avoid troubling you much with statistics, only using them lightly here and there by way of comparison and illustration.

Dividing my paper under several heads, commencing with

Impressment.

I will point out at once the evils attending it, and then prove, by reference to past experience, how it has failed to produce the object intended, and how mischievously it works by destroying every patriotic feeling in our seafaring population.

Impressment, then, involves stoppage of trade by placing an embargo

on all outward-bound ships from our ports, to the ruin of our merchants, and serious loss to the country at large.

It is a most expensive mode of providing seamen for the Fleet, and attended with far greater cost to the nation than many others which have been suggested at various times to obviate the necessity of resorting to it; besides which, the quality of the article obtained by means of it is generally of the worst possible kind.

It is highly injurious to the interests of a great maritime nation (whose constant policy it should be to engage and cherish the affections of this most valuable class of its subjects in every possible way) to alienate them by forcing them into the service of the State by coercive measures.

It involved the necessity of our men-of-war in former times being turned into prison ships in order to provide for the safe custody of the *pressed* men, the remainder of the crews of necessity being made to suffer detention with them. It is extremely doubtful whether we can recur to impressment, for if we do, it will provoke combinations amongst the seamen, and a determined resistance, as well as induce them to leave the country and seek shelter under other flags, if not assist to man the ships of our enemies. In conjunction with other ill-usage, it had the effect of doing so formerly, and to our cost, when the conceit was taken out of us in the war with our transatlantic cousins, whose ships were manned with British seamen fighting under the banner of "Free Trade and Sailors' Rights."

With the single exception of invasion or imminent invasion—when of necessity the able-bodied of all classes would be levied *en masse*—it is ILLEGAL; and I imagine that nothing but the direst necessity would induce the public to support the Government in resorting to it.

As a proof that impressment is looked upon as illegal, it will only be necessary to state that there are many instances on record where persons have resisted the press-gangs to the death, and in no case has such conduct been adjudged murder; while, on the contrary, where men have been killed by the press-gang, a verdict of "wilful murder" has been brought in against the Officers in command of the party, and it was only the shield of the Government that saved the Officers from the consequences.

The common law will bear out impressment for the public defence. But is it not sheer madness to exert it against the very men on whose right arms our existence is staked, unless driven to it by our extremity?

It will be sufficient for my purpose to go back to the end of the seventeenth century, and take a passing survey of the principal means adopted from that period up to the cessation of hostilities in 1815 for supplying our fleets with crews; and I hope to make this part of my subject sufficiently interesting so as not to tax your patience too much. I consider it necessary to refer back so far, in order to show the causes that produced so grievous an estrangement between the Royal Navy and the mercantile and seafaring community generally of the United Kingdom.

Starting from the year 1691, and just mentioning that the Navy was then manned by voluntary enlistment during peace time, and by

impressment and other coercive measures during war time—which system prevailed until the end of the war in 1815—I will proceed to give sketches of a few of the many ingenious schemes that were suggested for overcoming the necessity of impressment, of Acts of Parliament on the same subject, together with the opinions expressed in and out of Parliament by men in high stations, as well as by Naval Officers and by the seamen themselves. To give the whole would exceed the limits of time allowed for a lecture in this theatre.

In 1691 a paper was published in London by Henry Maydman, and styled “Naval Speculations and Maritime Politics.”

The author states that he has been thirty years a warrant officer in His Majesty’s Navy, having been employed in all parts of the world, in divers battles, and attentive to make observations. He suggests that every poor boy of a parent who receives alms shall be indentured and bound to the King before a Justice of the Peace at the age of 14, and sent to Greenwich to be educated for the sea. That they shall be marked on the arm with the letter K, some sent on board men-of-war, and no merchant ship allowed to sail, without one of these boys for every six or ten men she carries. Masters shall give account of them at the Custom House, and pay their wages into the hands of Commissioners, who shall provide them with clothes. Caulkers, shipwrights, carpenters, &c., shall be bound to take these boys. The Commissioners shall take care that they are not wronged, and he adds: “I do affirm that within ten or seven years this would add many thousands of able mariners and artificers.” He also proposes to encourage the fisheries; to keep a register; and that the Vice-Admiral of each county shall visit the sea ports, and summon all mariners, fishermen, &c., to give an account of their names and residences.

In 1693 several schemes were published, one by a Captain in the Navy (Captain George St. Lo). He published a book called “England’s Glory a Bridle on the French King,” in which he describes the hardships he had experienced in a French prison, and the readiness with which the French fitted out a fleet of twenty sail of the line in twenty days, under his notice, and proposes a plan for raising 20,000 seamen, which, with the Officers, would be sufficient for the fleet, and to the saving of all the charges of *impress*, the cost of which alone he reckons at £60,000* per annum; says that they can be procured in a month, and the reason why seamen are so averse to the King’s service is the lying of the pay ticket several years without payment, unless sold at a loss of 40 or 50 per cent.

He proposes that all vessels, lighters, boats, &c., should be bound to furnish a certain number of men proportionably, according to a scale, which he has laid down: also, that shipwrights, caulkers, and all those whose employments relate to the sea shall produce a certain quota, under penalties for refusing to do so. He regulates the price of wages, &c.; the drift of the whole being that the men for His Majesty’s Navy shall be provided by those connected with the sea.

Later in this year one Robert Crossfield dedicated a work to the

* A large sum in those days.

Queen's most Excellent Majesty, under the title of "England's Glory
"Revised, showing an easie and speedie method for fully manning the
"Royal Navy with Saylor's," &c.

After a few preliminary remarks on the evils of war, he goes on to say:—

"The reason of the ships not being manned is not the want of men (for it is apparent to the contrary), but that they hide *for fear of the press gang*. That laying an embargo on trade—to *press*—is prejudicial to Her Majesty and the nation. It is like stopping the circulation of a man's blood in his body," &c.

He therefore proposes that all vessels *outward-bound* should be unmolested, but that press warrants should be issued to press *all* merchant seamen, and that these warrants should be sent forth simultaneously; "and as soon as every man is captured notice shall be sent to the Admiralty, and maintain the pressed men until they are wanted. Is sure that all the *saylor's* must be caught, as they are *amphibious animals, and cannot live long out of water*." This, he says, is better than an embargo.

The seamen of this period were not well affected towards the new dynasty, and were much attached to the exiled monarch,* under whom they had fought against the Dutch on several occasions, and the views of the Court being chiefly directed to the *Army*, complaints were rife of neglect, oppression, and wrong, endured by seamen in the naval and mercantile service:

In 1696 an Act was passed (VII and VIII Will. III.) for the increase and encouragement of seamen.

This Act appears to have been loudly called for by the complaints of the seamen, and the sympathy of the nation. Great abuses were tolerated in the naval management, and it was the policy of the Government to divert all the resources of the kingdom to the Continental war, to the total neglect of the Navy. The Parliament displayed even more apathy than the executive for the consideration of the subject—was twice recommended from the Throne, first on the 12th November, 1694, and again on the 23rd November, 1695, and it was not until 1696 that it was passed.

The Act commenced (as such Acts generally do) by setting forth that—

"Forasmuch as the strength and safety of this and other His Majesty's Realms and Dominions do very much depend upon the furnishing and supplying of His Majesty's Royal Navy with a competent number of able mariners and seamen, which may be in readiness at all times for that service.

"And whereas the seamen of this Kingdom have for a long time distinguished themselves throughout the world by their industry and skilfulness in their employment, and by their courage and constancy manifested in engagements for the defence and honour of their native country; and for an encouragement to continue their ancient reputation, and to invite greater numbers of His Majesty's subjects to betake themselves to the sea, it is fit and reasonable that some competent provision should be made," &c.

In order to obviate the necessity for coercive service, it contained provisions for a *voluntary registry of seamen*, composed of persons above

* James II.

18 and under 50 years of age, to be maintained to the amount of 30,000, at a stipend of 40s.* each per annum, to serve in the Navy when required, with a slight increase of pay; none others but the registered men were to be promoted, they were to have double share of prize-money, and other contingent advantages, such as securing Greenwich Hospital for the use of disabled seamen, &c.

Parliamentary history at this period is not very distinct, but it appears, by the various discussions that took place during the existence of that regulation, and also by a return made to the House of Commons, that not more than 17,000 of the required numbers had availed themselves of the provisions, and that *no funds were voted* for the payment of their stipends, which at length accumulated to an arrear of £416,889 11s. 2d. !!!† when (in 1710) the Act was repealed by that of IX of Anne, c. 21.

The following extract from Ralph's History of England during the reigns of William and Mary, Queen Anne, and George I, will, I hope, be interesting, as showing the state of our Fleet, and the treatment of our seamen in those days, he says:—

“We have had a transient view of the Fleet at the Noro *completely manned*, and it remains to be told that this great point was not brought to bear without great difficulty and a very extraordinary exertion of all the powers of the State. A bounty of six weeks' pay was first offered by proclamation to all able volunteers, to be paid before they set sail, also conduct-money, and this proving ineffectual a general embargo was laid on all outward-bound ships. Warrants to impress were issued out on all sides, and all mayors, justices, sheriffs, constables, &c., were required to search for all seamen that had absconded, and to seize and secure such as they could find. And all persons whatsoever were strictly charged and commanded not to conceal any of the said seamen, or such as might be suspected to be seamen, on pain of being forthwith committed to prison and prosecuted with all severity, according to law, as persons conspiring against their Majesties and the safety of the kingdom.”

So ran the proclamation (this was after the battle of Beachy Head, when our Fleet ran for the mouth of the Thames).

“And when a sufficient number of these miserable *freeborn* subjects had been forced by their fellow-subjects into the public service, then other proclamations of a softer nature were set forth. During the continuance of the impress the coal trade had been wholly at a stand-still, and the price of that commodity enhanced in proportion to the scarcity, and to the demand, which the severity of the season had very much increased. The distress of the poor in general was redoubled, and even the rich partook of the general calamity.” (Vol. II, p. 272.)

In 1692 he describes the same arbitrary proceedings as happening over again. In 1693 he states,—

“The Queen, during her administration of the Government, had issued a proclamation for continuing all the seamen of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd rates in pay *during the winter*, which was closed with a *solemn promise* that such seamen as yielded obedience to it should be paid their wages down to Michaelmas of the current year, before the Fleet set sail on the next summer expedition.”

Now it appeared by the accounts laid before the House of Commons, that the sum due for wages alone to these unhappy men, amounted to no less than £1,036,415, showing that the Royal word of the Queen

* A large sum according to the value of money in those times.

† Still due to their heirs and successors.

pledged to the sailors was forfeited; and so great was the discontent which the want of money, bad victuals, and worse usage had created among them, that neither the severest discipline, nor even death itself (for numbers of them were hanged for desertion, *and some for demanding their pay, which was called mutiny*) could suppress it. On this truly melancholy occasion some of the sailors themselves sent forth a hand-bill, which began with these words:—

“All gentlemen seamen that are weary of their lives, and desire to serve R.W. (Royal William) on board the Navy Royal, shall have for encouragement fair promises and no performance, as follows:—

“For each able seaman 21s. per month, to be paid when he can get it, and to be hanged if he demands it,” &c.

Also a ballad, in which are the following stanzas:—

“But now suppose they had done ill,
In asking pay too roughly still,
When 'twas their due, and need so prest,
They might have pardon found at least.
The King and Queen some merciful call
But seamen found it none at all.
To robbers, thieves, and felons, they
Freely grant pardon every day;
Only poor seamen, who alone
Do keep them on their father's throne,
Must have at all no mercy shown.
Nay! tho' they want faults, they'll find some.
God bless our noble Parliament,
And give them the whole government,
For England's sinking, unless they
Do take the helm and better sway.”

Ralph goes on to observe that,—

“Though the whole kingdom rang with the disorders, abuses, and oppressions which had crept into our Marine, the House showed no disposition to take the state of the Navy into their serious consideration, or to make such wholesome provisions as might prevent the enormities complained of for the time to come.”

In 1702 a Mr. John Dennis published an essay, which he dedicated to the Lord High Admiral, the Earl of Pembroke.

He gives a general description of the state of the Navy, points out the abuses then existing; says the expense of pressing amounts to £300,000 a year, and that it totally fails to obtain men, and that the Fleet is often detained for months for the want of them; points out the abuses of the Registry Act of William III, and proposes to make it penal on masters employing unregistered men, &c.

The author of a Political Treatise on the Navy, &c., in 1703, mentions the circumstance of the seamen not receiving their retainers of 40s. per annum for seven years, but that having paid 6d. a month to Greenwich, they were actually out of pocket, in consequence of their pay being kept back, and that they had been badly treated, and “runs” and “queries” put against their names, by which they were liable to the penalty of serving six months without pay. When to this it is added that it had long been the custom to pour all the grace and favour of the Crown on the Army, which partially was now carried to blameable

excess in favour of the troops on the Continent under the Duke of Marlborough, to the utter neglect of the Navy, and also that the good Queen Anne showed violent indignation when an inquiry into the naval abuses was demanded, and withdrew her countenance from those who pressed it in 1706. The House of Lords voted an address to the Queen four years before the Act was repealed, recommending an inquiry into the following points, viz. :—

1. The effectual manning of the Fleet.
2. The encouragement and increase of the number of seamen.
3. The restoring and preserving the discipline of the Navy.

It was this address that Her Majesty Queen Anne received with a very bad grace, giving her great offence.

Impressment was found inefficient, embargos were laid and Fleets detained for want of men, although *thousands were in hiding*. Yet this was the season and these the circumstances under which it is generally believed the scheme of registering the seamen failed, and was abandoned, from being found ineffective and fraudulent; and it may be truly so considered on the part of the Government, to entice men into its service, hang them for demanding what they had been promised under pledge of the Royal word, and poison them with rotten provisions, &c. Can it be wondered at that *the seamen should evince absolute abhorrence of any measure intended to connect them with the service of the Crown*.

I could go on quoting from a heap of essays and schemes relating to the state of the Navy, and the more effectual means of manning the Fleet at this time; but I will make a skip to the year 1719–20, and read an extract from the preface of a Naval History, published by Mr. John Burchett, who was for 50 years Secretary to the Admiralty, and from the fact of his holding that position for such a length of time he must have been thoroughly conversant with the then state of affairs. He writes thus :—

“Let us in the next place consider the circumstances of the seafaring men of Great Britain a race of people who, as they are the most valuable because the fleets wherein they serve are our chief defence, so consequently the greatest care ought to be taken to treat them in such a manner as that it may encourage their increase, and leave them as little as possible for complaints of hardships. As they are a body of brave people subjected to greatest dangers, not only from an enemy, but on many other accounts, so may they with good usage be easily wrought upon, and induced with uncommon cheerfulness to look death in the face on all occasions; wherefore, since they are so intrinsically valuable in themselves, all that is possible should be done towards rendering the public service easy to them.”

After recommending a general registry and better method of payment for their services than by ticket, he proceeds to speak of impressment in these terms :—

“The present method of impressing men for the Royal Navy is not only attended with great inconvenience to the men themselves, but it causes no small interruption to trade; for very often when there hath been occasion for a considerable number of men to serve in the fleet, it hath been found necessary to put almost a total stop for some time to the proceeding of all outward-bound merchant ships and vessels.”

He then recommends the establishment of registry offices, so as to come at the certain knowledge of every seaman or seafaring man in

the kingdom, their ages and descriptions, and that the Admiralty should at all times be aware of which of them are employed, either in the public service or the mercantile marine, and when they shall be discharged from the one or the other—

"Besides which," he adds, "it might be so provided for, that when a certain number of men have been employed a certain time in the service of the Crown, they shall have licence to enter themselves on board of merchant ships, and when they have so served a limited time, be obliged to go on board the ships of the Royal Navy when there shall be occasion for them."

Nothing, however, appears to have arisen out of these suggestions. The same system went on, and complaints were as prevalent as ever.

In 1740 Sir Robert Walpole brought in a bill for the *General Registry of the Mariners* of the Kingdom. He insisted upon the necessity of such a measure with a view to obtaining seamen for the Fleet, and observed upon the inefficiency of impressment as follows:—

"Not many months ago, after every means of impress had been used, until not another man could be got, all the haunts of the seamen having been searched, the impress was suspended and protection granted, in order that the trading ships might go to sea. This soon made it apparent that there was no want of sailors in the nation—they turned out by thousands—16,000 demanded protection for the colonies and coasters alone."

The Minister then cited the French system of registration, under which they obtain their seamen's services so promptly. This citation, however, was fatal to the measure; for such an outcry was raised, on the score of oppression, slavery, &c. (*as if impressment then in operation was not a greater evil than the system proposed*), that he was obliged to withdraw the Bill. It was again brought forward, however, with some modifications under Mr. Pelham's Administration in 1749, and was introduced by Lord Barrington, one of the Board of Admiralty, who proposed to retain seamen for service at £10 per annum when not employed, so that our peace establishment should amount to 10,000 men.

Mr. Pelham considered it—

"Desirable that the men should take their turns to go to sea in the King's ships, that he had examined many schemes for manning the Navy at the beginning of a war, without distressing trade, and that, in his opinion, none were so good as retaining a number of supernumeraries at a small yearly allowance."

After a long debate, the House of Commons passed the following Resolution:—

"That the retaining and securing a number of seamen, over and above those actually employed, by a proper allowance of pay, will be a means of more speedily manning His Majesty's ships on any future occasion, without distressing trade."

And there this plan ended.

The accession of George II. gave hopeful expectation to seamen, for in his speech from the Throne January 27, 1728, His Majesty delivered himself as follows:—

"I think myself obliged to recommend to you a consideration of the greatest importance, and should look upon it as a great happiness if, at the beginning of my reign, I could see the foundation laid of so great and necessary a work as the increase and encouragement of our seamen in general, that they may be *invited* rather than

compelled by force and violence to enter into the service of their country as often as occasion should require it, a consideration worthy of the representatives of a people great and flourishing in trade and navigation."

Again, nothing appears to have resulted from *this* recommendation. But in this King's reign the Act for establishing a Fund for aged and worn-out Merchant Seamen was passed (20 Geo. II, c. 38, A.D. 1747), to be supported by taking another *6d.* per month from the men's wages (in addition to the *6d.* for Greenwich Hospital).

In 1756 the Marine Society, for training boys for the sea, was established through the patriotism and influence of Mr. Jonas Hanway, a merchant and a great philanthropist; since that date it has educated and given to the Royal Navy 30,000 boys, besides nearly 40,000 landsmen, fitted out for sea service between that year and 1814.

In 1763, during a short interval of peace, the Lieutenants of the Royal Navy proposed to the Admiralty a plan to keep in employment about 20,000 seamen who were about to be discharged, so as to prevent the necessity of *impressment* and distressing trade at the commencement of another war, by converting such of the King's ships as were suited to the purpose into whalers and sending them to the fishing-grounds of Greenland and Davis's Straits. They proposed that they should have the same pay as at present, and showed by calculations founded on the profits of the Dutch in this trade, that the employment of the following numbers would, after paying all expenses, leave a surplus of £100,000 per annum; 250 vessels, making altogether 125,000 tons, manned with 17,500 seamen, and 500 petty Officers.

In December, 1770, the Lord Mayor complained to the Admiralty that the tradesmen in the City could not go about their lawful callings without being interrupted and insulted by the press-gangs, and that great fears were entertained that the plague would be introduced by the sailors in quarantine flying on shore, at the risk of their lives, to escape impressment.

In this year (1770) the seamen presented an humble Petition to the King, praying for a remedy in lieu of impress, in which they use the following respectful language:—

"Was there no possibility of effecting the purpose of a naval war, but by the practice of impressing? Was pressing the best method of doing it? Though it might be effected by other means, we, your Petitioners, are so sensible of what is due to our country, and so loyal in obedience to your Majesty, that we would cheerfully sacrifice our convenience to public good, and the patriotic desires of our King; but while we are convinced that pressing answers no good end to either,—that it is inefficient for manning the Navy,—that it prolongs our wars for want of a proper exertion of our real and national strength,—that it is, therefore, productive of numerous heavy taxes,—that it makes property precarious,—that it is destructive of trade,—that thousands perish miserably in filth and contagion, victims to its tyranny,—that it affects the personal security of all your Majesty's subjects, without which all other blessings have no existence, we supplicate your Majesty's interposition to prevent the impolitic and abominable practice, &c."—*Gentleman's Magazine*, September, 1770.

In 1774, a plan proposed by Lieutenant Tomlinson of the Royal Navy, attracted much attention. He points out that our system of *impressment* is remarked upon by foreigners as renouncing every obliga-

tion to humanity and gratitude, as well as all regard to the legal rights of seamen. Lieutenant Tomlinson's suggestions were as follows:—

"That every seaman entering the Navy voluntarily, shall be allowed ten days' leave to bid adieu to his friends, and longer if the distance is great. That he shall be allowed conduct money, but it shall be made felony to him to desert after receiving it.

"That able-bodied seamen shall not be bound to serve more than three years with 30s. per month pay. Ordinary seamen, four years with 21s., and landsmen for five years, with 22s.; and that after the above servitude, they shall be exempt from compulsory servitude in the Fleet. All those who have served shall have a certificate granted, without fee or reward, signed by three or more Commissioners of His Majesty's Navy, which shall be their protection; and, upon the paying off of the Fleet, those who have not served their whole time shall have a certificate for the part, and they may afterwards complete it. *No seafaring people to be exempt from serving*, because the scheme is calculated to prevent compulsion, and to leave no excuse or cause of complaint by seamen *when it is made lawful to impress*, when they refuse to serve, and as they have nothing but their labour to contribute, it is but reasonable they should devote some part of it to the public good. Therefore no master of a vessel less than 20 tons, shall be excused, nor any mates to be exempt. Any persons secreting themselves shall serve for lower wages, and forfeit 20s. to the constable, and any person secreting a seaman shall be fined £20 for the first offence, and be imprisoned for the second.

"Deserters to be advertised, to forfeit their wages, and to be punished by Court-martial.

"When seamen are wanted, they are to be called together at the different ports by proclamation, when they shall have leave and conduct-money.

"All deserters to begin their term of service over again. Seamen who have served their full time to have a pension from Greenwich Hospital when 50 years old.

"In the first three years of a war, mariners may serve by substitute. Proposes another scale of prize money. Shows that there are 3,000 men employed in the impress service (exclusive of the guard ships), whose pay, maintenance, &c., at £4 per month (the Parliamentary grant), is £176,000 per annum. Exclusive, too, of regulating captains, sloops of war, hired ships and tenders, in constant pay, costing £20,280 per annum. Besides these, are three guard ships, which he gives calculations to show, cost £150,000 per annum, or about £376,000 in all. Says that every impress man cost the Government £24. Goes into calculations to show how many seamen can be procured. States there are 120,000 mariners, and all sorts of seafaring people in Great Britain. That 4,000 men are uselessly employed in guard ships, or lent to merchant ships in lieu of pressed men during the war. Shows the effect of *limited time*, in the following account of the Admiralty having ordered the 'Terrible' and 'St. Albans' (two guard ships) to be paid off in October last; and the 'Ramillies' and 'Ardent' to be commissioned in their stead. From this a report arose and spread amongst the sailors that the Admiralty proposed paying off such a number every year as would make a relief of all the guard ships in the course of four or five years, which gave the seamen such spirit to enter the Service, that the 'Ardent' was manned in 12 days; and in the same month, the 'Seahorse' and 'Salisbury,' who were going to the East Indies, report said for *three years only*, were both manned in a few days with prime seamen, and obliged to reject numbers.

To show the inefficiency of the *impress*, he states—

"That after a hot impress for five calendar months, from 22nd September, 1770, to 22nd February, 1771, and once from protection during that time, besides the advantage of the first surprise, and after sweeping London of the great numbers of dissolute persons, and after all the jails had been swept, and the refuse of the kingdom had been gathered together, they only mustered about 33,000 men (exclusive of marines) of all denominations; and in these were a great number of Officers' servants, &c., besides the crews of all the tenders, &c., so to make the number of real seamen very inconsiderable, especially when we consider that the Navy was supposed to muster 16,000 (Marines included) when the press broke off. In Sep-

tember, when the press began, 3,000 seamen fled on shore from the colliers between Yarmouth Roads and the Nore to avoid the press-gangs."

From the practical knowledge of the subject displayed by Lieutenant Tomlinson throughout his book the scheme appears to have been highly appreciated by many experienced Officers, shipowners, and merchants. Meetings were called at the principal seaports, resolutions were passed, and it was taken up by a party in the Legislature, and a motion founded on it, and brought forward in the House of Commons, 11th March, 1777, by the Hon. Temple Luttrell, who prefaced it with the following remarks:—

"The unconstitutional effects, the oppression, and inefficacy of the present mode of levying men by an *impress*, are but too sensibly felt by the whole nation; a valuable sea Officer (Governor Johnstone) has highly condemned it. Is it not an abominable sight in a free country like ours to have a number of sailors with cutlasses and firearms, frequently in the dead of night, sometimes intoxicated with liquor, making their way into the dwellings of peaceable inhabitants, dragging a sober, unoffending subject from his home, and settled means of livelihood, to convey him on board an impress tender, from thence to a guard ship, imprisoned amidst the moral and physical contagion of a miscellaneous kidnapped crew, to be driven across the seas, no mortal can tell him where, nor for how long a time, and, what is still worse, seized by surprise, nor suffered to bid a kind farewell to his wife and family, nor have a thought of their future subsistence when deprived of his care, to adopt a new way of life, perhaps that which his limbs and faculties are the worst calculated and fashioned by his Creator? And, sir, is it not a matter of reproach to this wise, this liberal nation, never yet to have provided a remedy for such dreadful and extensive suffering?"

He then went on to relate how numerous persons had been impressed contrary to law, and obliged to be set at liberty after heavy expenses—of the crews being pressed out of ships at sea, leaving them and their cargoes exposed, with only the master and a few apprentices on board; that the receiving-ships are nests of contagion; that we employ 5,000 men on the Impress Service, and that they fail to provide men; that the French by their Maritime Register can fit out 40 sail of the line more expeditiously than we can; and shows that although the press warrants had been out for five months the Fleet was not yet manned.

Mr. Luttrell concluded his speech by showing that Lord Howe, numerous Officers, merchants, and shipowners were favourable to Lieut. Tomlinson's plan.

The motion was seconded by Sir Edward Ashley, who followed in the same strain.

A conversation ensued, in which the Lord of the Admiralty* present was obliged to admit that the Fleet was not yet manned.

Lord Mulgrave opposed the motion in an ingenious speech.

Mr. J. Townshend said (alluding to Lord Mulgrave's speech)—

"It was the first time he had ever heard a syllable against the principle of such a Bill, or the present mode of pressing for the sea service defended. There had not been a great man who directed the affairs of this country for the last century who did not acknowledge the necessity of framing some law to prevent the evils proposed to be remedied. There might have been a difference of opinion as to the provisions of the Bill, but never a single difference as to the propriety of providing a certain

* Sir Hugh Palliser.

number of seamen within a certain period, on the possible approach of war, or the time of being actually engaged in one."

The Attorney-General opposed the Bill on the ground of informality, and it was lost, the Ayes being 52, and the Noes 102, and thus ended the scheme; and it appears that the Fleet could not be manned, and was detained long in port.

In 1777 a scheme very similar to that of our present Naval Reserve was proposed, in which the author suggests that seamen should be voluntarily enrolled in time of peace for service in the Navy *in time of war*; and when not in actual service in King's ships might be permitted to serve on board merchantmen, &c., when the voyage may not exceed six months; to be obliged to present themselves at a proper office on their return, and, if not wanted, obtain further leave from thence. 20,000 to be enrolled; and to have an annual stipend of £5, with £1 on enrolment, and giving them other advantages. They were to be called out by proclamation, and during service to receive their retainers as well as their wages.

I now pass to 1795, when the Ministry appear to have been at a dead stand for seamen. Those obtained by the press gangs were found *quite inadequate* to the demand. Besides, the country seems to have been excited by speeches and publications to a violent opposition to *impressment* and all other encroachments on liberty, probably caused by the general spread of opinions, then called *revolutionary*, now *liberal*, introduced by the recent French Revolution.

It was in this year that Mr. Pitt brought in his famous Quota Bill, but in order to gain the best intelligence, and suit the measure as much as possible to the interests of those concerned, the following circular was addressed by Government to the Mayors, &c., of the principal seaports in the kingdom.

It is dated from a department of the State which sounds oddly in these days.

"Horse Guards,

"17th January, 1795.

"Sir,—His Majesty's Ministers being desirous of submitting to Parliament the most effectual and speedy means of procuring an additional supply of seamen for His Majesty's Naval Service, and being desirous for that purpose to receive the best information on that subject from the principal ports in the kingdom, I have thought right to apprise you of it, in order that you may communicate this intention to the merchants and trades of ———; and in hope that they will send up some persons enabled to state whatever may occur to them with a view to the general service, as well as the particular interest of that port.

"(Signed) HY. DUNDAS."

It would appear that so little time was given for the answers to this circular to arrive, that only one (from Yarmouth) was received before Mr. Pitt brought in his Bill early in February. His scheme was as follows:—To oblige seaports and parishes to furnish seamen and landsmen, in proportion to their extent, for His Majesty's service, a measure declared by the Minister to be necessary in consequence of the inefficiency of *impressment* to obtain the required numbers.

The result of this scheme, after being carried out, is considered to

have been the cause of the Mutiny at the Nore, which disgraced the Fleet shortly afterwards.

"Such an influx of vagabonds thus brought together, perhaps was never equalled before. They must be considered the ten thousand worst characters in the kingdom, who had escaped hanging, for most of them were taken out of jails, having compounded their offences, and received a premium or bounty for *volunteering*; and they left few *disorderly* and *idle* persons for the magistrate to apprehend according to Mr. Pitt's directions, for, as a matter of course, every parish sent its worst lot, and some kindly accommodated their neighbours not provided with characters sufficiently abandoned."—(Capt. J. H. B., R.N.)

I will introduce a few extracts from the public papers of this period in corroboration of the system then in vogue:—

"Manning the Navy, A.D. 1800.

"Yesterday Sir William Scott made a report to His Majesty of James Thomson, who was capitally convicted at the Admiralty session, held at the Old Bailey, in December last, of felony and piracy, when he was respited on condition of serving in the Navy."

"On Wednesday evening an affray occurred at Deptford, in consequence of an impress taking place for the Navy. A Lieutenant and a Midshipman of a ship-of-war lying off Deptford, having pressed several men, one of them, named William Jones, resisted, and attempted to effect his escape. In the scuffle he received several wounds from the Lieutenant, who struck him with his sword, of which wounds he languished until Friday, when he died at St. Thomas's Hospital. A Coroner's inquest brought in a verdict of wilful murder against the Lieutenant and Midshipman."

"The inhabitants of the County of Waterford are required to keep within their dwellings from one hour after sunset till sunrise, under penalty of being sent to serve in the Navy or Army."

Admiral Ekins, Captain E. P. Brenton, and other writers in their naval histories condemn this Quota Bill as the most ill-advised and fatal measure ever adopted for manning the Navy. Capt. Brenton says:—

"The seamen who voluntarily entered in 1793, and had fought some of the most glorious of our battles, received but *five pounds* bounty, and these brave fellows saw men, the very refuse and outcasts of society, flying from justice, and the vengeance of the laws, come on board with a bounty of *seventy pounds*, for such enormous sums were the merchants obliged to pay for their quota men before the ships were allowed to sail."

I should state that impressment was still going on at this time, and an embargo laid on outward-bound ships.

On the 13th February, 1803, Lord Nelson, in presenting some "Remarks on Manning the Navy" to Earl St. Vincent, states—

"The expense of raising seamen to be £20 per head, and that 42,000 deserted during the late war, the loss on which is £810,000, without taking the expense of raising more men, and certainly not so good as those who had been used to the King's naval service, therefore proposes—in addition to a register of certificates to seamen—that every seaman who had served *five years* in war, and could produce a certificate of good conduct, should receive *two guineas annually*; after eight years, *four guineas*, exclusive of pension for wounds," &c.

This, it will be noticed, is very similar to the good-conduct pay of the present day.

"But," Lord Nelson adds, "the great thing to guard against is desertion, for, notwithstanding all I have proposed, to induce men to serve faithfully, the high wages of the merchant, and seduction of the crimps, make them desert," &c.

But no notice was taken of this.

On the 24th May, 1805, the Earl of Darnley brought forward his motion on the state of the Navy. Upon this occasion Lord Melville entered into a long and able explanation in defence of Ministers in which he said, in allusion to our resources—

"Still, my Lords, I am aware that much remains to be done, *for unless we can procure men, our numerous ships cannot be of much avail.* A method might, however, I think, be devised whereby men might be procured, and in a manner equally beneficial to the interests of the mercantile and military services, and whereby the two services would become more united."

Lord Melville was one of the best friends the Navy ever had, and it was evidently his opinion that it was politic to adopt some other mode in lieu of impressment, and one palatable to the seamen as well as to the mercantile interests.

The following extract from Admiral Ekins's "Naval Battles" will show the composition of the crews of our line-of-battle ships in those days:—

"The ships, on the breaking out of the war in 1803, were worse manned than ever. The 'Donegal' and 'Belleisle' went out to the Mediterranean with not more than twenty men each that could take the wheel, and from that time to the conclusion of the war in 1815 there were few exceptions to the inefficient and miserable state of the ships' crews.

"The 'Princess Royal,' in the Channel Fleet, was obliged to take 60 convicts, and still remained 70 short of complement, yet in three months time the Captain considered his crew very fair, compared with the general state of the Fleet at that time.

"In 1804 50 convicts were sent in one draft to the 'Bellona.' The 'Canada' received 60 Spaniards from the prison ships in one day, and a 74 left Plymouth 80 short of complement, the Port Admiral declaring he had not a single man to give her.

"If a Captain by great exertions in pressing got together a good crew, his ship was paid off, and his crew distributed among *five*, and these had to wait probably four or five months for their crews to be made up of all sorts.

"The 'Conqueror' in 1804 had not more than twenty effective old seamen in her, most of her Petty Officers were only topmen, and 200 were under the standard of size of a boy 15 years of age. This ship, after the battle of Trafalgar, (one fourth of her crew being sent to the 'Redoubtable') had just eight men on board who could knot a shroud, and on her return to Plymouth received 36 Spanish prisoners to make up her complement."

All these ships were Trafalgar ships, and yet it has been asserted by some writers on naval affairs since, that our ships were never *better* manned than in that action.

At the commencement of the great naval war there were 45 press-gang stations. The number varied during the war, but there were 34 at its close, having an average of 20 men to each; to this must be added the guard-ships and tenders, so it is probable that the expenses were about the same as in Lieutenant Tomlinson's time, 50 years before.

The desertions during the era of impressment may be compared to a man drawing water with a sieve, for not only was no progress made in

manning the Fleet by this means, but the value of the labour was lost besides.

The following will give a good idea of the losses by desertion during the war:—

From the beginning of May, 1803 (when hostilities broke out) to the end of June, 1805—

Able seamen deserted	..	..	..	5,662
Ordinary do.	..	..	..	3,903
Landsmen do.	..	..	..	2,785
Total	..	..	..	12,300

In addition to these must be added 3,017 invalided by survey of Captains and Surgeons, being found unfit for service after all the expense of pressing had been incurred, making a grand total of 15,317, of whom many probably had received the bounty, had deserted, and re-entered again under what used to be called "Pursers' names."

That our Navy should have had such a career of conquest until our *prestige* was rudely shaken by our cousins across the Atlantic, can only be accounted for in one way, I think, viz., that the names of Jervis, Nelson, Collingwood, and other heroes were a host in themselves, and that the fleets of our enemies must have been worse manned and disciplined than our own.

During the great French war it has been said upon good authority that we had not more than 40,000 men, who would now be considered able-bodied seamen. In 1810–11–12 the number of blue jackets voted was 113,000, which included Officers, petty officers, artificers, ordinary seamen, civilians, landsmen, and boys.

After 1805 many more schemes were brought out. Lord Collingwood advocated a great influx of boys to the Navy, in order that they might be trained up for our future seamen; others proposed a general registry of seamen and the ballot. Captain Marryat, and Mr. Urquhart, a large shipowner, also brought out plans, the latter recommending that seamen for the Navy should be first educated in the merchant service before going to the Navy. He also recommended that half-pay Naval Officers of the subordinate ranks should be sent into the merchant service, to learn seamanship.

Upon six or seven occasions since the termination of the war in 1815, we have found great difficulty in manning our Fleets. To provide the Fleet that was sent to Algiers in 1816 with seamen, the guard ships and harbour ships at the home ports had to be stripped of their crews before the Fleet could sail, notwithstanding that seamen were starving for want of employment, and not two months' pay as bounty could induce men to enter the ships in sufficient numbers.

In 1826, when Mr. Canning's expedition to Lisbon took place, and although the ships were put in commission at a season when many thousands of seamen of the coasting trade were out of work, they could not be prevailed upon to enter readily or in sufficient numbers. Impressment was threatened, and the seamen fled inland and hid away,

and as a final resource the preventive men or coast blockade men were embarked.

In 1832, when we blockaded the "Texel," and a few more ships were put in commission, great difficulty was experienced in raising 1,000 seamen.

Recent experience has proved that the same difficulty continues.

During the great war our seaports and their environs were guarded by parties of soldiers and marines, who strictly searched every vehicle that passed, in order to prevent the pressed men from deserting; nevertheless they managed to get away, after receiving the bounty. Detection was difficult, for the ships they had deserted from had probably sailed before they were again caught, and it is stated that some men had received the bounty over and over again.

I think I have said enough to show the inefficiency of impressment for providing seamen for the Fleet in times of emergency. It is still considered to be the law of the land, and there is no other plan in existence that I am aware of to substitute for it.

In 1834 the first step was taken towards a general *personal* registration of seamen; but it was not until 1845 that the Act 7 and 8 Vict., chap. 112, was passed by the late Lord Herbert of Lea (better known then as the Honorable Sidney Herbert, Secretary of the Admiralty), for the establishment of a general *personal* register of seamen, after which, when carried out, every individual seaman in the kingdom had a distinguishing number attached to his name.

In 1849 the Navigation Laws were repealed, and all our trade was opened to foreigners, *excepting* our coasting and colonial trade. In the same year the apprenticeship law was repealed, chiefly on account of its compulsory clauses.

In 1825, the total number of British ships was 24,280, with a tonnage of 2,553,682, and manned by 166,123 men.* But the repeal of the above laws and free trade had so increased our commerce and shipping, that in order to furnish sufficient numbers of seamen to man our ships, it was found necessary in 1853 to repeal the Registration Act, and remove all restrictions from shipowners in manning their ships, besides which it was found a very difficult matter to keep Jack and his ticket together. The result of this freedom from all restriction is shown by the present state of our mercantile marine, which now numbers 24,187† sailing ships, of 4,765,304 tons; 2,972 steam vessels, of 948,367 tons, manned by 228,596 British seamen (of these 70,000 may be considered A.B.'s), and 20,362 foreigners (of this number four-fifths are said to be A.B.'s).

In 1852-3 the continuous service system was introduced into the Navy, and the establishment of training-ships for boys to keep up the supply of a certain number of seamen for Her Majesty's Fleet in *peace time*, and thus for the first time in England was established a *standing* Navy.

In this year the Act Victoria 16, 17, chap. 73, for forming the

* Nautical Magazine, March, 1871.

† Nautical Magazine, March, 1871.

Royal Navy Coast Volunteer Force came into operation, and after enlisting above 8,000 of every description of nondescript in its ranks, has dwindled down to 2,200 servicable, semi-trained ordinary seamen and fishermen, &c.

In 1853 we were menaced with a war with Russia, but no preliminary steps were taken for augmenting the Fleet; the consequence was that early in 1854 we had a naval war actually upon us unprepared, and the energies and resources of the country were severely taxed to equip a fleet in the spring of that year sufficiently powerful, in conjunction with that of our ally, to cope with the large Russian fleet in the Baltic. I leave it to all present to reflect upon what our position would have been had our ally been an enemy, instead of a *friend*.

I remember at the time that an observation of this kind was smothered with the remark that we should always have timely notice of an aggressive war from across the Channel. The best commentary upon that now is the happy ignorance of our Foreign Office, in July, 1870, of the combustible state of the Continent, which at last suddenly broke out into one of the most tremendous conflicts the world has ever known.

Taking into consideration that in the war with Russia she was compelled to act entirely on the defensive, and that our casualties afloat were comparatively few, too much emphasis cannot be laid on the fact that our available resources in men were exhausted in two years, and had it been necessary to continue the war for another year or two, we must have had recourse either to enormous bounties, or to impressment, in order to keep our fleets manned. From this sharp experience it might have been reasonably supposed that we should have learnt wisdom, and have laid the foundation for reserves of seamen for future emergencies. Well, but what happened? In May, 1856, peace was declared, and immediately a cry was raised for retrenchment, and the Navy Estimates of 1853 held up as a model. So great was the pressure upon the Government, that they surrendered at discretion, and every possible ship and gunboat was paid off all standing, and the crews scattered to the winds. Even continuous service men to the amount of some thousands and first-class boys received their free discharge. The pensioner shipkeepers were also discharged, and for a short time millions worth of property were left at the mercy of harbour sneaks and other depredators. To explain this I will mention that the gunboats and ships being hurriedly paid off, most of their stores were left on board. The line-of-battle ships and frigates were left with their three warrant Officers, and the engineer and a small guard. The gunboats, the most easily boarded, were moored three abreast, each of these tiers having one young engineer on board in the daytime, and one stoker only in charge, who of course was in his hammock during the night-time. Guardboats were moving about, but in those days there was no harbour police, and much had to be left to the care of Providence. Depredations were often committed with impunity, and I have no doubt that the Crown gained very little in the end by these wholesale discharges and reductions.

The Coast Guard certainly benefited by receiving a number of good

scamen from the fleet, and by being transferred from the control of the Customs to that of the Admiralty, a most judicious step, which has prevented that valuable force from deteriorating to the condition it was in when called out in 1854.

The great error in our hasty and unreflecting policy became apparent when the sudden war between France and Austria broke out in 1858 (two years later) and the Ministry of the day determined to be prepared for eventualities. The Fleet was ordered to be considerably strengthened, and it was soon discovered that that was no easy matter, there being no reserve of seamen to draw upon beyond the Coast Guard and pensioners, and as the seamen of the merchant service declined to enlist. It was found expedient to offer a large bounty to induce volunteers to come forward. £10 was offered to able bodied seamen, and £6 to ordinary seamen of the merchant service, and yet, notwithstanding great labour and persuasion, only 3,000 men could be obtained in three months, and the quality of the article was such that Officers commanding our ships were only too glad when these men arrived on board by one ladder to see them depart as soon as possible by the other. To give a further proof of the class of men gathered by this means, I may mention that they were soon found making a fine harvest by enrolment, for they joined at one port and received the bounty, and took the first opportunity to desert, then found their way to another port, re-enlisted under new names, received the bounty afresh, and eventually deserted altogether with their booty, following the example of the bounty men of former times.

In addition to giving the bounty to the new-comers, it became necessary to give it to all the seamen of the Fleet then serving in order to keep *them* in good humour, so that a very considerable expense was incurred, which might have been avoided had we possessed an available reserve of seamen for making a demonstration to prove our readiness for war.

I need not dwell upon the worry and annoyance these men were to the service, and to the necessity of increased severity of discipline to keep them in order. Probably there are Officers present who can bear testimony to the truth of my statement.

The difficulties experienced in obtaining men for the Fleet upon this occasion led to the appointment in 1859 of a Royal Commission "On Manning the Navy." It was comprised of Lords of the Admiralty, the most experienced Flag Officers, shipowners, an ex-President of the Board of Trade, with the Earl of Hardwicke as Chairman. After sitting some months, and receiving the evidence and opinions of the most experienced and intelligent Officers in the Service, of the Board of Trade, and the Registrar-General of Seamen, of the shipping masters stationed at the outports, and many others, they made their Report, which contained the following recommendations, viz. :—

That the Reliefs in the Home Ports should consist of						4,000 men
Coast Guard						12,000 "
Marines embodied						6,000 "
Ditto Short-service Pensioners.. .. .						5,000 "
Seamen Short-service Pensioners						3,000 "
Royal Naval Volunteers						20,000 "
Royal Naval Coast Volunteers.. .. .						10,000 "
Total						60,000 "

the total additional expenses for which would amount to £598,821 annually, including 12 school ships to educate 1,200 boys at the expense of the State, £40,000.

Had these recommendations been fully carried out, in all probability we should have put an end to panics, and we should have possessed a reserve of trained men-of-war's men sufficient to enable us to double our Fleets in the Mediterranean and the Channel, without bringing any strain upon our resources and without absorbing the whole of the Coast Guard or inconveniencing the commercial marine.

The recommendation to form a body of trained seamen in the merchant service having been partially carried out, I will now speak of the first points, viz., the institution of the Royal Naval Reserve on the 1st January, 1860. Very few Officers present can have a notion of the difficulties first encountered in overcoming the long-existing and deeply-rooted prejudices of our seafaring population to taking service under the Crown. The old traditions of ill usage and the iniquities of the press-gang, had been handed down from parents to children for generations. In the Rules of Seamen's Benefit Clubs in the North were clauses which made taking service in the Navy or under the Crown a reason for expulsion and forfeiture of all claims on the funds.

It was not until the regulations had been relaxed and the idea of compelling the men to *live* on board ship during their annual training had been given up, that any really good seamen could be induced to enter, and then very slowly. After the first year's experience, and it was found that those men who had enrolled had been treated well, and no attempt made to entrap them into service afloat, the best seamen of the merchant service began to enter freely. The Officers of the Board of Trade and of the Coast Guard worked hard and patriotically for years, and eventually, with the valuable assistance and exertions of Mr. Mackenzie, the Collector of Customs at Hartlepool (whose popularity amongst the seamen in the North helped greatly) the clubs have been broken up, and that, together with the untiring watchfulness and labour of the present Registrar-General of Seamen, has given the country a body of nearly 15,000 of the finest seamen in the world, forming a *small* second Reserve in the event of hostilities endangering our coasts and commerce. The very trifling per-centage (not 2 per cent.) of punishment of every sort proving, too, that we have secured the best conducted men for the force.

The present state of this force is—

Officers, divided as follows:—

Lieutenants	121
Sub-Lieutenants	78
Honorary Lieutenants	82
Hon. Sub-Lieutenants	2
Engineers	2

Seamen, first-class	14,438
„ second-class	11

Drill Stations.

Reserve ships (Coast Guard)	8
Drill ships	9
Batteries (Coast Guard)	28

It has frequently been brought forward as an excuse for attacking the Naval Reserve, that it has diverted the seamen of the mercantile service from entering the Navy. The best reply to that is, the indifference shown to the attractions and enticements of the bounty in 1858, when none but the refuse of the mercantile service came forward.

The chief advantage the country has derived as yet from the institution of the Royal Naval Reserve is the better feeling which has been engendered amongst the seafaring population towards the Royal Navy. From the intercourse it has brought about between the seamen of the mercantile marine and the crews of the drill ships and the seamen of the Coast Guard, they have learnt that our men-of-war are no longer prison ships manned with refuse crews, but that the seamen are well paid, well fed, and well cared for in every way, and that the lash has become almost an obsolete method of maintaining discipline. There is now every reason to hope that if wise measures are adopted by the Government during the present lull, we shall find ourselves stronger in our resources of trained seamen than we ever were.

I have often heard it mentioned as a matter of surprise, that the numbers in the Royal Naval Reserve have seldom exceeded 16,000, and that with so large a number of seamen as are now said to be in the mercantile marine, we have never been able to reach the number recommended (20,000). After my own experience and knowledge, coupled with the information I have derived from various sources, I am of opinion that, owing to the stringency of the regulations as to *height, physique, age, character, and qualifications, as seamen*, there can be very few remaining in the merchant service available for the 1st class Naval Reserve. The minimum height is 5 ft. 5 in., which is above the average height of men-of-war's men as carefully ascertained. The introduction of steam into our mail packets and trading ships has also tended to lower the qualifications of the seamen, and the crews are now often made up with very few real seamen amongst them; but I am convinced that there are thousands quite qualified for the *2nd class Reserve*, and if the regulations for the drill had been without a certain objectionable clause, I think we should now have had a very respectable body of young seamen enrolled.

It will now be necessary for me to consider the present state of the *personnel* of our Fleet and the Reserves, but before doing so I will remark that the strength of our Fleet must always be determined by those of the Continental Powers. Our insular position allows us to dispense with a large standing army, but that makes it more imperative upon us to maintain a naval force that shall bear the same proportion to the Navies of the Continent as *their* Armies do to ours, *i.e.*, our Navy should be equal to twice that of France or Russia, or equal to the two combined. If I recollect rightly, one of the greatest and best of our political reformers, the late Mr. Cobden, asserted this as his opinion in the House of Commons. If we find a small and efficient Fleet sufficient for our need in peace time, we ought to have large Reserves of trained seamen readily available for doubling or trebling the Fleet, as well as to provide for the inshore defences on the first symptoms of war.

The Navy Estimates 1871-72 provide for the following *personnel* of the Navy:—

30,236 seamen (of this number only 18,000 are *bonâ fide blue jackets* proper—the remainder are stokers, artificers, servants, bandsmen, &c., or the non-combatant class) including those in the Indian Troop ships.
 4,005 boys, including those in the Indian Troop ships.
 8,000 marines afloat.

42,241

The seamen are thus divided:—

General Service:—

Petty Officers and leading seamen	..	..	..	9,517
A.B.'s, ordinary and 2nd class ordinary	..	..	..	11,291
1st Reserve ships (Coast Guard)	..	..	..	1,890
Gunnery and training ships	..	..	..	2,393
Stationary receiving ships	..	..	..	2,992
Surveying ships..	..	..	..	218
Troop ships (Imperial)..	..	..	..	434
Store ships	..	..	..	203
Drill ships	..	..	..	248
Indian troop ships	..	..	..	1,050

Total Petty Officers, leading seamen, A.B.'s, ordinary, and 2nd class ordinary 30,236

I may be open to a little correction in these numbers, but I have taken them from the Naval Estimates as they first were issued.

I believe since then two new training-ships and 500 boys have been added.

In Reserve.

3,985 seamen of Coast Guard.
 3,500 boys in training.
 6,000 marines in barracks.

13,485

Reserves outside of Navy.

14,438	Royal Naval Reserve.
11	2nd class Reserve.
2,200	Royal Naval Coast Volunteers.
<hr/>	
16,649	
<hr/>	
Total..	72,375

To which may be added about 6,000 able-bodied seamen and marine pensioners, making a grand total of 78,375.

Is this a sufficient force to defend a country like England, with her large unprotected commercial ports, her commerce, and assailable sea coast?

I know it will be answered by some, Yes; because we have more men than we have ships to put them in. Such certainly is the case at present, but how long is it to remain so? With a new great Naval Power just raising its head in the North Sea, must we not more than ever be on the watch to prevent any combination of the maritime Powers taking us by surprise? Our late experience warns us against getting into a fool's paradise, listening to the cry of "Peace, peace," while the earth is heaving with the combustible elements of war. I most unhesitatingly state that our present entire force, active and reserve, is not sufficient to defend our coasts and harbours, maintain our prestige, and protect our commerce on the seas at the same time.

Continental Powers have this advantage over us, in that they have a stringent law which compels the services of their sea-faring population, and obliges the adults to pass through the national Navy, in order that they may get the necessary training to fit them for service in war time.

While our system remains purely voluntary, a pressing necessity exists for our raising in peace time large levies of trained men, to be held in reserve for our requirements in a great naval war.

With our enormous means, both public and private, for building war ships of the present type, as well as gunboats, perhaps we are equal to all the maritime nations of the world put together, but from not being able to command the services of our seamen readily, our advantage in this respect is neutralised.

The United Kingdom, in the event of hostilities threatening, should be prepared to arm and defend all assailable points on our coasts with monitors, gunboats, and torpedo boats, as well as have fleets and flying squadrons on the high seas for attacking the enemy and protecting our commerce. We have seen the sad results of having no protection on the high seas in the late American War in the destruction of her commerce by a few small active cruisers. It seems to be culpable rashness to wait for the emergency and then have to man our ships and defences with untrained men that would probably have to be raised by enormous bounties or by impressment; the evils of which system we have had ample illustration of already.

I am sure that I am not singular in having no faith in cheap and economical schemes for manning the Navy. The experience of every one who has to deal with seamen is nearly identical, viz., that a *future* benefit has little weight with them. The great inducement to serve must be some substantial, *ever-present advantage*.

We cannot escape expense if we are in earnest in obtaining and keeping up a body of trained seamen (who are really skilled workmen) sufficient for our wants, and this expense only amounts to an insurance against loss.

I cannot refrain from quoting here a short passage from an article in this week's *Saturday Review** on Colonel Jervois's Paper "On our National Defences:"—"Doubtless Ministers may be told that such fortifications should not be raised (that is, for the protection of the Metropolis), for if raised, they may never after all be wanted. This very reasoning has been often used as to the protection of our dock-yards, now happily nearly effected. Its proper refutation lies in the simple fact, plain enough to any disinterested reasoner, that the works have been built expressly *in order that they never may be wanted*." I consider it quite *apropos* to keeping up reserves of trained seamen during peace time.

Any scheme that may be attempted upon a purely economical principle, or one that interferes too much with the ordinary occupations of seafaring people, is pretty certain of failure.

To prove the necessity of having an available Reserve to draw upon, I will remind my audience of the First Lord's speech in the House of Commons when introducing the Navy Estimates before Easter. The Fleet had been in want of 500 men for six months, and they had only been able to raise 50 in that time. At the same time it conclusively proves that the number of boys entered annually leaves no margin to provide for exceptional casualties, which we are always liable to.

The following are the propositions for Reserves outside of the Navy, I offer for your consideration, feeling that had such, or similar, been established as an institution of the country at the end of the Crimean War, we should now have had a reserve of fleetmen sufficient to have doubled our Fleets in the Channel and Mediterranean as well as to increase our flying squadrons without disturbing commerce inconveniently.

I will observe here, *en passant*, that I consider a reserve of 12,000 coast guard men far preferable to any scheme for holding a body of men-of-war's men out of the Navy in reserve, but the former not being approved of on account of the expense, I adopt the latter alternative.

I only ask for sufficient time for development, and then I believe we should possess a substantial Reserve of men-of-war's men sufficiently elastic to allow the Government to increase or decrease the strength of the Active Fleet if necessary during peace time.

Note.—I have said nothing about the Marine Artillery or Marines in my paper. I am one of those who consider that they must continue to be the left arm of the Navy. "Per mare, per terram" is their motto,

* May 19th, 1871.

and their records declare how nobly they have done their work afloat or ashore. To withdraw them from our ships in peace time would be destructive of one of their great qualifications, viz., that of possessing their sea-legs and a knowledge of a man-of-war and her duties; besides which, they are skilled gunners and light infantry soldiers. To depend entirely upon seamen for our small-arm corps would be a mistake. They are invaluable upon certain occasions for storming or making a rush, but in battalion in line with troops they would, I fear, be too unsteady under fire.

I propose to divide the Reserves of seamen outside the Navy into three divisions.

The *First Division*, to consist of men-of-war's men, and to be composed of *ten-years' men* and the surplus seamen of the Fleet, whether continuous service or not, but who are *bonâ fide* able-bodied seamen and who can produce three years' service in the Navy.

The *Second Division*, to consist of the present Royal Naval Reserve, composed of *prime able-bodied* seamen of the merchant service.

The *Third Division*, to consist of the *ordinary seamen* of the merchant service, *deep-sea fishermen*, and first-class boys, from 16 years' of age, who have been brought up in the training-ships at our commercial ports.

The three divisions should amount to, at the very least, 50,000 *men* and boys. In addition to this Reserve, there should also be a Reserve of, at the least, 5,000 *stokers* of all grades.

I will only glance at the advantages and obligations of each of the divisions.

N.B.—The present short-service pension of 6*d.* per diem amounts to £9 2*s.* 6*d.*

A Volunteer in the *first division*, if a short-service man, to receive a retainer or pension of £10 per annum, and also his good service or badge pay, which having earned in the Navy, he should be allowed to retain.

A Volunteer who enters the first division with less than ten years' previous service in the Navy, to receive £6 retainer, as well as his badge pay, gained in the Navy. In either instance all payments of retainer to be made in the United Kingdom. All Volunteers in this division to retain the grade they left the Navy with.

At the age of 50, a Volunteer who has completed 20 years' service in the Navy and the Reserve combined, to be entitled to the Naval Reserve Pension of £12 per annum, with such proportionate addition as his previous and subsequent service in the Fleet may entitle him to.

The men of this division to be at liberty to engage in the merchant service while belonging to the Reserve, under certain obligations, and with special leave as to voyages, &c.

They will be entitled to be received into a naval hospital if sick, and to receive medical advice as if serving afloat.

They will be eligible for the Coast Guard.

While on drill they will receive the same pay as the men of the second division or Naval Reserve. They will be allowed the option of taking a portion of their pension, when it is due, and of leaving the remaining portion to be enjoyed by the wife or family after death.

The conditions of enrolment to be as follows:—

Candidates must enrol for ten years, and be prepared to return to active service in the Fleet at home or abroad, whenever the Government at home require their services, should war be declared or imminent, or at any time if their services are pressingly required, and their leave expired.

They are never to be absent from the United Kingdom without leave, and the authorities must be kept aware of their whereabouts.

They must present themselves for a month's annual drill at convenient seasons, and at such depôts as the Government may elect.

They must always have completed their annual drill before applying for fresh leave of absence.

They must continue to follow a seafaring life, or remain in employment equivalent to it.

They must always appear at drill in the dress of the grade they left the Navy with.

The reserve of stokers should be under similar advantages and conditions, but in lieu of annual drill they should be liable to be called out for temporary service in the naval steam factories, or for steam reserve duties, and they should have the opportunity given to them to qualify for higher grades.

In order to provide for the waste that would go on in this division in spite of any overflow from the Royal Navy into it, *I consider it necessary that there should be a corresponding entry of boys in the naval training ships, in order to maintain the necessary supply of seamen to the Fleet, and to this division of the Reserve.* No one can doubt for a moment that the Navy is the best school for training men-of-war's men in, but the expense of keeping up a war Navy in peace time would be so enormous, that no Government could propose such a course to Parliament. It is, therefore, to provide a reserve of men-of-war's men and to avoid this expense, that I have made the foregoing proposition, and I will here show by calculation the saving that would result by the establishment of such a reserve.

By way of example, I will take 5,000 petty Officers and seamen as the number intended to be kept in the Reserve proposed.

The expense of wages and provisions, &c., for this number, if serving in the Fleet, would be—

1,000 second-class petty Officers*	..	..	£
1,000 leading seamen	..	..	275,270
3,000 able seaman	..	..	..
If in the Reserve, for retainers, drill,			
pay, &c., for the same number	..	..	76,000
Showing a saving of	..	..	199,270 per annum.
In like manner, for 10,000 petty Officers	..	..	..
and seamen, the saving would be	..	..	398,540 per annum.

I have no doubt of objectors being found to this scheme on the

* I consider that the Coast Guard contains the chief and first-class petty Officers for the Fleet in war time, and, therefore, have placed second-class petty Officers as the highest grade in this Reserve.

score of expense; but as every man in the proposed Reserve is supposed to be a *skilled* workman, I feel that he is worth a good retaining fee.

The advantages and conditions of the second division, or present Royal Naval Reserve, I would alter as little as possible. The only changes I consider desirable are as follows:—

That means should be adopted which would admit of the men being taught the exercise of the new guns, and of having target practice, but without obliging them to travel a long distance for it. As the Government will constantly be pressed to consider the defence of our commercial ports and the most assailable points of our coasts, and as monitors and gunboats constitute the prevailing idea of affording this defence in the best way, by stationing a number of these vessels under the charge of the different first reserve ships at the different ports, they might be made readily available for this service, and at the same time exercise the reserve stokers.

In the second place, I would make the wearing of a suitable uniform at drill imperative. There has always been a great opposition to this in a certain quarter without any sufficient, or rather I might say without reason; and, but for this opposition, I believe the men would now appear uniformly dressed, generally at all the ships and stations; and lastly, the recruiting of this division should be chiefly from the third division, in order to induce the younger seamen to qualify for entry.

The third division, at present called the 2nd class Naval Reserve.

This part of the present Naval Reserve was instituted after the report of the Departmental Committee of Admiralty and Board of Trade, in 1869. It has proved a failure, from causes that were foreseen and pointed out by persons well acquainted with the habits and vocation of our seafaring population.

A distinction was drawn between the systems of training of the men of the Naval Reserve and of this division. It was ordered that they should take their annual drill consecutively for 28 days on board the Reserve ships, in the same way as the Royal Naval Coast Volunteers, entirely forgetting how very differently situated the men of the two forces are, those of the one, the Royal Naval Coast Volunteers, being always at home and seldom out of sight of land, the others employed in foreign and coasting voyages all the year round, just as the men of the Naval Reserve are, and consequently as little on shore with their friends. They make the same voyages to Australia, India, China, and the Americas, and seldom remain in England more than a month at a time. To expect them to give up this month and serve and suffer the restraint on board a man-of-war for this period at a distance from their friends, and usual shore amusements, was to tempt failure, and there need be no surprise that the young seamen have declined to enter.

The suggestions I have to offer for reforming this division of the Reserve are that—

The Third Division should consist of—

1st. Young ordinary seamen of the merchant service (*bonâ fide* sailors) who have been, and continue to be, employed in the foreign, colonial, and coasting trades.

2ndly. Of young deep-sea fishermen, as soon as they are out of their apprenticeship.

3rdly. Of 1st class boys, carefully selected from the training-ships at the commercial ports before their apprenticeship. They should be entered to serve in the Reserve or the Royal Navy for ten years, in the same way as boys for the Navy do now. And in order to obtain a supply of these boys the training-ships should be subsidized by the Government, or £5 should be paid for every eligible boy upon his entry to the Reserve from the training-ships. With respect to the apprenticeship of these lads, I leave that to the Board of Trade to arrange; but the proposal, which I borrow from the suggestions of the late Captain Brown, in the Report of the Manning Commission, that they should be apprenticed to the Registrar-General of Seamen, is an *admirable* one. He would be their friend and protector, and would protect them from being wronged in any collision between them and the shipowner or master, and at the same time keep *them* to their engagements.

These boys should be discharged to the Reserve ships for their annual training, upon returning from voyages, and receive while on board 1st class boys' pay and a dress for drilling in.

By thus permeating our seafaring population, we should obtain a better hold of our seamen and seafaring community, and the two services would become connected in a satisfactory manner.

The total expense of 50,000 men and boys in a Reserve of three divisions would be £477,550, divided as follows:—

6,000 men-of-war's men.	£
4,000 retainers at £10 each	40,000
2,000 ditto at £6 each	12,000
Annual cost of training	25,200
Travelling, medical attendance, average	
2s. 6d. each*	850
	<hr/>
	£78,050
30,000 able-bodied seamen, Royal Naval Reserve	
(2nd Division).	
30,000 retainers, at £6 each	180,000
Annual cost of training	126,000
Travelling, medical attendance, average	
2s. 6d. each*	3,750
	<hr/>
	£309,750

* As carefully estimated from known data.

10,000 ordinary seamen, 4,000 1st class boys (3rd Division).		
10,000 retainers, at £4 each		40,000
Annual cost of training, £3 10s. each		35,000
Travelling, medical attendance, &c., 2s. 6d. each*		1,250
Annual cost of wages and training of 4,000 boys		11,000
Bounty paid to training-ships for 500 boys annually received into Reserve ships		2,500
		<hr/>
Total ..		£477,550

With respect to the training of these men, I would make it the rule that the 1st Division (being all men-of-war's men) should take their annual training for 28 days *consecutively* on board men-of-war, at any period of the year convenient to themselves. They would be the first called upon to serve, and therefore should be kept well advanced in their drill, and the boys of the 3rd Division should always take their drill in the Reserve ships until they arrived at men's ratings. The *men* of the 2nd and 3rd Divisions *must be allowed* to take their drill at convenient seasons to themselves, otherwise if taken at *unsuitable* times, it involves loss of employment, infractions of the regulations, penalties, &c. To oblige *them* in peace time to live on board the Reserve ships for a month consecutively, with the idea that they will learn the rules and discipline of a man-of-war, must act as a deterrent; the restraint will be irksome, and it will separate them from their families and usual leisure employments and amusements during that time, besides which they will be liable to lose their opportunities of sailing in favourite ships and with old Captains.

If these men are taught the essential duties at the gun, such as sponging and loading, pointing, using blank cartridge, firing at a target on shore and afloat, so as to gain a knowledge of the use of the sights and of the various kinds of projectiles, to use their rifles and swords properly and intelligently, $\frac{1}{10}$ ths of the work is done, and the remaining $\frac{9}{10}$ th, viz., the familiarising them with the new heavy guns and the use of winches and other mechanical appliances for working them, would soon be picked up when called out for service. Besides which, if we do adopt a system of harbour and coast defence with monitors and gunboats, &c., these vessels will give them the opportunity of having target practice at sea, for I imagine the vessels and machinery will not be allowed to rust at their moorings till wanted for war.

Officers of the Reserve.

I must now ask the question—In the event of a great naval war shall we have a sufficient number of young naval Officers for all our ships and gunboats? Looking at the present Active Navy List, and remembering the paucity of quarter deck Officers when the Fleet sailed for the Baltic in 1854, and during the remainder of the Russian war, I

* As carefully estimated from known data.

answer No. At the same time, I do not forget that the subordinate Officers of the Coast Guard are intended to command our gunboats on the coast. As second Officers, and for gunnery purposes they will probably prove very useful; but they know very little of pilotage and navigation, and I consider *those* most essential qualifications, and therefore that the necessity exists for our providing for the emergency by training a number of officers of the mercantile marine for the purpose of supplementing the Active Navy List.

The present list of Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve comprises the pick of the merchant service, but from the fact of their having been taken too much from the higher grades, their position and duties in their own service interfere greatly with their complying with the regulations for drill, and the larger number are continually in arrears.

When we are constantly called upon to notice the skill, the courage, and the qualifications of the men who now command the noble ships of our commercial Navy; when we read of deeds of seamanship, of daring and coolness, and bravery under the most trying and difficult circumstances—witness the “Sarah Sands” on fire when conveying troops to India in 1857, and the records of the Board of Trade in the Wreck Register—and reflect that we owe many of the glories of our Navy to some great men in olden time, Sir Francis Drake, Sir John Hawkins, Sir Martin Frobisher, and others, all of whom commenced their careers as merchant skippers, we cannot help feeling that there still exists in the hearts of the present men the same enterprising spirit, the same devotion to their country, as belonged to those worthies. In education, in professional skill as seamen and navigators, there are Officers in our mercantile marine unsurpassed by those of any other Navy in the world. I therefore maintain that it is sheer folly not to acknowledge this, and to take care to place the aspiring young Officer of the rising generation in a position where some day he may possibly have the opportunity of taking his share in the defence of his country and acquiring her gratitude.

My proposition is, *not to disturb* the present Officers on the Active List of the Reserve, until they *have ceased to follow the sea*, when they should be placed on a retired list; but for the future that no direct commission should be given, but in place thereof, a selection of efficient candidates for the rank of Officers of the Reserve, should be made from the junior Officers of the merchant service and from the cadets trained on board the school ships “Conway” and “Worcester,” stationed at London and Liverpool. These young gentlemen, after a suitable examination in education, character, and physical fitness, should be admitted with the rank of Midshipman to the Royal Naval Reserve, and hold it during their apprenticeship, taking a month’s training annually on board one of the drill ships; and while at drill, they should receive the same pay and allowances as A.B.’s., *i.e.*, 3s. per diem, and wear a uniform corresponding (but sufficiently distinctive) to that of Midshipmen of the Royal Navy.*

* In the interim between their apprenticeship and passing for Second Officer, it might be advisable to make a small addition to their pay and allowances while on drill, as well as a trifling distinction in their uniform.

Upon passing for the rank of 2nd Officer and still retaining good certificates of character, they should be called upon to pass an examination in gunnery on board the drill ship, and then be promoted to the rank of Sub-Lieutenant, with the understanding that they continued to follow a sea life *on foreign voyages*.

At the end of three years, or as soon as passed for chief Officer and found to retain their good characters and a competent knowledge of gunnery, they should be considered eligible for promotion to the rank of Lieutenants as vacancies occurred. After this, drill should not be enforced for Lieutenants if holding the rank of master or chief Officer and *in employment*.

By this means a body of intelligent young Officers would be obtained, who would be more accessible if their services were ever required on board of our ships of war, than those Officers who, from holding the high position of commanders of the ships of our large steam and sailing companies, would in all probability be wanted in their own profession.

I think it would be good policy to grant to the Lieutenants Royal Naval Reserve, the honorary rank of Commander, while commanding mail ships, transports, &c., *flying the blue ensign*, and who possess some practical knowledge of gunnery and small-arm drill, or, who have distinguished themselves by promoting the interests of the Reserve during the time they have held commissions in it.

The present regulations for Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve, would merely require readjustment to meet these propositions.

There will probably be found another great want, viz., that of *Medical Officers*. Schemes for obtaining the services of members of this profession in the event of a great war, have already been placed before the authorities, but appear hitherto to have excited no attention.

The want of Medical Officers for the Fleet during the Russian war—a war too, in which there were but few casualties afloat from sword or bullet—was greatly felt. The same necessity will probably occur again. How is it to be met? Would it not be worth our while to invite gentlemen of the medical profession to become candidates for the position of Surgeon and Assistant-Surgeon of the Naval Reserve?

I believe there are many gentlemen in the medical profession who would be willing to accept commissions on the following terms:—

1. The commissions to remain in force for a period of five years; at the end of that time the renewal to be optional.
2. No services to be required from Surgeons and Assistant-Surgeons holding these commissions, except in a case of emergency, such as the prospect of invasion, when the Royal Naval Reserve will be called out by Royal Proclamation. Then Surgeons and Assistant-Surgeons holding commissions on the *Active List* to be required to serve *afloat* or *ashore* as required by the Admiralty, for which they will receive the regular Naval pay; and in case of wounds or injury will be entitled to the same pensions as Surgeons of corresponding rank in the Royal Navy.
3. Gentlemen holding these commissions to be entitled to wear a similar uniform and to have the same privileges to which Surgeons and Assistant-Surgeons of the Royal Navy are entitled.

The Ballot.

I had intended to have gone into the question of the ballot, but will only make a few observations upon it.

Taking for granted the axiom "that it is the duty of every man to assist in the defence of his country against all aggressors," I maintain that for the ballot to be effectual it must be *impartial*, and include the peer as well as the peasant. No person of sound mind and body between certain ages should be exempt. I do not say that every one should be a *combatant*, but the member of any profession or calling can render assistance. The seafaring population should be taken solely for the Navy and coast defences *afloat* and along the seaboard.

If an Act of Parliament, making every seaman between certain ages liable to be called upon to train for service in the defence of our commerce and coasts should ever be put in force, I believe we should have no difficulty in maintaining our second and third reserves of seamen at any strength we might desire, for the balloted men would probably prefer to qualify for receiving the annual retainer rather than serve for only the annual dress and drill pay.

The ballot, as regards seamen however, is an experiment yet to be tried, it has frequently been strongly urged for raising a sea militia from amongst our *seafaring* coast population. But it must not be lost sight of that any compulsory system of raising a reserve of seamen involves *penalties* which are not readily enforced in dealing with such a roving community as sailors. If the voluntary system is to be maintained, it must combine attractive and conciliatory conditions, so that the seafaring population may find it worth their while to enrol for the defence of the country. A mischief has been done by former harsh and coercive measures, which it will take some time yet to obliterate from the minds of our people.

Before I finish I desire it to be understood that I do not profess to have offered an *altogether* original scheme. It will have been seen that many of my ideas have been derived from the suggestions of others. My only hope when I accepted the responsibility of reading a paper before my brother Officers and the public was, that so important and vital a subject would not be allowed to sleep, but that men of far more intelligence and experience than I pretend to possess will be induced to take up the subject, and concoct a practicable and comprehensive scheme, sufficient to secure the safety of our country, and acceptable to the Government and Parliament. It is high time we ceased to show to the world the greatest maritime nation, neglecting to use its resources in the young blood of our seafaring population, for the purposes of national defence.

In conclusion, I think I cannot do better than quote a passage from the report of the Manning Commission. Under the heading "Shipping Interest," page xiii, they say,—

"If, then, by timely precautions during peace, we can diminish the probability that war will occur at all,—and to this end nothing will conduce so much as a knowledge on the part of foreign powers that our defences are impregnable;—if we can secure that, on the outbreak of a war, the Channel and neighbouring seas shall be at

once safe for ships and cargoes homeward bound ;—*if we can attach the sailor to his country, and prevent the disposition which has hitherto prevailed of seeking service under other flags* ;—the owners of our commercial marine will reap the greatest advantage. To them, therefore, we look with confidence for a cordial and patriotic co-operation in promoting during peace a system which is intended to accomplish these results."

The CHAIRMAN : Before asking any gentleman present to make remarks upon the subject, I should like to say one word for the information of those who have not been present at former discussions on this subject of "Naval Reserves." It is one of those subjects which appear to excite a great deal of warm feeling. I have been present when the discussion has continued three nights on this question of Naval Reserves. Remarks were made which excited a great deal of ill feeling, which has acted injuriously, and which I hope to night will not be repeated. On previous occasions unpleasant remarks were made with regard to the Royal Naval Reserve. Gentlemen in the heat of debate did not content themselves with criticising the nature of the Reserve, which they had a perfect right to do, but stated their belief that the men of the Reserve would avoid their engagements if war took place ; that if they did not desert their colours, they would not join them and would forfeit all their engagements. While we are perfectly cool, let me say that such remarks are uncalled for, and are very objectionable ; and that no person ought to make them in the absence of the men so criticised, namely, men in a humble position of life, who have nobody to speak for them and defend them. I, therefore, trust that no such remarks will be made to-night.

Mr. STIRLING, LACON : Will you allow me to offer a few observations ? I am very glad, Sir, that you are in the chair, because, perhaps, no person has devoted so much time to the particular subject that I wish to lay before you. I am also glad to see a person here who took part in the discussion on a paper which I read five or six years ago in this Institution, on "The Loss of Life at Sea," and which has been instrumental in bringing that subject very much before the country. It is a most remarkable thing to me that while the attention of the country is so much directed to the state of our military forces, the condition of our marine seems to be altogether lost sight of. A great part of the session of Parliament has been devoted to the organization of the Army, but we do not hear a word about the Marine. When I speak of the Marine I do not speak of the Navy alone, I speak of the sailors of the country, because the strength of the country does not lay in the Navy alone ; it does not lay in the mercantile marine alone ; it lays in the two combined, and in an harmonious action between the two. What is the position of the sailors of this country at the present moment ? I fear that they have not only very much degenerated, but that the "*genus sailor*" is fast dying out. What is the reason ? We have adopted in this country for the last twenty years the most extraordinary policy for the greatest maritime nation in the world. We have adopted a system by which the boys of the country, who would naturally take to the sea as ducks do to water, cannot get to sea at all. Many members of Parliament have spoken to me of boys in their villages who would be glad to go to sea if they could, but they cannot get to sea. I am not going to trouble you with any statistics, but merely to refer to the question of boys in the shape of apprentices. I quote here from the remarks of a gentleman who is present, and who spoke in the discussion upon my paper. He is thoroughly conversant with the subject, and I daresay will correct me if I am wrong. He says that "in 1818 there were 31,858 apprentices in the mercantile marine of the United Kingdom ; in 1852 they fell to 14,258. To keep pace with the growing wants of shipping the number should be nearer 15,000 than from 5,000 to 6,000, as at present." Further on, Admiral Ryder, who was in the chair, says : "I went into the calculations a few days ago, and I made out that to recruit the merchant service sufficiently, it would require 16,000 boys every year, and as he (the previous speaker) says, only 6,000 are forthcoming, I am confident myself that our merchant service is dying down as far as the seamen are concerned." This was spoken four or five years ago. I must tell you as a proof how much the sailors of this country are dying out, and how much they are wanted in

the merchant service, that only about a month ago the north-eastern ports, which used to be considered "the nursery for our seamen," from which the Navy used to draw great supplies, actually sent up an agent to London to endeavour to procure men. It was stated by the gallant Officer who read the paper, that there are 20,000 foreigners in the merchant service. In a letter which I wrote in the *Shipping Gazette* some three weeks ago, I said there were 30,000. That statement was called in question in the House of Commons by a Member of the House of Commons. This was reported to me. I went to the Board of Trade the next morning and said "Have I overstated the number?" They completely verified my figures, and said I had not overstated it. I have seen a return of the Board of Trade of 1851, where the foreigners in the merchant service were 4 per cent.; and in 1867 they were 12 per cent. But about a month ago, in a leading article in the *Shipping Gazette*, a paper which is well informed on these subjects, it was said that the per-centage of foreign seamen in the merchant service is more than 30 per cent.

The CHAIRMAN: That means, of A.B.'s, not of seamen of all classes.

Mr. LACON: I believe of all classes. If that be so, and if a war were suddenly to break out upon us, the merchant service would be immediately deprived of 30,000 men; and what are you doing with your Royal Naval Reserve? You are giving a retaining fee to the best men of the merchant service; you are bribing them as it were during peace, and if a war broke out to-morrow, the merchant service would lose not only the 30,000 foreigners, but they would lose 17,000 of their best men besides. You would completely cripple your merchant service. As I said before, the strength of this country lies quite as much in the merchant service as it does in the Navy. In a pamphlet which I published two or three years ago, I said: "Thus the Government and the country are witnessing 'year after year the silent destruction of 'the nursery for our seamen,' and are 'thinking to remedy the evil by the employment of foreigners, and to supply the 'prospective defences of the country by such costly expedients as a 'Royal Naval Reserve,' and untold sums expended upon 'Armstrong guns' and 'ironclads,' 'which, without the gallant hearts to man them, are but wood and iron still. Well, 'what is the remedy? Without presuming to solve a difficulty of such magnitude, 'I would venture to suggest an apprentice law, protection for the lives of our 'maritime population, free trade, and a strict police.'" When Mr. Graves was about to bring forward his motion for a Royal Commission for manning the Navy the other day, which was put off till the 6th of June (and I must say I hope when it comes forward on the 6th of June it will be refused by the Government, because there is no virtue in a Royal Commission; a Royal Commission will just simply accumulate further evidence upon us, and we want action), when Mr. Graves was to have brought his motion forward, I mentioned that night to a gallant Admiral this apprentice law, a compulsory apprentice law. He said, "Oh, the shipping 'interest will never stand that in these days of free-trade." But I believe the country and the shipping interest are so thoroughly convinced of the error that has been committed, and of the difficulty arising from the scarcity of men, that they are perfectly prepared to adopt a compulsory apprentice law. If such a law were adopted, would it not greatly simplify matters for the Navy, and also for the country? In the Report of the Liverpool Committee of Inquiry into the condition of our merchant seamen, questions were addressed to masters of sailing ships, masters of sailing and steamships, masters of steamships, owners, or overlookers (late masters), sailing ship owners, steamship owners, and others coming under none of these designations. In the answers returned, 89 per cent. state that seamen have deteriorated as seamen; 65 per cent. that they have deteriorated in physical condition, and 71 per cent. that they have deteriorated in subordination. Of the causes of deterioration in seamanship, 47 per cent. attribute it to the abolition of the compulsory apprenticeship system, and the want of training; and in subordination 54 per cent. to the introduction of foreign seamen. Of the remedies mentioned, 43 per cent. suggest training-ships, and 56 per cent. a return to the compulsory apprenticeship system, or carrying apprentices. One writes, "there is a great deterioration in our seamen as practical men. The generality of men who ship in the present day are insubordinate in the extreme. I attribute this to the majority of them not

having been brought up, and serving an apprenticeship." Another writes, "apprentices make the best seamen." Another, "my deliberate conviction is, that the compulsory training of apprentices is the very pith and marrow of the question; apprentices are taught habits of obedience." And another, "the seaman who has served an apprenticeship, or who has been brought up to the sea from boyhood, so common 20 years ago, is now rarely met with." In the Bristol Chamber of Commerce a majority of the Committee are of opinion that there should be a return to a system of compulsory apprenticeship. From the Hull Chamber of Commerce the secretary writes that the Shipping Committee agree in all the remedial suggestions, and the Member for Sunderland on Tuesday last gave notice in the House of Commons of a motion for the re-enactment of a compulsory apprenticeship clause. Lloyds have no doubt whatever that the shipping interest are in favour of such a clause. Some great measure is therefore looming in the future when it will behove all parties to act in a liberal spirit,—the shipping interest, who are about to initiate a self-imposed burden; the country, who will get their boys to sea; and the Government, who will thus be able to supply the prospective defences of the country. In the discussion on my paper on "The Loss of Life at Sea," in this theatre, a question was asked by Mr. Harcourt: "Speaking as one of those who have frequent applications made to me (to get boys to sea), I may say that if I go to the Registrar-General himself, he has no influence; if I go to the merchant captain, he has no power; and often the applicant who comes to us in this way finds it impossible to get into the service, and to gratify that spirit which influences so many of our youths with the wish to go to sea. May I ask why that is?" A gentleman who is now present (Mr. Moore) said, "It is because the owners of foreign-going vessels decline to take apprentices, for the sufficient reason that they do not want to keep them; they do not want to keep them when the ship comes home and is in dock." This is such an important question for the country, namely, to get a proper supply of seamen, that if the shipping interest come forward and say they will burden themselves with this compulsory apprentice law, I submit that the State ought to say to those persons who do not know what to do with their boys when they come from foreign, "We will take them off your hands; we will keep up training-ships or training-schools at the expense of the country, and we will train every boy,—not men, as is now done,—but we will maintain, train, and educate every apprentice for a certain number of days in the year." Of course they would be divided from the coasting trade, and sent on board the training-ships at times most convenient to the owners and for their reception. At the termination of their apprenticeship, these boys might be subject to six or twelve months' service in a drill ship or man-of-war, when the good treatment which they would experience in the present day would tend to remove those prejudices against the Royal Navy which the gallant author of the paper states have existed up to the present time. If you were to adopt this combined system you could have any number of boys, not merely what the Navy requires or what the merchant service requires, but what the country requires, and in eight or ten years you would have a sufficient supply of men who had not only served their apprenticeship, but an educated apprenticeship. And I say this country will not be in a satisfactory state in the event of our being threatened by war by any foreign Power until the Navy can lay their hands upon ten, twenty, or thirty thousand seamen without materially crippling the merchant service. There is another point to which I also wish to direct your attention. If we should adopt this system of furnishing for the country a superior class of men, I trust that the mode of treatment of these men in the merchant service will be improved. There has been ill-treatment, but I hope the ill-treatment of our seamen has been exceptional. I have put this before proper persons who are thoroughly looking into the subject. I believe that a great deal of this ill-treatment has arisen from too much interference with the relations between master and servant. The owner does not sufficiently look after his men, he does not care sufficiently about his men, and his men, *en revanche*, care very little about the owner. Three years ago I wrote as follows, and, of course, I should not have so written unless I felt very strongly indeed on the subject. It is only an instance of how unjustly some of our men have been treated in the merchant service.

And I fear that many a man during the last twenty years has left the country with bitter feelings at his heart for ever. The engagement of a seaman is simply a contract between master and servant. "Labour offers its honest services, and the Law Officers of the Crown say that in the contract there is no implied warranty on the part of the owner that the vessel is seaworthy; and if the seaman goes on shore to make a complaint before magistrates he is met by a countercharge of desertion, so that his evidence cannot be taken. He cannot get the evidence of a surveyor, who is generally on the side of, or employed by, the owner; and if he does, the surveyor is liable to an action for trespass if he goes on board without the consent of the owner: so poor Jack is perhaps locked up till sent on board, and then he goes to sea and loses his life, with the consolation that a grateful country will make no inquiry whatever about him; or perhaps he will take three months' imprisonment in preference! Anglesea gaol is so full of sailors that the authorities have made application to the Government for its enlargement." All this I am happy to say is being remedied by the Government, and in their new Bill, the law is about to say that both sides shall be heard, and that the *just* complaint of the sailor shall be attended to. Now I am not going to detain you any longer. But I say if such a scheme of compulsory apprenticeship, with an education of so many days in the year for each apprentice, be carried out, you will in a few years have a superior class of men. Men will undoubtedly draw away from this country to the colonies, which cannot supply themselves with the raw material. But I believe if such a scheme is carried out, that men will be proud, in whatever part of the world they may be, of being "English sailors," and that they will entertain feelings of attachment and gratitude to a country which has so treated them, and, without any necessity for a retaining fee, that they will rally round their country in her hour of need.

Captain COLZOMB, R.N.: I think in the early part of the paper what struck me most strongly was, that if the maritime spirit of England could survive through a series of years such extraordinary treatment as has been described, that maritime spirit must be intensely strong. The lecturer quoted very early in his paper the scheme of a gentleman with whom I have a very considerable acquaintance—I may say a personal acquaintance—I speak of Mr. George St. Lo. I have read some two or three hundred of his letters, some of them in his handwriting; and I was sorry to observe that his theory and practice did not quite coincide. He was Commissioner at Devonport Dockyard, then called Plymouth Dock, between 1691 and 1700, at the time described by the lecturer, when the country was in such tremendous want of men. He wrote to the Admiralty and proposed a scheme which differed considerably from that of which we have heard to-night. He said he had information that in Plymouth, in the ships lying in the Catwater and in Cawsand Bay, and stowed away in the purlieus of Plymouth, there were an immense number of men waiting for the outward bound convoy to start, and he suggested that it was very desirable to get these men for the Navy, especially for Sir George Rooke's fleet, which was then on the coast of France, and very much under-manned. His proposal was, that proclamation should be made that the men at present in hiding at Plymouth, and in the outward bound ships, should all be registered, with the view of securing their services, not for Her Majesty's Navy, but for their own ships. Then it was to be suggested that those who were not registered should be immediately "pressed," and that strong measures would be taken to press them. The proclamation was to state further, that any men who should be impressed before this registration took place were to make proper representations to him, and he would take care to have them righted. The Admiralty highly approved of the plan. A proclamation was issued, and, as he supposed, many of the men from the environs of Plymouth found their way on board the outward bound ships. As soon as he had ascertained this, he sent for two Captains of men-of-war, and directed them to go and impress two or three men from one of the ships; they immediately did so, and the masters of the ships came to him in a high state of indignation to complain of the conduct of his Captains in having "pressed" men against his proclamation. He strongly reprimanded the Captains in the presence of the masters, sent them away, and released the men: The result was, that all those

who had not already presented themselves on board the ships in the Catwater, and so on, came on board in great haste. Mr. St. Lo went out himself in the Sound that night, went on board a man-of-war, at daylight made a signal to all the Captains, went on board the merchant ships with them, pressed 350 men, and then went home to breakfast. The Admiralty paid him the highest compliments for this, and it is merely an illustration of what the lecturer has told us. The lecturer, in his paper, raises the question of the Reserves, both of Officers and men. Hitherto we have heard very little said about the Reserve of Officers. We are reducing by what has been very properly called "artificial" means the number of Officers on the active list of the Navy, and such a reserve as the lecturer has mentioned seems to me to be admirably fitted for this end. I have heard it said, from time to time, that in the event of war breaking out, and our being obliged to call upon the merchant service for Officers, there would be difficulties on board our ships with our own Officers. I take leave to think that that would not be the case. I take leave to think that in times of that sort patriotism would survive any small prejudices, and that we should get on uncommonly well together. It has always been to me a simple matter of astonishment that attack should be made upon the principle of what Captain Gardner calls the Second Reserve, that is, the present Royal Naval Reserve. It seems to me to be the acme of perfection for the present state of the country. It was suggested here, when former papers were read, and when, as the Chairman said, so much heat was evolved, that the proper Reserve was the overflow from the Navy. It was then pointed out that at a time when a Reserve was most wanted, a Reserve of that kind would be smallest—that is to say, we should go on gradually reducing the Navy in time of peace, the overflow from the Navy would become smaller and smaller, so that when the panic arose there would be none of that Reserve. Therefore I think we must have a Reserve totally distinct from the Navy altogether, not subject to its fluctuations, but kept up on a totally separate basis. Such a Reserve is the Royal Naval Reserve. The First Reserve is of course a proper one; there is no question about that. To keep a hold upon your ten years' men—men who have passed through the Navy—is a most important matter. But I do not quite understand whether the lecturer meant that; I do not think the Navy should be dealt with in any way as having in contemplation this First Reserve. The Navy simply looks to its own requirements for the time. Of course, as ten years' men pass out of the Navy, they would simply go into the other Reserve, without force, and without any special steps being taken to make them. The strength of the Reserves, I take it, we must look for in the First and Second Reserves spoken of by the lecturer. The Reserve of stokers is also a very important matter.

Captain Dawson, R.N.: The Navy never was in such a perfect state as at the present time as regards the quality of the men. Whether we look upon men-of-war's men physically, intellectually, or morally, they never were so perfect; there never was such a proportion of good seamen afloat; they never were so well drilled, so thoroughly well ordered, and so thoroughly efficient in every possible way. The mischief is, that there are so few; that is, so few when we consider the probabilities of a maritime war. For all peace requirements, we may well be content with the admirable plan under which the Navy is recruited at the present time. It is admirable in principle, but the difficulty arises when we want to expand the Navy for such a maritime war as may involve the question of our national existence. In discussing the subject of a reserve, it is not then a question whether a merchant seaman is better for fighting a ship than a man-of-war's man. Of course, the man-of-war's man, being brought up to the business of war, ought to be superior for warlike purposes to the merchant seaman, whether partially trained or not. But the question is, how can we so expand our Navy at the outbreak of a war as to make it equal to the exigencies of the country, if attacked by two or three maritime nations? To do this effectually, we must have reserves of men, with sea-legs and sea-stomachs, more or less acquainted with modern weapons of war; who, when combined with a fair proportion of regular men-of-war's men, will form as good crews as are likely to be brought against us. The first reserve spoken of by Captain Gardner represents to my mind the most important reserve that should be in-

stituted. The circulation of men through the Navy with a large overflow of ten years' men, would produce a considerable first reserve of the most admirable kind, manufactured by the Navy itself, though there might be some difficulty in persuading such men to serve in the merchant service afterwards, unless there was a considerable improvement in the general conduct of that service. This reserve would be easily obtained by increasing the number of boys in sea-going ships of war, who are now in the proportion of about one boy to every four seamen. Our ships of war could be very safely conducted at sea, if the number of boys were increased to a still larger proportion, and those men who had not become first class petty officers, were encouraged to leave the Navy after ten years' service, and pass thence into the First Reserve. These most thoroughly trained men would form in time of war the petty officers of our war fleet, and the backbone of discipline. With reference to the second or present Royal Naval Reserve, I am very thankful indeed to Mr. Stirling Lacon for what he has said as to the deterioration of merchant seamen, its cause and cure. We ought not, as Naval men, to lose sight of this as one which may affect us seriously in the critical day of battle. Captain Gardner has told us that there are 70,000 able seamen in the merchant service, and yet that only about 15,000 of those are enrolled in the Royal Naval Reserve, because the other able seamen of the merchant service do not come up to the standard of the Royal Navy. I quite concur in what has fallen from Mr. Lacon as to the cause of it, which is obvious. The number of apprentices has decreased in the most marvellous way, and is still decreasing every year. The numbers entered now are somewhere about 4,000 annually, and they have been decreasing year by year. We see these things with our eyes open, but it is regarded as a shipowner's, or trade question, one of supply and demand, and not in its relation to our national defences. As a national question, it is not reasonable to expect individual shipowners to take the initiative in placing a burden on their own shoulders which belongs equally to the whole country. I do not think we shall ever be able to recur to a uniform compulsory apprentice system, which pressed unequally on different carrying trades, but a modified apprentice system might be brought about. Steamships do not and cannot train apprentices, but they use them when trained. Could not some system of bounty be offered to owners of sailing ships to induce them to carry a large number of apprentices, and train them for the whole merchant service, charging a certain amount of tonnage dues on all shipping to recoup the Government for the expenditure? Then Captain Gardner's plan of the Third Reserve might be worked out as regards boys, who would form a most valuable part of the third reserve. I do not think so much of the fishermen reserve as I do of the boy reserve, but the fisherman has the advantage of being in existence, whereas the boys, though willing, cannot get to sea at all until an Act of Parliament is brought into operation, which has not yet been sketched. Drill given to boys fresh from the training-ships would be most valuable, and would remain with them through life. I quite agree with Captain Gardner in what he has said as to a reserve of Officers. We have Captains and Commanders enough on the active list for commanding the war force, but the great difficulty will be to get an efficient number of young Lieutenants: Now, these might be very well obtained from the young Officers of the merchant service, who would be quite capable of performing quarter-deck duties. I do not quite like the lecturer's notion of detaining young Midshipmen of the merchant service for a month at a low seaport to attend drill, knowing, as we do, the contaminations which these lads would be subject to in going to and from the drill ship. I think that the honour of wearing an uniform would be very much enhanced if some law were passed by which others would be prevented from imitating it. A great deal has been said about the difficulty of getting 500 merchant seamen for the Navy to fill the vacancies consequent on the loss of the "Captain." It is all a question of money, entirely a question of money. The merchant seaman receives a much larger wage than the able seaman of the Navy, but the difference is not so great in the long run, when to the man-of-war's man's wages you add what he may receive as a petty officer, by various extra qualifications, for good conduct badges, by continuous employment, and by subsequent pension. It is on the first entrance of the mer-

chant seamen into the Royal Navy that its wages appear so disproportionate to that which he has been accustomed to receive. Whilst the A.B.'s is the highest rate of wages in the merchant service, it is the lowest rate in the ever-ascending scale of pay in the Royal Navy. Merchant seamen not joining is simply a question of wages and nothing more. I do not know that it is, therefore, necessary to increase the wages of the Royal Navy generally; but it is quite evident that it is no discredit to the Royal Navy, that seamen are not found willing to give up the higher wages of the merchant service, in order to enter as A.B. with low wages in a service where several years must elapse before they can attain the position of petty officers, or qualify themselves for the other various additions to pay.

Captain GARDNER: In replying to the various observations made during the discussion, I have only one remark to make upon what Mr. Lacon has said about compulsory apprenticeship. As the compulsory apprenticeship was done away with at the request of the shipowners, it remains to be seen how a Bill to restore it would affect them at the present moment, whether they would accept a Bill obliging them to take apprentices. With regard to Captain Colomb's remarks, I can only recall to him the treatment which the Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve received from Officers of the Fleet during the experimental squadron, and I know the Officers of the Royal Naval Reserve expressed themselves extremely well pleased with their treatment. With respect to what he stated about Reserve seamen, it is necessary, in the first instance, that the Reserve should be open for the men to volunteer into—that the entry should be entirely voluntary. There should be no pressure whatever put upon them; but when they are there retaining fees should be paid to keep them there. That is the First Reserve. Then, with regard to what Captain Dawson said about petty Officers being in the First Reserve, I consider that the Coast Guard ought to form the petty Officers of the First Reserve, because at present I consider the Coast Guard contains *all* our future petty Officers in reserve in the event of war. With regard to the drill of the Royal Naval Reserve Midshipmen, I see no objection to their being drilled in the same way as our own Officers drill in the "Excellent." They could live with their friends. They would receive pay and allowances. You could not find lodgings for them; you give them money to provide for themselves. You cannot keep them on board the drill ship. I do not see how you are to get over that difficulty. The young fellows would be looked after by the Registrar-General of Seamen, and he would probably try to find them proper lodgings. You could not keep them on board the drill ships, but you *could* provide lodgings for them. I do not think there is any other point that I need reply to.

Mr. LACON: Allow me to read this in answer to what Captain Gardner has said. It is extracted from remarks made in this Institution by Mr. Thomas Moore, for several years the Honorary President of the Seamen's United Society. He says:—"The question of the engagement of apprentices was much discussed at the time of the repeal of the law which rendered the taking of apprentices compulsory; and it may be remembered that in 1854, when the Merchant Shipping Bill was before Parliament, Mr. Horsfall endeavoured to prevail upon Mr. Labouchere to fall in with the views of the majority of shipowners, and the unanimous demand of seamen, and to re-enact a law for the compulsory apprenticeship of boys. The Honourable Member presented a petition from the Shipowners' Association of Liverpool in favour of the re-imposition of such a clause in the Bill then before the House."

The CHAIRMAN: Before asking you to return your thanks to Captain Gardner, I should like to make a few observations upon this subject. It is one that has interested me very much for many years, ever since I was appointed to the command of the Reserves. Lord Derby, the other day, when speaking (I think before Parliament) about the Army organization, said (and his remark attracted general attention throughout the country, as showing that his Lordship took the same sensible view of this matter which he always takes of every public question), "We must first make up our mind what we propose to aim at doing in our future wars, and then we can discuss what arrangements must be made for the Army in peace time—what forces must be maintained, what Reserves, what matériel," &c. It

seems to me that this is as true for the Navy as for the Army. Before considering what the number of men and ships in active service and in Reserve should be, we should form some idea of what we propose to do when we next embark in a naval war. Do we propose to act as before on the offensive, or, as some advocate we should act in the future, simply on the defensive? Unless we take this point carefully into consideration we shall not and cannot agree upon what the size of our Navy should be, and what the size of our Reserves should be, what should be the description of ships, how many of each class, &c. All these questions seem to range themselves round that first starting-point. My own opinion, and that of everyone, I believe, who knows anything about these matters, is that we must be prepared to act vigorously both on the offensive and on the defensive. If I am right, then, the origin of a great deal of misunderstanding on this subject, what should be the strength of the *personnel* of our Navy, is evident, viz., that people talk about a *peace* Navy and *peace* requirements without knowing precisely what they mean. One First Lord of the Admiralty thinks—or, at all events, says—that *fifteen* ships in the Pacific are necessary to keep up the *prestige* of England there; and another First Lord, under the pressure of economical consideration, thinks that *three* ships are quite sufficient in the Pacific for so-called *peace* requirements. So the Navy during peace time passes from one extreme to the other, and you cannot settle the question at all as to what the Reserves should be, or what the supply of boys should be to feed a Navy which is so varying in size. But if you approach the question from the other point of view, and consider and decide on what it is proposed to do in the event of going to war with say two of the most powerful naval nations in the world, then we have something tangible to start from. Approaching the question from this side, some agreement might be arrived at as to what should be the number of men that we must have available at once if we were plunged into war with two such nations—say Russia, and France as she was before the late war. I do not think there would be much difference between us as to what number we should require to have under the pennant in say the course of fourteen days from the declaration of war. Our force, when it was brought together, would be found to be composed of (1) the men who had been *continuously* drilled on board men-of-war, the mass of whom are to be your more or less perfect seamen; these are the *Seamen on active service in the Fleet, the Coast Guard, and the Marine forces afloat and in barracks*; (2), Men who had been occasionally drilled one month annually, viz.,—the *Pensioners, the Royal Naval Reserve, the Coast Volunteers*; and (3), a very large number of seamen who are in the merchant service, coasting trade, and deep sea fisheries, who are undrilled but have got their sea legs and sea stomachs, who are not at present bound to serve, but should be enrolled by ballot for occasional musters, to which they should be made liable by Act of Parliament. This will at once lead us up to the number of men that you ought to have in the Royal Navy and in each of these two great Reserves. Having previously settled what was the least number of men of each of these three classes, viz., (1) the *continuously* drilled, (2) the *occasionally* drilled, (3) the *occasionally* mustered, that we wished to have available at short notice, say a fortnight after the declaration of war, then the *continuously* drilled men would always be maintained at the same number, and would form what we now by a misnomer call our Peace Navy, and the *occasionally* drilled men would be the First Great Reserve, and the *occasionally* mustered men liable to service, who had sea legs, would be the Second Great Reserve. Of course, the number in the two Reserves would be limited by the number of men in the merchant service, the coasting trade, and at the fisheries. This seems to me the proper way of approaching the question. If these two nations could call together in a fortnight 90,000 seamen, &c., we ought to be able to do the same, and if 120,000 men in three months, we ought to be able to do the same. My opinion is, undoubtedly, that the number of *continuously* drilled men that we ought to find ready to our hands on the breaking out suddenly of war should be very much larger than the number of *continuously* drilled men we have now, which, as Captain Gardner has informed us, numbers of all sorts, including lamp trimmers, loblolly boys, 52,000, but of these only 18,000 are blue jackets, and 7,000 Marines afloat, and 7,000 in barracks. If, then, we look at the question from this point of view, and decide that we ought to have

many more continuously drilled men, than we have at present, then we must raise them as fast as possible from boys, and the number of ships in commission in so-called peace time must be gradually increased and be regulated accordingly, not solely or even primarily to keep up the *prestige* of England in the Pacific or elsewhere, which probably might be effectually maintained by one ship, but primarily to keep that number of men *continuously* drilled whom we have previously decided we wish to find on the outbreak of a naval war to be on our ships' books and to have been continuously drilled. That should be the rule by which we should commission our ships, and pay off our ships; and the Reserves would all fall into their places in the same way, and their numbers be decided on accordingly. This seems to me the proper way to consider the question, and we shall never arrive at any satisfactory solution of the difficulty until we look at it from this point of view. To talk of regulating the number of seamen in the Royal Navy by "*peace requirements*" is not only bad policy, but it is a delusion and a snare, and the sooner it is exploded the better. It has been said that we want much fewer men than we did before, because of the few ironclads we now require in comparison with the large number of ships of all classes we had in the Navy before, and that our ironclads would destroy a fleet of other vessels. I do not admit this as an argument of any force. I believe if we were at war with the two naval nations referred to, and were kept at it for a couple of years, we should find that we wanted as many men as, and perhaps more, than we had before, say some 180,000 to man every description of war ship, to defend our colonies, to protect coal, provisions, and munitions of war, transport and merchant ships, to man all sorts of gunboats, not merely for coast defence, but to carry on the war on the enemy's coasts. The Fleet would require all the men we had made engagements with to join in case of war, and would still be asking for more. If the men on active service and in the Reserves are not increased in number *now*, and the liability of all seamen to the ballot established *now*, I believe we shall be driven again to impressment. Every branch of this very important subject has been, I think, touched upon by the gentlemen who have spoken to-night. I quite agree with what has been said by Mr. Lacon on the question of apprentices. I am of opinion that the merchant shipowners of England will be willing and content to take a fixed number of apprentices in proportion to tonnage, and to have a law to that effect imposed upon them, if only they are approached in a proper way. But they are men who know the national value of what they would be asked to give to the country, and they would expect something for the concession. It will be necessary to ask the shipowner to do that which, although ultimately remunerative to him, would at present cost him something considerable. Apprentices are not remunerative in the first two or three years of their service. It would be necessary, therefore, to offer some concession about light dues, insurance duties, or penalties, and we should find that in the long run, partly from patriotic motives, partly from far-seeing penetration as to the measure being ultimately best for their own interest, they would be perfectly content to take a limited number of apprentices. The whole question would then be worked out as easily as possible. If there is any gentleman here who has not seen the Royal Naval Reserve at drill, I would ask him to take the trouble on any day of the week, especially Friday, to go down to the West India Docks about one o'clock, and he will see there as fine a body of seamen as he could see anywhere. For myself, having commanded the force, and knowing what the men are, nothing would give me greater pleasure when in command of a ship than to have 200 of these London men on board. I do not believe that you can see a finer body of men than our Royal Naval Reserve. There is a scheme afloat in the air now—I dare say some of you have heard of it—for altering the whole system of the Navy—pulling down the present system and rebuilding it from the bottom. Our existing Royal Naval Reserve is to be done away with. The continuous service is not to be continued as at present; the men are all to be allowed to leave the Navy at 21, and join an imaginary Reserve, whose retaining fee is to be £2 a year! The result, in my opinion, will be, that the men will leave the service, but would not join as seamen in the Reserve a day longer than they could help. Frantic efforts would be made to fill up vacancies with boys. The Navy would be "boyed" instead of being

"manned;" and as the number of blue jackets could not be kept up, ships would be paid off, and ultimately the Navy would dwindle down in numbers, and we should, after attempting and failing to raise good men by bounty, pay the penalty of our mistake by some disastrous reverse. Various other proposals are being discussed. One lately broached was to dismiss the Marines and fill up with blue jackets, but how are we to raise 16,000 seamen to replace the 16,000 marines? If Mr. Graves's motion for a Royal Commission on the Reserves, on the 8th of June, is not carried, I have no doubt we shall hear more of the above-mentioned schemes. I will now return thanks to Captain Gardner for the great research he has displayed, and for the able manner in which he has treated the subject.