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THE BRITISH SEA WAR-GAME.

By Vice-Admiral BATSCH.

(Translated, by permission, from the 4th Vol. of the "Deutsche-Revue," November and December, 1889, published at Breslau, by Trewendt.)

THE following excellent translation gives us the reflections of an eminent foreign naval Officer upon naval warfare in general, and our own Manœuvres for the last two years in particular. Vice-Admiral Batsch, when in active employment, had a reputation in his own country analogous to that enjoyed by Sir Geoffrey Hornby, as Commander-in-Chief of a fleet, and, therefore, any criticism by him has a special value. He clearly points out that attacks on seaports and territory are of little value when attained by simple evasion of a powerful naval force anxious to be attacked, and to settle the question as to supremacy at sea, upon which all naval warfare hinges. As this vital result cannot be decided by peace manœuvres, other operations are undertaken which give an air of unreality to the whole. It is curious so keen an observer as Admiral Batsch has not pointed out the fallacy of making the mouth of the Thames an objective. What, it may be asked, could a hostile squadron effect in such a position in the hourly fear of a British fleet heaving in sight? The worst could be a temporary interruption of the commerce making for the port. But somehow it has become an article of faith with many that such an arrival, attained by *evasion* of the hostile fleet, with the ability to remain for a certain number of hours—and the period is carefully watched—constitutes a dire event for this country. Such an appearance, after a series of defeats of our naval forces would, however, be most serious, and though the Thames might bristle with forts as high as London Bridge, they would have as little effect upon the situation as 200,000 Volunteers deployed along the banks.—S. EARDLEY-WILMOR.

"We are convinced that unless the French Navy thrives, the British Navy will droop."—JAMES' "Naval History," vol. v, p. 368.

It has often been asserted, and has never been denied, that the art of war is subject to change; yet this assertion is not so well justified in the eyes of the

professional as in those of the civilian. If we compare the war exercises of the present day on shore with those of the past, we find but little difference between them, except the changes in respect of firearms. The form in which the movements of an army present themselves to a non-professional spectator is still about the same. Man and beast remain as they were in former days; the arms alone are altered, and in peace-time the effect of this alteration is naturally not evident. For man and beast on land, we must substitute man and ship on sea. Here also man remains the same as ever; not so the vessel upon which he plies his warlike craft. Had it likewise continued to be the same as before, the war exercises of a fleet would even now be confined to what was then sufficient. Dense clouds of smoke produced by coal and gunpowder wafted up from the blue sea with such striking effect would still be the principal components of the war pictures, and the zealous student of the art of war at sea would not have been a bit the wiser. The representation of maritime warfare has of late been taken up so actively that public opinion has been attracted to it much more than was formerly the case. The advances made in the matters of steam, electricity, and submarine mines play so great a part at sea, that the attention of the observer is permanently roused. Everyone is trying to make clear to himself again the significance of the naval question, and not a few suppose that with respect to this, at least, the art of war is not only subject to change, but that it is by degrees reaching its extreme point.

In comparison with former days warlike power has indeed been greatly increased; what with the assurance and certainty of movement given to us by steam, the possibility of rapidly covering great distances in any direction you like, of hurling ponderous projectiles with great penetrating power and large bursting charges with accuracy to a distance of two or three German miles, and lastly, the power of causing fatal damage to an enemy's ship by submarine explosions. These conditions doubtless necessitate a different application of the art of war, but no change in the art itself.

It is not surprising that we sometimes come to false conclusions, mistaking for the main point what were, and only can be, matters of secondary importance; for instance, in the case of a certain description of torpedo-boat, which was expected to play a part to which it is unequal; and so will it be with other things, which are judged of and treated in the same or a similar manner. The naval manœuvres which take place annually have brought to the foreground in England all that concerns the fleet, to which the general political tension in Europe has not a little contributed. Many think that the advent of the next war is a mere question of time, but few realize what extension it must necessarily assume, and this is one of the substantial hindrances to its outbreak. It is assumed that particularly in England the extension of the suffrage has suppressed all warlike tendency. It is thought that the development of national power in a military sense is incompatible with such a high pitch of democracy, and one might admit this to be the case, if one were inclined to give weight to such views as the altered means of carrying on war have here and there called forth. As a matter of fact, the art of war has not as yet reached its extreme point; but the weapons of war have been sharpened, and the milder form of making war, which many believe in, must yet remain a thing of the future. In England there are plenty of peace-lovers, and of those who look upon the maintenance of a military force as in itself a crime and a survival of barbarous days; yet there is scarcely another country whose prosperity and high position has been so much the work of war as that of our cousins beyond the Channel. W. J. B. Seeley, Professor of Modern History at the University of Cambridge, has lately demonstrated how an almost unbroken period of warfare commenced contemporaneously with the rise of real civilization in England, con

tinuing even until now. And because this is the case, the objects of maritime war and maritime war itself have gained in importance. This applies more to England than to other States, because its interests as well as its resources point to war at sea rather than on land. Attention has already been called to the great increase in its trade. The number of British ships which yearly enter and depart from British harbours is considerably above 600,000, that is to say from 1,800 to 1,900 daily; it has been remarked that on an average thirty-five ships are constantly to be seen in the Channel from Beachy Head, that a ship passes that point every five minutes, and that on an average 288 ships pass daily.¹ The value of the exports and imports and their economical importance take, without question, the first place; but the interests of the men employed in this traffic are also not to be underrated, for the amount required to defray the cost of labour, income, and salaries, is put at the considerable sum of 50 millions sterling a year; this is all the more worthy of consideration as the interruption to commerce consequent on war, apart from other mischief, would entail on one side the laying up of commercial vessels, and on the other the loss of income from freight; now the capital invested in British shipping is estimated at 100 millions sterling! According to Lord Brassey's figures the total number of vessels sailing under the British flag amounts to 37,500, representing a tonnage of 9½ millions. The total tonnage of France, Germany, Russia, and Italy, on the other hand, does not yet reach 4 millions, whilst that of England, Scotland, and Ireland alone exceeds 7 millions, the remaining 2½ under the British flag belonging to the colonies. In consequence of the maritime wars at the beginning of this century, the greatest part of the European freights were carried under the British flag, and even after the battle of Trafalgar, nearly 500 cruisers were required for the protection of this commerce; yet at that time Great Britain had not more than from 24,000 to 25,000 merchant ships, with a total tonnage of about 2½ millions. In these days England maintains, to guard her 37,000 vessels, not one-tenth of the number of cruisers, namely, 42; that is to say, one cruiser for every 100 steamers of 100 tons and upwards, while France has one cruiser for every 10 steamers over 100 tons. At the same time, maritime commerce has increased, especially for England, not only in the number of ships employed, but also in its value; hence the measures and means for its protection become of more importance. The fact has particularly to be noted that it is of more consequence to limit the duration of war on sea than on land; for in the latter case, goods can be brought into a country and exported from it without touching upon the theatre of war; whilst in the former case, this cannot be done, particularly where a country is, like Great Britain, completely surrounded by sea. In her case the unimpeded importation of food across the waters, not to mention that of raw material and other produce required for her manufactures, is a vital question, and it must be protected at all cost. This also is a condition which did not apply to England's last maritime war, and one which will make any future war much more trying to her. At the same time, we need not give way on that account to the extreme apprehensions which are associated with the idea of interruption to maritime commerce. If the power and nature of the means formerly available for naval war are compared with those which exist at present, even the non-professional observer must be struck by the remarkable contrast which we have already pointed out. What then happened can hardly take place now. In 1799 a squadron of some thirty line-of-battle ships with all the want of mobility inherent to that period was able to sail from Brest to Genoa and back without being observed by a single English

¹ Admiral Colomb, R. U. S. Institution, Feb., 1883.

squadron. In the present day such a performance would be in the highest degree improbable. Nowadays, too, we can hardly realize how only the half of an army intended for disembarkation should arrive at the appointed time and place, whilst the other half was delayed a whole month by contrary winds. Yet this was the case in Holland, also in 1799. Form whatever opinion we like as to the greater or smaller prospects of success for an expeditionary force by sea, it will not at any rate in these days fail owing to such mishaps as these. During the last Franco-German war a cruiser arriving at Madeira from Senegal received all at the same time the news of the occurrence at Ems, of the outbreak of war, of the defeats in the Vosges and before Metz, of the capitulation of Sedan, and of the capture of the Emperor. This could happen in 1870, and the ship in question came from a distant part of Africa; but in the present day there are few places of importance where such a thing could occur, whereas in 1798 there was nothing extraordinary in the fact that the French sent reinforcements from Aucona to Corfu a month after the island had fallen into the enemy's power.

The difficulties with which a blockading force had formerly to struggle hardly now exist. In those days the shutting up of all an enemy's ports, as carried out in the American Civil War, was never even tried. They contented themselves then with blockading certain harbours, and were glad if they could only keep under observation the enemy's forces lying therein or induce them to come out. It was much easier for blockaded ships to escape unobserved then than it is now. Such a thing may happen now, and, doubtless, it will always be possible, but it is a mistake to deduce from them that the introduction of steam has made a blockade henceforth impossible. The objects of such a blockade are two-fold: first, to watch the enemy's forces which are in the harbour, and, secondly, to put a stop to all communication with the outside for commercial or other purposes. Complete success has never been attained in either of these two objects, if by complete success is meant a thorough closing of the harbour. During the Napoleonic wars such a result was never even aimed at; in later days it has been attempted with the help of steam, but never with success. In treating of this point it is well to consider that the escape of the enemy's ships is, after all, a matter of secondary importance in its effect on the conduct of the war. First and foremost is the assumption that the forces opposed to one another wish to fight, and not to avoid each other; hence the blockade of a harbour has for its first object the observation and not the enclosure of the enemy's war-ships. The latter object applies to general traffic, and, as a rule, its attainment has not required the employment of war-ships of the first class. These are reserved for cases in which an encounter with the enemy's main force is expected. This principle has been always, and is still, the main point to be attended to in maritime war, the objects of which remain unaltered, although the way of attaining them is modified in accordance with the nature of the means most available. The defeat of the enemy's fleets comes first; until this is arrived at, all other aims appear only of secondary importance. Such, for instance, are the capture or destruction of the enemy's merchant ships, the shutting up of his means of supply (the so-called blockade), the infliction of damage to his coast by bombardment or otherwise, the occupation of islands and small colonies, the disembarkation of troops on smaller or larger scale.

Some, indeed, maintain that such proceedings are no longer legitimate; it seems to us, however, idle to have any doubts upon the subject, and it is better to be prepared for such attempts. The well-known "Declaration of Paris" is often interpreted as if intended to do away with all capture of enemy's goods at sea; but this is not the case, it is only directed against giving letters of marque to privateers. The conclusion of a Convention against

all captures at sea would be virtually an agreement not to trespass upon an enemy's territory—in other words, perpetual peace.

When Admiral Aube's theories upon "*La guerre de course*" became known, objection was made to them, not because they pointed to the capture of the enemy's goods at sea, but to the devastation of his sea coast; but no fair objections can be raised, even against forced contributions, as long as war itself is considered allowable.

The importance of captures at sea continues to increase, for the question whether certain goods are contraband of war becomes rather more than less complicated. Time plays a greater part in the conduct of war nowadays than it did formerly, and means of secondary importance for carrying on war take some time before they come into play. Such is the case with the supply of a great many things necessary for war. Even on land it has been proved that the supply of arms and ammunition in great quantities throws no great weight into the scale; this is still more true in maritime warfare, where, however, the supply of coals is invaluable. On this account the importance of a blockade gains strength, although steam gives greater facilities for breaking it. A number of adventurers enrich themselves by blockade-running, but the course of the war is not thereby affected.

The molestation of seaside places, notwithstanding the protestation against it before alluded to, will be more apprehended than ever, because they are almost entirely defenceless against modern artillery, and because ships can now encounter coast artillery with much less damage to themselves than of old. Yet, although seaside places have become much more open to attack, it does not at all follow that they should be more the object of attack than has hitherto been the case, for even their destruction will only act in a secondary manner upon the main result; it may, indeed, tell against the destroyer, for his efforts may weaken him without in the least affecting the enemy's main combatant strength. The same rule applies to the occupation of islands and colonies. The real possessor of all such territories distant and detached from the mother country is always the Power which commands the sea which bathes their shores. The command of the sea, however, is synonymous with the power of free movement for a force making head against an enemy. Much is said about this point, but the much is generally wanting in clearness. Thus it is the fashion to estimate the right to the possession of an island by its neighbourhood to the coasts of a powerful State without considering whether that State has the real command of the intervening waters. England held the island of Elba during the last years of the 18th century, but when the British fleet evacuated the Mediterranean in 1796, the first thing that was done was to withdraw the English troops from Elba. On the other hand, the possession of Malta by the French became, after the battle of the Nile, a mere question of time, although Vaubois did his best to hold it. The case was the same with Egypt. The French were able to hold their own against the Turks, and what the latter chose to call an army, even after they lost their sea communications, but they were obliged to give in to the English General. Loss of command of the sea is equivalent to a flank open to the sea, and when, in addition, the investment is complete on the land-side the strongest fortress on the sea-coast must fall. Such was the case with Genoa, in spite of Masséna's heroic defence, so also was it with Dantzic, and so would it have been with Colberg had not its sea-communications been kept open. One of the most brilliant examples of the kind is the defence of St. Jean d'Acre, which was also Napoleon's first really important defeat. Lastly, amongst the secondary objects of maritime war no small part is played by the disembarkation of troops, and by thus carrying the war into the enemy's country. Here, again, a school has arisen, according to whose tenets disembarkations are not so feasible as they were before the days of steamers

and railways. This is a mistake, and we shall do well to clear up the matter. One would suppose that the landing at Ismailia in 1882 would have opened the eyes of the adherents of this school; it is certainly remarkable that Arabi only became acquainted with the fact of this landing on the day of Tel-el-Kebir. It does not prove much, that the history of this century notices a number of unsuccessful disembarkations before the steam horse was at the disposal of the defender: for the mere possibility of an Anglo-Swedish attack from the sea was sufficient during the campaign of 1807 to make Napoleon place an army of 74,000 men on the German coast, and the comprehensive arrangements of the same nature which were made on the outbreak of war in 1870 are well known. The unfettered choice of time and place is a very strong element in favour of an expeditionary force and that which gives it importance. The introduction of steam has increased this importance, but this is not all, the great advance of the power of artillery also favours it. How much conditions have altered to the advantage of maritime expeditions may be seen by comparing the case of the last Egyptian expedition with that of the Anglo-Russian attack on Holland in 1799. The west wind which took the British fleet to the Texel kept back the Russians, who were coming from the east, for nearly a whole month, thus causing the failure of the expedition. The idea that the news of Masséna's victory at Zurich had its influence upon the results may be admitted, but there was reason enough for failure without it. How differently things pass nowadays! Two weeks after the departure of Lord Wolsley from England his fleet of transports had left a track of more than 3,000 sea knots behind it, and lay before Alexandria, whilst nobody imagined that the General would land a day later, not there, but at Ismailia. With regard to the practicability of a disembarkation, people are in the habit nowadays of examining a coast-line with a too critical eye, and are thus led to wrong conclusions, assuming that a fleet of transports will not venture to anchor on an open shore. The objection holds good, indeed, as to many coasts; for instance, those long, harbourless stretches bordering the Atlantic in France, Spain, and Portugal, which are mostly unapproachable; but this assertion must not be made general, for one need only remember that even the cumbrous Russian transport fleets, composed entirely of sailing-vessels, have repeatedly, and, moreover, during winter, succeeded in disembarking troops on the almost harbourless coast of Pomerania. Naval strategy is, without doubt, still a dark problem for many, but the existence of the science has been demonstrated in a very striking manner in a pamphlet by Captain Stenzel of the German Navy, which appeared not long ago, and in an anonymous article by a French naval Officer, which was published in the August number of the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*." The maritime Powers are reminded forcibly by the great revolution which has taken place in naval war material that this science must needs be reckoned with. The Russian, French, and English fleet manœuvres are the visible demonstration of the attempt to assimilate the conduct of fleets to the new ideas. The most interesting of these manœuvres are those carried out by the British squadrons; first, because their operations are the least concealed from public view; and, secondly, because the art of war at sea in the case of Great Britain stands before that on land. It cannot be denied that, as Captain Stenzel justly remarks, naval strategy has retrograded as a science since England has been supreme at sea. With the exception of the battle of Lissa no collision between naval forces of any importance has occurred since the Congress of Vienna, but that one solitary example of Lissa shows that strategical blunders can rarely be remedied by tactics, for it proved that the act of putting aims, which are at best only of secondary importance, before the main task in naval warfare, cannot go unpunished. The Italians weakened themselves in an aimless manner at Lesina, and thereby lost the game at Lissa.

Englishmen are very unwilling to occupy themselves with set and unsolved questions of a general nature ; when these crop up, they are treated as literary sport—read, and laid aside. Our neighbours prefer living from hand to mouth with regard to such matters. Should the time come when it appears positively necessary to solve an important problem, some belauded panacea which has turned up on some or other previous occasion is revived, receives official approval, and is administered as a fundamental remedy for the ailment. This procedure is applied especially to the questions of military organization and to that of national defence. When, at the end of the fifties, Orsini's attempt led to political complications, the English remembered the dangerous vicinity of Cherbourg, a Commission was immediately assembled which reported that the harbours of England were almost defenceless, in consequence of which the *martello towers* of Sheerness, Portsmouth, and Plymouth were constructed at a cost of many millions, though, as people changed their minds, these works are not yet fully armed. It was very well known that the danger of Cherbourg lay not in her walls, but in her ships ; but it was thought right in the first instance to meet the danger with walls. Then they went to Kronstadt with a fleet such as the Baltic had never before seen, found that they could not force their way in front and could not get behind it, the channel not being passable for big ships, that, in short, the fleet could do nothing. So they built a flotilla as quickly as possible, which gathered the laurels, of which we all know, at Sveaborg, and afterwards died of gradual decline at Haslar. When, in more modern times, the Treaty of San Stefano seemed to threaten British interests, and at the same time some Russian cruizers appeared upon the ocean, it was thought advisable to take up the question of the coaling stations. They set to work, and were by no means remiss in the erection of redoubts and in the manufacture of guns ; only the most necessary part of the whole thing—the garrisons—are still deficient. The knowledge was wanting on all these occasions that one must know beforehand what to do in order to attain a definite aim ; the fact is, the nation had enjoyed an unquestioned supremacy for half a century, and no one felt bound to think of providing for the future.

Decisive maritime operations are generally carried out in a very simple manner. The struggle for victory which ensues upon the meeting of two hostile fleets is alone decisive ; the meeting itself occurs in a straightforward manner independent of artificial conditions, and if a fight does not ensue upon the meeting, there is no real war. It is probably this circumstance which has misled competent professional men like Bouet-Willamez to assert that there is at sea no room for the real art of command, called strategy, and that the operations of actual combat constitute the whole science of maritime war. Two things were wanting to clear up this error : first, the warlike excitement which has been reigning during the last decade, and next, the complete revolution in the matériel of fleets. It is immaterial which of the two things exerted the greater influence ; but it is a fact that the more considerable naval manœuvres date from this time, and that they are now carried out annually. Germany and Austria set the example, but the British Admiralty deserves the credit of doing the thing on the largest scale and of expending the largest sums upon it. This is but natural, because a sea-frontier always presents itself before England whenever she takes a step to prove her strength. In order to form an opinion upon the value of these exercises we must needs cast a glance upon the nature and degree of defensive power required by England, and we must also take into consideration the constitution of her armed forces. At this moment the almost universally admitted insufficiency of her fleet occupies the front place ; in face of the fact that an Admiralty which only a year ago pronounced the state of

the Navy to be satisfactory has just been demanding twenty-one millions for its increase, such an admission cannot be contested, and yet when we consider the many and various tasks which this Navy has to fulfil, it is difficult to estimate its necessary strength in round numbers. If, however, we go to the root of the matter we must remark first of all upon the insufficiency of the Army. England has a Standing Army of, at the outside, 200,000 men, behind which a reserve of trained soldiers amounting, if we reckoned the so-called Militia Reserve, to about 100,000 men. The task of this Army consists in maintaining a picked force in India as reserve for the Anglo-Indian Army, and in providing garrisons for the mother-country, of which latter Ireland takes up the larger part. If we allow 70,000 to India, 100,000 for home service, 30,000 remain for holding the smaller colonies, the coaling-stations, and Egypt. If we take into consideration the fact that most of the stations apart from the mother-country are strong fortresses like Halifax, Bermuda, Gibraltar, Malta, and Hong Kong, the insufficiency of the force available for their occupation is self-evident, for the less such places are capable of defending themselves by their own unassisted means the greater become the demands upon the British Navy for their protection. Its principal aims must be to paralyse or annihilate the enemy's fleets, and to secure all communications by sea.

The strength necessary for these purposes depends on the strength of hostile neighbours, and on that of the allies upon whom Great Britain can reckon. It is much more difficult to give positive figures for the requirements of a fleet than for those of an army, whose numbers are more easy to determine with exactitude.

It would be as great a mistake to make up for deficiencies in the army by strengthening the fleet *ad libitum*, as it would be to do the converse. We cannot say for certain how far a country may have to depend upon itself in both respects, but there is much reason to object to assigning the part of General to one of two allied Powers and that of Admiral to the other. The conduct of operations of war can never be thus so thoroughly split up into distinct portions as to release any one of the associates from shifting for himself at a critical moment. By the well-known Treaty of Westminster at the commencement of the Seven Years' War, the King of Prussia was to have the aid of eight English line-of-battle ships in the Baltic; all who have studied the course of that war know how much this help was required. Had Frederick received it, neither Kolberg nor the corps of the Prince of Holstein would have furnished so sad an accompaniment to the fatal day of Kuenorsdorf. As far as the elder Pitt was concerned, the will would not have been wanting to fulfil the compact, but he could not answer for his successor, and so the ships were not forthcoming, their absence being accounted for partly by more urgent claims for them elsewhere, partly by doubtful excuses. How far the required strength of a navy and of its component parts can be determined by experiment, how far the principles and usages of maritime war as formerly practised may be reconciled with the changes of material? Such was the problem laid before the English Admiralty for the solution of which a series of maritime exercises were carried out last year and continued in the present year.

In every picture on a large scale contrasts first attract the eye and occupy the attention of the spectator, even distracting it from the main point. Such was the case with the picture rich in effects which was displayed last year on the shores of Great Britain.

It was a war-game at sea, the principal interest of which was centred in a blockade, combined with predatory warfare and the imposition of forced contributions. A part of the ships enclosed in two blockaded harbours succeeded in getting put of port, this part was of sufficient force, as to

number, to relieve the squadron which remained blockaded in the other port, for united with the latter it would be stronger than the blockading fleet. One would suppose that the object of the two blockaded squadrons would have been to effect a junction, and then to fall upon a part of the enemy's force with a view of annihilating it. This, however, would not have agreed with the general idea given out by the Admiralty, according to which the blockaded squadrons were to break out if they could, avoid the blockading squadrons, and then commence a career of captures and impositions which, as it was assumed, would decide the overthrow of England. But if we here consider this matter in earnest and ask ourselves "Is this war?" we shall be inclined to reply in the negative. It is merely a well-designed attempt to make an impression upon timid people, upon the comfort of the "Landed Gentry," and the equilibrium of the "Stock Exchange." Calculations were made to an hour as to how soon after the exhaustion of the Liverpool granaries hunger would make itself felt, and the Bank of England would stop payment. There is room for difference of opinion as to the value of this object-lesson. Some, perhaps, went too far in asserting that the manœuvres degenerated into a game of hide and seek, but they certainly threw no light, as far as outsiders are concerned, upon the real meaning of maritime war. Its object is to interrupt traffic at sea, to close and debar communication with the coasts and ports of the enemy, and to gain the command, not only in a military but in a commercial sense, of all the seas which surround his shores. The thorough attainment of those ends is not arrived at by damage however extensive to the enemy's means of supply, by impositions and by capture of sea-freights, but only by destroying what serves to protect his communications and keep them open, namely, his main fighting force.

Last year's "general idea" neglected this object, which is to be regretted. It may be replied that this does not matter, as what was omitted last year may be added to the programme this year; but this is not so. Those who prepared the scheme converted a secondary into the primary object, and thus gave a false appearance to the war-picture. Incorrect assumptions are founded upon many important dispositions, and conclusions are drawn therefrom which are not accurate. The escape of the blockaded squadron is looked upon as a successful evasion of the blockader, and as scoring a point against him and in favour of the other side; but this would really only be the case if the evader succeeded in obtaining such additional strength as to enable him to destroy his enemy before the latter was reinforced. No such an attempt was however made, as it would have interfered with the Admiralty scheme; instead of this the squadron which escaped undertook work utterly unbecoming for the ships which composed it, for one does not require either ironclads or monster guns for exacting contributions, capturing merchant ships, and burning towns; nor is it good economy to bring such huge machines into play when any small vessels you like to use could do the work at much less cost. The Admiral who acted thus in war would be committing the same error as that of the Italian Admiral who attacked Lesina without taking any notice of the yet unbroken strength of his opponent; he wasted his own strength on matters of secondary importance, thereby weakening himself for the critical moment, and he suffered in consequence. We cannot, however, blame the English Admiral who went off with his squadron last year, because he was literally carrying out the idea which was imposed upon him, and which obliged him to treat an operation of minor importance as his chief objective. The *Convention* and the *Directory* laid down similar rules for their Admirals during the revolutionary wars, and in consequence their Navy gradually went to the bad. We must nourish confidence in victory; this is not, however, gained by burning and devastating the enemy's defenceless sea-places, but by measuring our own strength fairly

against his; and this is not done by merely ordering our Admirals, as was often done on the French side in those wars, not to *avoid* battle.

It may, however, be argued that a fair representation of a sea-fight cannot be given, that it is not therefore practical to imitate operations which must lead to a conflict which cannot after all take place; that fleet evolutions are, however, in themselves useful for the sake of the practice which they afford, and that it is better to make them lead up to some other object than to an actual combat. This leads naturally to a discussion of the value attaching to this game of war, and further to the conclusion that we have no reason to doubt its utility, but that this was obtained from the British manœuvres of last year at the cost of sound strategy.

It is contrary to all English precedents to open a maritime war by merely making turning movements so as to deceive the enemy. To assume that the order to "sink, burn, and destroy" applies only to private property cannot be admitted. This was, however, the very form and wording of the instructions which were given to British Admirals throughout the last century and during the first part of the present century, even down to the time of the Crimean War. When the French Admiral Bruix entered the Mediterranean with thirty ships of the line in 1799, he must have intended to annihilate his enemy, not to make all sorts of demonstrations and feints; as far as the numerical strength of his fleet went, he could hold his own; it is, however, doubtful whether his morale was equal to that of the English Admiral, who had just been gaining laurels at Aboukir, otherwise, although the general course of events would not have been in the least affected, there cannot be a doubt that the battles on the Trebia and at Novi would have been fought under very different auspices. Nelson, on the other hand, knew what he had to do, and what was to be expected, when on hearing of Bruix's appearance he at once disembarked the troops which he had just taken on board at Palermo for conveyance to Naples. One may suppose that the plan of campaign allotted to Admiral Bruix was about the same as that imposed upon Admiral Tryon last year by the Lords of the Admiralty, and as a trial of strength on the part of Baird was out of the question, all that remained for him to do was to go to London. Having got so far, we have nearly said all we have to say about last year's manœuvres. As surely as faulty strategy at the commencement of a war leads to bad results, so surely does an ill-considered introduction to peace manœuvres stamp them with an unreality which extends to all subsequent details. Admiral Baird really found himself in an "excellent position," the one and great defect of which, however, was that no one thought it worth while to attack him in it. If the enemy broke the blockade, he was to "pursue or take him;" such were his instructions; this, however, counted for nothing as long as the task of his adversary was simply one of "evasion." The blockaded Admiral was instructed by the Admiralty to defer for ten days the movements necessary to effect his purpose. But without this restriction the representation of maritime war in peace is already much affected by the fact that actual battle can only be very distantly imitated. The representation must be confined to movements, the importance of which depends upon time and place. In the case before us, this told all the more because the principal task assigned to one opponent was to get away from the other. The reality of the thing or the representation of the reality was anything but promoted by this delay of ten days, for the blockading Admiral was deceived by a proceeding which would have been, if possible, reversed in actual warfare.

The assumption is doubtless permissible that a squadron to which the task of breaking a blockade is allotted should not wait till this is complete, and until his opponent has so perfected all the means at his disposal, that it becomes doubly more difficult to break out. On this account the delay

imposed on Admiral Tryon was, to say the least, not practical ; on the contrary, we should not go too far in pronouncing it to be deceptive and unreasonable. The work of the Intelligence Department played a peculiar part in this representation of war. This work is, as we well know, divided into distinct branches, one of which deals with our own communications with the rear, the other with the enemy's movements. The British fleet which was attacking Ireland communicated in a sort of way with the bases on its own coast at Milford and Lamlash. Some fast cruisers were available for the purpose, and as there were not enough of these, the deficiency was made good by the employment of torpedo-boats, which were intended for a very different purpose. Intelligence of the enemy's movements was confined practically to what was gathered from some newspaper reporters as they came and went. Now it is quite unquestionable that such an introduction of private intercourse into peace-exercises is not allowable, assuming, as it is does in war-time, a form which cannot be imitated in peace. Spies are shot, if caught, whereas in peace-time the danger which attends the collection of information during war is non-existent. It was only in this illegitimate manner that the blockading Admiral was informed that his enemy intended to break the blockade—one of his reporters having been allowed to communicate with the shore at Berehaven. In the same way, a post-bag intended for the blockading Admiral came into the enemy's hands ; the boat on which it was conveyed being captured by one of the ships which had escaped, and being smuggled into Lough Swilly under a flag of truce through the blockading squadron. We may leave the question undecided whether it is allowable to use a flag of truce during peace exercises ; in the case before us, its use was of the nature of a *ruse de guerre*, which was practicable in peace but unlikely to succeed in war, because no one would then allow such easy and unimpeded traffic with a flag of truce. We may think what we like of this part of the affair, but opinions cannot be divided as to the insufficiency of the communications of intelligence from the rear as far as the blockading squadron was concerned. The work of bringing ordinary news was confined partly to large cruisers, like the "Arethusa," partly to torpedo-boats, neither of which were fitted for the purpose, for by using large cruisers as despatch-boats, you expend fighting power on work of secondary importance ; whilst by employing torpedo-boats in this way you withdraw them from their own special vocation, getting thereby mail-packets upon which you cannot rely, because of their too great dependence upon wind and weather. No adequate preparation had been made last year for the use of the coast-telegraph stations for war purposes, and their assistance was not available for the blockading Admiral. The blockaded Admiral was better off in this respect : being superintendent of the *naval reserve*, there was a connection between him and all the coast stations, which very much facilitated the work of his intelligence department. We cannot conclude our notice of last year's naval manoeuvres without reference to another important point. Captain Stenzel, in his paper on "The Conduct of Naval Warfare," remarks very justly that it was a mistake on the part of Admiral Baird to weaken his squadron by detaching ships from it immediately after the escape of the enemy from Bantry Bay. But what else could he do, as no previously prepared arrangements for coal supply had been made ? That this be done in time of war is a matter of vital importance during its whole continuance ; it is only the expense which prevents this being done in peace-time, during which it is not convenient to employ all the resources of supply habitual in time of war. It is evident from the foregoing that in future maritime warfare coaling stations some few hundred knots in our rear will not suffice, and that squadrons which wish to be always ready for action must take a good part of their supply along with them. It is difficult work to ship coal at sea, and the attempt to do so has not as yet

been very successful, nevertheless it is one of the things which must be arrived at sooner or later.

English Admirals are at present of opinion that a corresponding number of ships must be maintained to relieve those despatched to take in coal; this means doubling the size of a fleet—the most costly way that can be found of settling the coal-supply question. In the paper which we have often quoted on the “Conduct of Naval Warfare,” fault is found with the blockading Admiral for having sent his small vessels to take shelter in the enemy’s ports. This will, however, have of necessity to be reckoned with in future warfare; it has even been done before now, and is sure to be an important feature in the wars to come.

It will be impossible to bar all such places to an enemy by fortifications, neither would it be wise to do so if you could. The question requires all the less consideration in the case before us, as in last year’s exercises the significance of fortified harbours and of coast defence was left out of court.

Clausewitz explains “strategy” to mean “the use of battle for obtaining military and political objects,” a most comprehensive interpretation. Battle is, however, excluded from peace-exercises, to which, therefore, a somewhat less comprehensive definition must be given. If, then, we understand by *tactics* the employment of our combatant power in battle, we should here define *strategy* to mean the “concentration of our fighting force at the right time and place.”

This strategical problem was neither set nor solved in last year’s British naval war-game. That of the present year may possibly give further instruction.

The conclusions derived from peace-exercises are often only of secondary advantage. There is much in their performance which is really like maritime war, but at the same time there is also much which only resembles it in appearance, and which leads easily to false inferences. The German language contains no fitting expression for an idea which frequently comes to the surface when treating of war, and it makes use in consequence of a foreign expression, we mean the idea of the “*imponderable*.” The first Napoleon was in the habit, when comparing the fighting strength of two Powers, to say that a single man of one State was worth such-and-such a number of the other. What caused the single man to weigh down the balance was this very “*imponderable*” factor, which Napoleon attributed partly to physical qualities, but in greater part to moral influences. Patriotism, good control of public spirit, the use of the intelligence for extensive and worthy aims, development and bracing of strength, both bodily and mental; all these things, as displayed in the habits and customs of a nation, compose that “*imponderable*” matter, the existence of which in plenty on the one side, the paucity or total absence of which on the other, create the inequality between them. The bad “*imponderables*” deserve mention by the side of the good, for they play almost as important a part in war as the latter—these are bad passions, fanaticism, covetousness, and selfishness.

When let loose and given play to recklessly they are often powerful agents, and their effect is seldom wanting. If we allow that the first Napoleon showed considerable mastery in the employment of both kinds of incentive to action, it may be pleaded in extenuation that, especially in the earlier wars, no one hesitated to take advantage of them, only not always with equal ability and good fortune. When these were wanting, the use of the bad incentives often turned against the operator. Naval war has always held the first place in Great Britain, and it is on the sea that the possession of those good “*imponderables*” has always been particularly advantageous to her. The power of enduring the hardships of a sailor’s life, the readiness to make those very hardships subservient to their warlike vocation, these are

specially Teutonic gifts ; the Anglo-Saxon has known how to make the best use of them, and the world knows the result. But also the hateful "imponderables" have played no small part in his success ; their effect in his work of war has been so unmistakable that it was near showing itself even in the peace operations. False imputations of horrible and dangerous deeds is, in the intercourse of nations with one another, a means of intimidation. It is used to inflame the passions, as when lately the story was invented that a war-ship of one nation had treacherously sunk that of another Power in a sequestered part of the Southern Ocean. Months must elapse before the utter falsehood of the report could be made known, and the effect of the lie on the thoughtless masses cannot be obliterated. If such or similar means are used in your own camp no apparent harm may come of it, but though no visible mischief may result the bad effect is always durable.

The curtailment of outlay on armies and fleets is always popular in England, and when a Government is not firmly in the saddle it is very reluctant to propose an increase of expenditure, and must be impelled to do so by an unmistakable display of public opinion. This is the only way of accounting for the introduction of predatory warfare into peace-mancuvres, and though the immediate inducement to do so disappeared since the last votes for the Navy were passed, it was thought proper to adhere to the system once it was started. Looked at from any other point of view, it is a course which cannot seriously be justified. We have begun by touching upon this point, to which we shall not have to return, because it makes an exception to the many useful lessons to be gathered from the last naval mancuvres. It will be sufficient to add that the relation which the captured vessels bear to the capturing ships will be very different in real war to what it appears to be in peace. By far the greater proportion of merchant-vessels will no longer find it necessary to play such a poor part in war-time as formerly, for the sailing ships will be all laid up soon after the outbreak of hostilities, while the steamers will make use of their freedom of movement, and will not fall so helplessly into the hands of the depredator, as was the case with sailing-vessels. Having thus disposed of the question of captures at sea, we will treat as lightly that of attacks on the shore-line, because the apparent result is hardly worthy of serious consideration. It may well be necessary to use strong measures to act upon British nerves ; in proof of this, if we had no other, we may mention the agony-pieces which are acted on British provincial stages ; one of the provincials could hardly believe that "Mary Stuart" was classed as a tragedy in Germany, where the really tragic effects were not produced on the stage. Where the circle of spectators contains a majority of people who hold such views it is of no use to try the game of *intimidation* upon them, though the mention in the newspapers of the large sums extorted as contributions fails not of its effect, but this must not be mistaken for practice in the work of war ; it is not even "*magnifique*," still less "*la guerre*."

We intend, in what we have just said, no reflection upon the Admirals in command as far as last year's work is concerned, for it was all in the programme, and was intended to be one of the principal features of the performance. Not so this year. As far as we know the representation and practice of predatory warfare was not actually enjoined, but it was carried out on a large and small scale by both parties ; the captured, except in one case, generally looked upon it as a good joke, and the ransoming of the sea-side places alone led to any discussion ; the matter will cost a lot of ink-shed, and will not be settled before the next real war. Little has been said this year about the umpires attached to the fleets, perhaps because it was discovered that the tasks assigned to them were either too great or too small. Moreover, the sight of the most unprejudiced umpire is limited by the

bulwarks and the horizon of the ship on which he is placed, and of the squadron to which the ship belongs; his judgment is affected by relations from the influence of which it is hard to emancipate himself. Nowhere does the feeling of comradeship flourish more than on board ship; pleasure is a strong cement to unite those who share it, still stronger is the bond of common pain, of which even the greatest enthusiasts for life on the ocean wave cannot help admitting that the fury of the elements is productive. No wonder, then, if partiality, favour, and affection are occasionally produced; and unless it become possible to float a squad of impartial umpires in a balloon above the whole scene there will always be a risk of partiality being displayed. It is necessary to mention this also in our introductory remarks, because, like the "*imponderable*" before alluded to, it is a part of the arrangements which does not fulfil the expectations formed concerning it, and which has not the importance attached to it. The naval manœuvres of this year are very fruitful of instruction, on which account it was all the more necessary to preface our remarks upon them with what we have just been saying, because the proper comprehension of the lessons to be derived from them might easily be impaired by the circumstances alluded to. The experiment of a mobilization of the Navy, the nature of war at sea and on the coasts; such were the declared objects of this year's exercises, to be carried out, of course, only as far as compatible with a peace footing. An attempt at mobilization in time of peace, even of the land forces, encounters difficulties which make it of doubtful value. The completeness of the effective force, the war equipment, and the dislocation of the troops are only partially feasible, because the whole country is affected by these manœuvres, and on that account the leverage of urgent political reasons is required. A mobilization of the Navy is carried out entirely in the war-harbours, the increase of force which accompanies it consisting chiefly in vessels of all kinds which are at hand, the only thing omitted being a comprehensive completion of the personnel. Everything else is carried on just as it is when an increase to the effective land force is made in time of peace, as, for instance, what soldiers call the concentration of the Army (*Aufmarsch*), an operation which requires extraordinary and extensive preparations. But the completeness of the personnel in the case of the Navy does not encounter the same difficulties, for it is principally obtained from the maritime population; those who are drafted into the Navy still follow their own calling, and it is easy to limit the demand upon them so as not to damage private interests. The case is otherwise if we compare the mobilization of an army with that of a fleet in their relative significance. The above-mentioned urgent political reasons affect the actions of a fleet in quite another way. If the Oriental question crops up unexpectedly, we will say at Sofia, in the midst of the most perfect peace, almost without notice and without any declared object, the greatest activity is displayed, commencing almost simultaneously at Toulon, Spezzia, Pola, Stamboul, and Malta. No one asks why, or if one enquires he gets no answer, for none of those employed can at once give expression to the ideas which he has formed. If a similar restlessness displays itself also at Sevastopol and Nikolajeff the beat of the pulse will no doubt be felt in the British Channel; Cherbourg, Brest, Plymouth, and Portsmouth sharing in the excitement. Whoever watches the traffic which then passes between the Mediterranean and the British Channel will soon discern an increase of movement, and whoever reaches Malta shortly afterwards finds that the British Mediterranean Fleet has quietly been nearly doubled, and, if not quite to the same extent, an increase approaching to this will be noticeable in all the British naval ports, for Great Britain knows that it must depend upon its fleets, and on its fleets alone, come what will of Army-organization, which is somewhat coming to the fore.

We may call these and similar ebullitions, together with the preparations arising from them, what we will, they have all the significance of mobilization, differing only from the latter in that the expression is not used. Whilst that word signifies the end of the preparations for war, the proceedings above described are only the first steps in the affair, and whilst, on shore, the prohibition to export horses is the first forerunner of a mobilization, so, at sea, an embargo on merchant-vessels is the immediate precursor to the same.

One must make this clear to oneself if one considers the naval manœuvres from the standpoint of a mobilization. We need only peruse the history of the present age to discover a whole series of mobilizations of this kind always accompanied by similar preparations for war, but which neither led immediately to war, nor prevented one, nor ended in producing one. At the same time, as is well known, this did not prevent great battles being fought without being in a state of war, or that action should take the form of impressive demonstrations; Navarino, Dulcigno, and Besika will serve for examples.

It was necessary to make particular allusion to this aspect of naval mobilization, because the exercises of which we are treating were calculated to give a representation of war with what was in the main a peace-establishment. The conditions to which we are here drawing attention deserve notice besides for another reason. In a navy like that of Great Britain, which has to provide for holding strong stations at a distance from home, the formation of new squadrons on passing from a peace to a war footing is but little required. The despatch of fresh armaments after the declaration of war is generally a tardy measure, the distances being usually so great that in spite of steam time has to be reckoned with. On land, in the case of each belligerent, it follows as a matter of course that the army must be concentrated on the frontier, the course of the operation being open to observers on both sides who can calculate it to a nicety. Such is not the case at sea. The concentration of naval forces must be completed, not only before the war actually begins, but even before the order to mobilize has gone forth, or else it comes too late. In the case of two armies opposed to one another, the passage of the frontier is virtually an act of war; but a Russian squadron may lie before the Bosphorus, and an English one at the same time before the Dardanelles, and yet it is not a state of war, for the waters are everywhere free to all comers, and it is even not considered a hostile act to infringe upon the zone of "flotsam and jetsam," which the stronger side will take the liberty of doing, whilst the weaker one will often put up with it, though he may sometimes protest against the act as contrary to international law, seldom, however, getting a hearing. The course which Great Britain has so often pursued is noteworthy with respect to this side of naval warfare. The electric telegraph was unknown at the time of her maritime wars, and in the instructions sent to foreign parts it was often necessary to anticipate events; hence sea captures were often in full swing before the actual declaration of war. This is one of the peculiarities of traffic on the sea, that hostilities may and do take place, as forerunners of war, because friends and enemies have been accustomed at all times to navigate the same waters, and because a meeting with the future enemy is more accentuated at sea than on shore. For instance, the embargo or the seizure of private property found in harbours under a hostile flag. It was necessary to refer to the foregoing as an instance of the very peculiar suppositions under which naval preparations for war are made. What is in that case required for a mobilization must not be confounded with what is wanted for a similar operation on shore, as we should otherwise be misled in our calculations, and should fail in attaining the object in view. The first objectives of an army concentrating for action are the points at which it will cross the frontier; those of a fleet are the

military harbours or other stations of the hostile squadrons. As to attain these points we need not set our feet on the enemy's territory, we may go there as early as we like. Our only restraint need be the question as to the amount of force at our disposal. The Power which wishes to protect its maritime communications must be strong enough to occupy this advanced position. It must be able to hold its own on the scene of decisive action, and must not be under the necessity of avoiding it or of seeking safety in "stratagems," and all manner of feints. Such being the case, all the things which with an army characterize the passage from a peace to a war footing, and which come into force at the moment of mobilization, must with the navy be in part carried out more or less long before.

In England the word *mobilization* has not the same significance as in countries where obligatory service is the rule. In the latter, when the order to "mobilize" is issued, all other considerations give way to its accomplishment. The State obtains complete disposal of the whole population fit to bear arms on land as well as on sea, and as the use of this power interferes greatly with the whole system of commercial life, it must needs be delayed until there can be no longer any doubt that the apprehension of war will be realized. This can well be done, because the peace organization which exists along with the general obligation to service provides for every post which has to be filled, and assures the required number of additional men. With regard to the personnel, the English Navy has its peace establishment, which mainly consists of the so-called "continuous service men" who enter quite young, and after twelve or twenty years' service are discharged with pensions, forming respectively the coastguard and pensioner reserve, and being liable for service in case of war. As these are real veterans their number is not great; if we reckon the peace establishment of the Navy at something under 50,000, we may put the coastguard at a maximum of 5,000, and the *pensioner reserve* at not more than 2,210. The figures show that these reserves do not count for much as a reinforcement, even when we add to them 2,000 "Royal Naval Volunteers," but they have the advantage of being available even before the outbreak of war. The "Royal Naval Reserve" is of much greater numerical importance. This force amounts to nearly 20,000, but it is only available to a very limited extent, for its members are in the employment of private shipmasters, and are scattered throughout the world. During the period of their engagement they receive a not very generous yearly allowance, having besides the obligation to serve in war-time if required, that of occasionally when at home going through a month's drill on board a training-ship. As the annual allowance is welcome as a supplement to their private earnings, making their total income up to more than a man-of-war's-man receives, they thereby receive a premium, as a naval Officer of high rank expressed it, to keep out of the Service, at any rate in time of peace. Moreover, as the infrequent and short periods of training for which these men are available are insufficient to ensure efficiency, the system does not receive general approval. Of the peace establishment which, as we have said, may be put in round numbers at 50,000, about three-fifths are on sea-going ships, two-fifths on harbour-ships, and these latter are the first available in case of any special armament in time of peace. As regards the matériel, there are at present always about 100 vessels of all sizes in commission, of which about 16 are heavy battle-ships, 50 large cruisers, and 40 smaller ones. The first reserve of ships consists of about half the number in commission, that is to say 8 battle-ships and the same proportion of smaller vessels.

In the second reserve are about 16 more battle-ships, 40 cruisers, large and small, and some quite small vessels. This last group is manifestly not to be reckoned upon, in case of a sudden mobilization, but the same cannot be

said of the so-called *coast defence* ships, that is to say, 10 ironclads, 6 at home, 4 at foreign stations, and some 40 gunboats, mostly of an obsolete pattern. Now as the naval manœuvres take place in the home-waters, the above-mentioned 6 ironclads may be counted upon.

Of course, the ships in commission and in British waters, the so-called *Channel squadron* and the coast defence ships, making up altogether 18, mostly well-manned ironclads, are in first line for peace manœuvres. Seventy-three ships took part in those of this year, to make up which number it was necessary to put 44 additional ships in commission, to man and fit them out; of which 14 were at Chatham and Sheerness, 16 at Portsmouth, and 14 at Plymouth, so that in treating of the act of mobilization, in this instance, we have to deal with the ships and dockyards just cited. Bearing in mind that, as above mentioned, there are somewhat more than 100 ships permanently in commission, we find that the immediate increase to the active force was in the proportion of nearly 50 per cent., an increase which, as far as the personnel is concerned, would be no easy matter to supply, even in States where the general obligation to serve is the rule, because the reserves are not available in time of peace. In England, where there is no compulsory service, the same difficulty exists, for although a part of the reserve men are available, their number is insufficient, and this is especially the case with regard to the engine department.

It is certainly a great performance on the part of the "Intelligence Department" of the Admiralty, which was formed some years ago, that 44 ships should within four days be commissioned, manned, and fitted out. We should be mistaken, however, if we thought that this was done in a manner suitable to a state of war, and we must not take quite as a matter of fact the suddenness of the order to fit out issued to the dockyards. We have already noticed that the complements were to a great extent made up of coastguard and "pensioner reserve" men, we have only to add that the different training ships, gunnery ships, the so-called steam reserve-ships (receiving ships for stokers), and, lastly, in no small proportion, the corps of marine infantry, contributed their quotas towards manning the ships put in commission. The crews also of some ships which happened at this time to return from foreign stations were made use of. The engine-room personnel of the newly commissioned ships was only completed to within 25 per cent. of the establishment, and the deficiency was very severely felt during the trying manœuvres. In like manner there was a want of Officers, for Lieutenants alone were 200 under their establishment, in consequence of which Officers' duties were often performed by petty officers, which may answer passably in peace-time, but which in time of war would be objectionable, and not conducive to discipline. The four days allowed for fitting out were no doubt made the most of, though in some cases there may have been previous preparation. It would be going too far to say that after these four days the ships were really ready for sea and in fighting trim. The days are over when a Keppel could leave Portsmouth with untrained crews, and comfort himself with the assurance that he would not meet the enemy till somewhere about Plymouth, for in these days ships with their engines and armament are very different, and a real preparation for war requires more than was furnished in the case of mobilization now under notice.

On the other hand, the part played by the dockyards and their hands this year contrasted very favourably with the performance of the previous year; in this respect great progress was made. Whereas on the former occasion we hear of ammunition for breechloaders having been served out to ships armed only with muzzle-loaders, of torpedoes being issued which did not fit the tubes, of ships with a complement of 300 men being rationed for 600, such complaints were at least unheard of this year. The stores intended for each

ship with the inventory were kept separate in the dockyards, prepared and packed already for embarkation, but there is some reason to suppose that this would not have been quite the case had the demand been made at any other unexpected time. There was also no deficiency of means of transport in the dockyards. A systematic time table had been prepared for the four days' work; this was strictly adhered to, and experience showed that nothing had been forgotten, which was an excellent proof of the foresight displayed by the *Intelligence Department*.

Take it all in all, the way in which the whole thing was planned and carried out was very creditable, but it was not the practical representation of a plan capable of being executed at any time and place, and in a manner suitable to the conditions of actual war; hence it was not what we understand under the term *mobilization*. The same remark cannot be made of the representation of naval warfare which ensued. As in the case of the mobilization, unreality very much hampered the performance. Although the representation of a mobilization was not quite adequate, it would yet be unfair to say that a plan of mobilization is utterly wanting. This is not the place to discuss the question, suffice it to say that the plan not only exists, but that it is also thought out in a manner which does all honour to the foresight and to the practical judgment of our English cousins.

If unreality gave in some respects a false aspect to the manœuvres, the lessons which were derived from them are unmistakable. The effect of steam-power upon strategy and tactics, of the electric telegraph upon the work of the *Intelligence Department*, was brought out in a very remarkable manner. One point which shines out clearly in this year's manœuvres is the direction given to them by those in supreme authority. The Admiralty associated itself with the war this time, which it had not done before. Thus, in 1887, one theatre of war had been chosen in the Irish Channel and another in the British Channel, each independent of the other, so that neither the one nor the other had even any system of getting intelligence from the coast and using it for the common good. In 1888 the fault of entirely separate theatres of war was avoided, but the conduct of the war was confined to the Commanders at sea, the Admiralty itself remaining neutral and thus placing itself in a false position; for when war is being carried on near your own shores unity of command cannot be dispensed with. This fault was also entirely rectified in 1889, and it will be seen how excellently the change told upon strategy.

The English harbours served as stations for the fleet designated by the letter A, those of Ireland for that known as B fleet, the former under Admiral Tryon, the latter under Admiral Baird. As battle-ships, A had nine ironclads, B had twelve; A Fleet had also five squadrons detached to different English harbours, composed of smaller, partly protected ships, and designated by the letters C, D, E, F, and G. These were to serve as second line of defence, and, although confined to the neighbourhood of their respective stations, were otherwise free to act as required. Ten cruisers, for predatory warfare and for scouting duties, were attached to the English fleet, and fifteen ships and smaller vessels of the same description to that of Ireland. In naval warfare the chief strength lies in the battle fleet, which is not limited to local defence and which is capable of free movement. It occupies at sea the same position as the field army on land, and is intended to serve the same purposes as the latter. Each battle fleet is the main objective for that of the enemy, each trying to fall in with the other and to engage it so as to produce a general action, which will be followed by minor engagements. This search for the enemy on land requires a great deal of art on account of the difficulties of movement and supply, also of those created by the nature of the country and the different means of transport. This art is

displayed in the general idea and in the *critique* of the autumn manoeuvres of an army. As the war-objective of a fleet is the same as that of an army, it may be thought that the general idea for its manoeuvres should be similar, but this is not so, because there is no room at sea for the "art" of which we have spoken on account of the simplicity of movement, of the "terrain," and of arrangements. Indeed, we may go further and assert that not only is there no room for "art," but that the great simplicity peculiar to the movements of fleets leads, in our peaceful imitations, to undertaking tasks which produce much that is inconsistent with real war. For instance, the Admirals were empowered by the "general idea" to assume at pleasure, according to circumstances, either an offensive or defensive attitude, laying aside, however, when attacking, any idea of actual collision, and aiming at objects the attainment of which could only have a secondary effect on the general result.

The rules laid down for the game contributed to the same end. These are of such a nature as to exclude the formation of any opinion as to the respective tactical skill displayed by ships, and as to prevent the question of tactics arising at all between ship and torpedo-boat, for all ships were directed to keep at long distances from one another, and actual collision only took place with specially prepared torpedoes. The latter, though just as numerous as last year, came on this occasion but little into play, and we shall, therefore, have nothing further to say about them. That torpedo-boats were again often used as scouts and despatch-boats is a misuse which, as it seems, is not so easily dispensed with. As the representation of tactical defeat which leads in war to a crisis is not feasible, the "general idea" takes another direction, and what in actual warfare at sea would only follow upon a general engagement, being therefore of secondary importance (we mean the coast-attack), becomes the principal aim. Hence arises the fault that such attacks on the coast or rather on harbours are undertaken, although the enemy's main strength is still unbroken. In order to arrive at this end all means must be employed to avoid meeting the enemy's main force, and whereas in actual warfare all instructions are calculated to produce a meeting with it and to break it up, in sham war the whole thing turns upon the invention of stratagems and clever dodges, by means of which you manage to follow the rules of the game. According to these the undisturbed possession of a harbour for eight hours constitutes a victory. In order to prevent the enemy from gaining such a victory in the Thames, the English Admiral, in 1888, steamed thither with all his force after the Irish Fleet had slipped out from the harbour which he was blockading, and meanwhile the western ports were requisitioned behind his back. This time the Irish Admiral was not blockaded, and could go where he liked, and so planned an attack upon the Thames. As, when you have to avoid your enemy, speed becomes the principal thing, he kept back the slower ships of his fleet and despatched the faster ships in two divisions by different routes, so as to escape notice. Either by mere accident or by the remarkable ability of his opponent, the separate divisions fell in with superior forces of the enemy, and three ships had to strike their flags in obedience to the manoeuvre rules, that is to say, nearly half the attacking squadron; the stratagem was discovered, and the plan had to be given up, a further result being that the Irish Fleet, which was originally about 25 per cent. weaker than that of England, became now less than its opponent by 43 per cent., and in consequence all idea of plans on a large scale had to be given up.

The fault inherent in the plan which failed has already been noticed; but its unfortunate execution teaches us that an Admiral should not divide his strength in the presence of the unbroken and united force of the enemy; that he should not leave that force out of consideration, and that attempts to

clude such an unbroken force are very objectionable. Thus the capture of the "Hero," "Camperdown," and "Immortalité" was the first great incident of this war-game, and for that reason of interest, because it gave the English Admiral Tryon the opportunity of a movement which hindered the junction of the enemy's divisions, and afforded a victory to Tracy, his second in command.

As now, after such a serious loss, the Irish Admiral was prevented from achieving anything great, there remained for him nothing but harbour attacks on a small scale. Admiral Baird's second in command, Admiral D'Arcy Irvine, moved with the two ironclads "Anson" and "Collingwood," afterwards joined by the "Inflexible," round the north of Scotland to the east coast, where he levied contributions on *Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and Peterhead*, a proceeding of very doubtful value for purposes of instruction, but this very raid led to an incident, the value of the lesson to be learnt from which, cannot be over-estimated.

When the writer of the article in the "Revue des Deux Mondes," on modern naval warfare, concludes with the expression, "There is then such a thing as naval strategy," he could not have found a better example in support of his views than the fate of Admiral D'Arcy Irvine. Following the eight hours' rule he only remained that time before each of the ports Peterhead and Aberdeen; his aim was apparently the Thames, and he must lose no time in getting there. He did not, in any case, wait for an answer from the town authorities to his requisitions. On Saturday, the 20th August, he lay with the "Anson" and "Collingwood" before Leith, his Commander-in-Chief, Baird, being then at Queenstown, whilst the Commander-in-Chief of the English fleet was cruising off the west coast near the Lizard. The latter ran into Falmouth that day and heard of the appearance of D'Arcy Irvine before Leith. He saw from this that the Thames was threatened, and sent Tracy with four ships immediately to the "Downs," where that Admiral arrived at 2 p.m. on Sunday. Believing D'Arcy Irvine to have with him only two battle-ships—"Anson" and "Collingwood"—whilst he could himself dispose of two battle-ships—"Rodney" and "Howe"—and of two heavy cruisers—"Undaunted" and "Narcissus"—he moved northwards to meet his adversary, and arrived early on Monday at Spurnhead, where he learnt that D'Arcy Irvine's squadron had been reinforced the previous day by the "Inflexible," gaining thereby a superiority over him. He therefore retired on Aldborough, south of Yarmouth, to receive the reinforcements which he knew to be on the way. He had not long to wait, for the "Ajax," "Invincible," and "Shannon" arrived before Deal at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, and "Ajax" joined Tracy at 9.30 the same evening. The Admiral, having received this accession of strength, moved off at once and reached Scarborough early on Wednesday morning. There he found himself in a thick fog, but he felt sure that the enemy was close in front of him, as D'Arcy Irvine's movements had been throughout reported to him from the look-out stations. Knowing that he might meet with the enemy at any moment, he kept all his ships ready to put on full steam at once when required; as luck would have it the fog lifted suddenly, and the weaker enemy being caught unprepared—that is, without sufficient steam in the boilers to get away—was obliged to surrender. Thus the Irish Admiral's Fleet is once more reduced by half its fighting strength.

In order to form an opinion we must now return to a consideration of the general situation. The Irish Admiral commenced the war with twelve battle-ships opposed to nine of his opponent's. He recognized the mouth of the Thames as the enemy's principal vulnerable point, and therefore chose it as his main point of attack. He sought to send thither by devious routes the ships which he looked upon as the flower of his fleet, trusting in their speed

to avoid the enemy, but in this he failed, losing two battle-ships, and thus reducing his strength to ten, and his numerical superiority to one. He, thereupon, sent out the remainder of the pith of his fleet on another expedition, on this occasion round the north of Scotland, with the view of reaching the mouth of the Thames by another track and of executing by the way a raid on the British coasts. He succeeded in the latter aim, but did not gain his principal object, for the defending Admiral was on the watch off the south-west coast, and, being informed of what was passing on the east coast, sent a superior force which came up with the Irish Admiral's attacking squadron in good time, and overpowered it, thanks to numerical superiority, forcing the Admiral's flagship to retire. As the "Collingwood" and "Inflexible" were then captured, the Irish Fleet was now reduced from ten to eight battle-ships, its original superiority being converted into inferiority. As is so often the case, one is tempted here, judging after the event, to credit the English Admiral with the greater ability. This would, however, be unfair, for in the first place we have to reflect that every move of the game can only be justified by the fact that it was make-believe warfare. Had it been a case of real war very little of what was done on either side would have been justifiable. Admiral Baird would really have deserved blame if in actual warfare he had, instead of using his superiority of twelve to nine to crush the enemy's main force, chosen a raid on the Thames as his principal object, but such an assumption is inadmissible. On the other hand, it is evident that an unmistakable and straightforward rush at one another, carried out by both parties in earnest, would have finished the war at once, which would have spoilt the game. There was a great outcry afterwards as to the proof given by these manœuvres of the value of superior speed. No one can be more convinced of the value of this quality than the present writer; still he is of opinion that the manœuvres now discussed gave no proof of it; or rather, we can only draw such an inference from these manœuvres, because we have to do with two adversaries, one of whom would never attack, whilst the other would never expose himself to attack. This may really happen, but it is not war. We have no right to question the ability of the most renowned of British Admirals because he twice failed in cutting off Bonaparte's transport fleet; on the other hand, Admiral Gantheaume has not usually been credited with special ability because he succeeded three times in avoiding the whole chain of English squadrons between the Channel and Malta, and in landing his division safely at Toulon. The division was saved, but the army of Egypt had to capitulate all the same.

The question of speed does not deserve the dubious treatment to which it is now often exposed. Whatever part the skilful handling of sails had to play in the old days towards producing British predominance at sea, the same part will continue to be played by the speed resulting from steam and mechanical power. Only we must not run away with the idea that speed is only meant to be used for catching and running away. The end of a war is near at hand when one side is only bent on catching, and the other on getting away; true war action consists in mutual endeavours to meet with a view to fighting, and in this way to bring things to a crisis. Speed is not only strategically useful, it has its tactical value, and furnishes, if nothing else, the only means by which a duel between ships with the use of the ram is made possible, supposing equal skill in other respects on both sides. Speed, again, alone gives the choice of the battle-ground and of the formation for battle; speed is power, and power is size; capacity is limited by size, and with it the weight of armament and everything connected therewith. Here, too, the question of economy is in no small degree involved, for the most expensive part in the construction of a ship is that which comprises the engines, but the proportion of this part to the total is reduced as the latter increases, even

when speed is at the same time augmented. The manœuvres do not furnish good grounds for tactical conclusions in consequence of the disturbing influence of the rules which were framed for the guidance of those concerned. Torpedo attacks, the only tactical attacks which were admissible, were not attempted on a scale worthy of notice, because hostile encounters between ships and squadrons only took place on the high seas. Where harbours were attacked no torpedo-boats were at hand for the defence. The main conclusions, then, are in the domain of strategy. In a few words they are these, that the main objectives of maritime warfare are subject to the same considerations as those of war in general, that the course of a war at sea has been much affected with respect to preparations, to the first movements, and to subsequent operations, by the changes which have been introduced with regard to mobility, armament, and means of defence, and, lastly, that the fault of trying to avoid an encounter with the unbroken force of your enemy in order to gain some secondary advantage, will never rest unpunished.

This is the principal moral of the English naval manœuvres of 1889. We have asserted over and over again that the manœuvres had on both occasions much more the stamp of peace than of war. They were not, in fact, calculated in every respect to give a true picture of the latter, but still it would be unjust to underrate their great merits. In a country where the most unlimited freedom of public discussion reigns, and where little opportunity is given for quiet and independent official action, these manœuvres serve as a healthy lesson. Numerous defects were brought to light and made public, which were not exactly calculated to flatter the national vanity, since they became welcome food for the hostile press, both at home and abroad, gaining thereby, especially in the eyes of the distant observer, an exaggerated importance, whilst whatever strong points came to light were but little noticed, because it required actual war to bring out their full value, and because, as we must in all justice admit, overweening self-admiration is not a British habit. Such manœuvres are undoubtedly a means of measuring the power of a nation, and furnish the opportunity of forming a judgment upon it. This is not unimportant at a time when all the Powers, especially those of Europe, feel the need of testing their muscles, and when everyone wishes to weigh well in the balance. The military value of the English alliance is now much discussed. The opinions of foreign diplomats and of soldiers upon this point are not in unison. The statesman sees and feels the working of the hidden, invisible might which at times comes out in strong contrast to outward appearances, making itself felt in Great Britain's favour. It is a might which seems to him to wax instead of to wane. The soldier, on the contrary, misses that military value which he estimates by the method, energy, and outward display of force to which he is accustomed in his own country. He misses the general liability to serve, the drill, the numerical strength, and looks on with a shake of the head when England shuffles up together the whole array of her armed strength and succeeds with trouble in despatching an army corps to take part in one of her little wars. The case is very different with a naval force; you cannot make pretence of a ship, but there may be many a sham battalion whose ranks remain from year to year unfilled. Every gap in the array of a ship is at once discernible and tells irresistibly upon the efficiency of the division, of the squadron and of the entire Navy. The average Englishman does not believe in building up warlike power in our sense of the word; the spasmodic exertions which the British War Ministry makes from time to time in this direction always give way before any reactionary movement, and it is only since the commencement of the second half of this century that we see any signs of systematic progress.

"The fact is admitted," to quote a communication addressed to the "Times," "that we have no war organization; that our cavalry regiments,

infantry battalions, batteries, and other tactical units have grown up without any method, one after another according to the inspiration of the moment, that every war in its turn has produced its crop of augmentations of some kind or another, which are, at the end of the war, either retained or reduced, according to the whim of the moment. There is no idea of any general unity of organization, and what is wanting in the case of the tactical bodies is still more deficient in that of matériel; not to mention transport, ammunition, guns, tools, and other supplies of all kinds are stored away higgledy-piggledy without any heed to readiness for use in the field; excess in some respects, scarcity in others. The supplies thus collected are occasionally disposed of, but, worst of all, there is throughout inexcusable extravagance in the safe keeping and maintenance of obsolete and unserviceable stuff. In short, we have men and supplies, but the idea of making methodical use of them is utterly wanting. It seems incredible that thirty-two years should have elapsed since the Crimean War which might, one would suppose, have enlightened public opinion, before one came to see that an army consists of something more than a mere medley of battalions, squadrons, and batteries, and that such a state of things can only be compared with that of a house for whose roof slates had been furnished and for whose windows glass was in readiness, but for which the builder has no plan, and all other requisites are wanting. At the approach of any danger the War Minister of the day appears to see no other course before him but that taken by his predecessors of applying to Parliament for the means of augmenting the Army by 20,000 or 30,000 men and of buying a million's worth of fresh supplies and war material."

It is not possible to reform such a state of things in the twinkling of an eye, but our neighbours are well on the path of progress, at the same time we must never expect that their military system can or will be after the pattern of the Continental Powers.

The value of the English alliance, in a military sense, rests on other grounds. A doubled army will not make up for half a fleet any more than a doubled fleet will fill up the gaps, and make up for the deficiencies of an army.

Neither army nor navy can once for all be said to be the *first line of defence*, for the work to be done in front depends in each individual case upon the political and strategical situation of the moment; the point of real importance is whether the sources of national power favour its manifestations most by land or by sea. The answer for Great Britain is "by sea." Viewed in this manner the Navy comes first, and more especially bespeaks the sympathies of the nation. It is thought, or, at least, many think, that England, being an island, can only carry on war at sea. This is an error, war carried on exclusively on land is only one-sided, and cannot be entirely decisive for any country with a sea-coast. There are undoubtedly statesmen in England who think that the nation is free from complications on the Continent, but whenever they have proceeded to act upon such a theory, they have learnt by experience that it is not tenable, and the conviction that they must be prepared to throw at least two army corps into the scale is gradually making way.

For employing these in Europe, England's sea communications come strategically to the front. In whatever manner the Powers may be grouped, the influence of England upon the Baltic, the Mediterranean, and the Euxine will make itself felt. To assist in guarding the northern shores of Central Europe, to protect the southern flank of the Iberian Peninsula, of Italy and of the Balkan States, and to occupy the bases of the Bosphorus and Dardanelles in the East, are tasks which will give plenty of occupation to the British trident, and if, as Colonel Maurice assumes, the co-operation of an English squadron from Malta will so far free Southern Italy from moles-

tation as to enable that kingdom to place 300,000 men in the field, we see at once the connection of England with the league of peace, and Great Britain's power of carrying out the principle of "*do ut des*" is so great in political eventualities at the *New Hebrides* no less than at *Cairo* and on the *Heri Rud*, as to furnish a very promising contradiction to the at all events somewhat depressing idea of "fighting alone" entertained by some British statesmen. *Self-confidence* is a fine thing, but let it not degenerate into a "fool's paradise." Our expectation that the English military system will be purged of the defects which, to quote the words of one of their own essayists, still give it the character of a "masquerade," bids fair to be accomplished. The thought of being able to stand against the world in arms is elevating. If we have only to deal with mere local boundaries and interests, we may believe in it. It is easier, as remarks very justly a writer in the April number of the "*Edinburgh Review*," to appreciate the greatness of Russia, with its territory spreading in one sheet from *Poland* to *Kamtschatka*, or of the United States of America, whose shores are bathed by the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, than that of the British Empire, whose possessions are scattered disjointedly over the globe; it is difficult, too, to estimate its defensive requirements. Public opinion on the Continent is apt to form a low estimate of the possible exercise of British power; more than half-a-century has, however, passed since the Russian poet, Khomiatoff, prophesied a speedy end to the "threatening monarch of the seas," instead of which we only perceive growth, prosperity, and a dogged steadfast adherence to principles which, if occasionally egotistical, yet work well in the long run. These are the very "imponderables" of which we spoke, which impart durability to the equilibrium of this great commonalty. As the Frenchman Langat says, "*Un certain héroïsme froid, une énergie intérieure et toujours tendue, une force qui se contient, une vertu qui dédaigne les apparences et garde quelque chose de farouche*;" and not unjustified is the description which Robertson gives of his native country in the following words, "She puts on her shawl very badly, and she is awkward enough in a concert-room, scarcely knowing a nightingale from a jackdaw; but—blessings long and large upon her—she knows how to teach her sons to sink like men amongst sharks and billows, without parade, without display, as if duty were the most natural thing in the world, and she never mistakes long an actor for a hero or a hero for an actor."

LUMLEY GRAHAM.

¹ "Colburn's United Service Magazine," August, 1889.