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PROTECTION OF COMMERCE IN WAR, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE CAPE ROUTE.

By Commander W. C. CRUTCHLEY, R.N.R.

Wednesday, 29th June, 1904.

Colonel Sir H. M. HOZIER, K.C.B., *p.s.c.*, in the Chair.

IN discussing commerce protection, it would, under ordinary circumstances, be one of considerable difficulty, and it would also run to much greater length than will be occupied by this paper; but as I think I know what was in the mind of the Council of this Institution when the request was made to me to undertake the work, it is to a certain extent simplified, and becomes merely a peg upon which to hang an up-to-date discussion of points formerly raised by me on several occasions in this theatre.

Reiteration may be tiresome, but is absolutely necessary if anything is to be done.

There are two ways of dealing with this subject:—1. To treat it in a manner that would appeal to the naval strategist only; the other (in adopting which I think I shall carry out the wish of the Council) is to place before the audience, and, through the medium of the JOURNAL, the public, a brief statement of the condition of the Cape route on any one day in the year under strictly ordinary conditions, and making suggestions that I think would be of value, to leave my audience to draw their own conclusions.

When it was first decided that this paper should be written, it was, to the best of my recollection, early in March last; when the pourparlers were finished, it was approaching the conclusion of that month, and I consequently wrote to the various Steam Shipping Companies employed on the Cape route asking for the position of their various vessels on March 31st. That is how that date came to be selected. There is no reason to suppose or imagine that the vessels at

sea on that date were either in greater or less numbers than they would be on any date in the year that might be selected.

By showing upon a plan the regular vessels engaged in that trade in their approximate positions on that day, the ordinary layman can get some idea of what British commerce at sea means, when he realises that this is only one of our many highways that the great British Navy exists to protect. No attempt has been made to show vessels, either sail or steam, other than regular liners.

At the time these words are being written (April 30th) we have to hand the news of the sinking of the Japanese transport the "Kinshui Maru." That is not the first Japanese merchant-vessel that has been sunk by the Russians; but the conditions under which this has taken place are such as to cause speculation as to what might be the possible fate of a great many of our merchant steamers if attacked by an enemy that had no naval base in the vicinity and no means of taking a captured vessel before a Prize Court. Here it is stated that a certain number of the crew were taken on board the captor; the remainder, who refused to submit, were ruthlessly sent to the bottom. I do not know that I have anything to complain of in this course of procedure. War is a stern matter, and is not to be waged without considerable hardship and suffering. Why I mention this now is to ask whether we have any reasonable assumption that a Power, determined upon wrecking the commerce of this country, would hesitate to sink vessels and their crews with them. There has been, up to the present time, considerable discussion as to what would be the fate of merchantmen in a naval war; our doubts are now to a certain extent set at rest, for we see that Russia has upon three occasions, when opportunity offered, deliberately sunk every merchant-vessel belonging to the enemy with which they have come in contact. This, it is true, is following the example of the "Alabama"; but it may be urged, with some degree of reason, that that vessel was a forlorn hope sent out to sink, burn, and destroy, with no base and no opportunity of submitting her captures to a Prize Court. In the present case no consideration of that nature can be urged. The Russian Navy is, upon paper, and should be, a powerful force; it cannot claim indulgence upon the score of weakness. We must conclude that its actions are based upon the irrevocable decision of a great Power as to the manner in which it will elect to wage war upon the sea, and we find that, acting against an enemy that at the commencement of the war was of greatly inferior naval strength, that mighty Power Russia has elected to inaugurate, so far as merchant-vessels are concerned, a war of annihilation. In the case of the "Kinshui Maru," there is no evidence to suggest that it was not possible to escort that vessel into Vladivostok Harbour. What is the moral to be drawn from this, so far as we ourselves are concerned? I venture to say it is, that if any naval Power decides upon hostilities with Great Britain, it will be, so far as our Mercantile Marine is concerned, a war of extermination. It will be the gambler's throw, and all will be staked upon the endeavour to strike the Empire in its most vital part—its great and world-wide commerce carried in shipping that amounts to half the tonnage of the world. I think that there will be no endeavour, at all events in the early days of war, to take vessels before Prize Courts. We have in the Russian procedure the indication of what may be expected in the future, and I, for one, am thankful that we have once again been given a chance, before it is too late, to read in unmistakable characters the handwriting on the wall.

Take the route under consideration, and then decide upon the likelihood of any attempt being made to transport vessels on this route before a Prize Court. Let us take the great Powers of the world only in considering this matter. First of all, the United States. I infinitely prefer not to touch upon that, as hostilities between ourselves and our kinsmen are not to be contemplated. Next consider France, our most ancient enemy on the sea, with whom we have fought for ages, and have had full experience of their ability as seamen and their qualities as enemies. The recent rapprochement between them and ourselves can be welcomed by none more gladly than by seamen that have tested a foeman worthy of their steel; but unless it were to be assumed that the British Navy had entirely lost the command of the sea, it would not be possible for France or French cruisers to take their prizes before a Prize Court. The matter of capture might perhaps be easy, but not the necessary escort into port. There remain now but Russia and Germany. The question of taking prizes into Russian ports can hardly be seriously discussed, for one thing, they would have to be escorted through the North Sea, which would certainly mean the recapture by ourselves; and the same remarks apply with equal strength to Germany.

On this route, however, we must not lose sight of the fact that the Germans have a large tract of country in the Cameroons, and if they made an effective naval base where they have taken possession, it would give them a very great advantage if they determined upon harassing our commerce, and could protect that base in the early days of war. It does not, however, exist at present. The Frenchmen at Goree and the Germans at Cameroons are the two nations that have it in their power, at all events at the outbreak of war, to strike at our commerce with very considerable effect. Realising as they would that their opportunities for offence could not last long, the attack in the first place would be made with the greatest energy.

It would indeed be regrettable if one were driven to the deduction that any civilised Power would deliberately torpedo merchant-vessels without giving their crews a chance of escape; but I do hold very strongly that that chance of escape would in all probability consist of half an hour for the crew and passengers to take to the boats, and it might be contended with fair justice that this was conduct necessitated by the urgency for crippling an enemy that was all-powerful at sea. Some may, and doubtless will, argue that the "Kinshui Maru," being a transport, was subject to harder treatment than would be meted to an ordinary merchant steamer. I would reply that precedents are very awkward things.

In the Japan-Chinese war the Japanese sank the "Kow Shing" under perfectly similar conditions to the sinking of the "Kinshui Maru." They were both merchant-vessels in the first place; both were engaged in commerce vital to the enemy, and it would be argued that the suppression of our commerce would be the greatest service that could be rendered by any of the forces of an enemy of this country; therefore, I think that the naval officers of any Power at war with us would be in no hurry to draw nice distinctions. And I should like to emphasise the point, that despite all that anyone may say, I believe that should the opportunity arise, our shipping will be destroyed without mercy.

The indiscriminate sinking of our merchant vessels would probably exert a greater moral effect than any other course of action would

achieve. We saw during the time of the Spanish-American war its effect on the price of wheat in this country. What, in the event of the loss of a dozen ships in one day, would then be the probable price of the loaf in this country? Who could hazard an opinion? There is only one possible solution that would avert panic, and that is an arrangement by which in time of naval war, Government would have made arrangements for taking over the entire food supply of the country, and then issuing it to the people on reasonable terms.

In drawing attention, however, to the Cape route—only one of the happy hunting grounds that the enemy would probably frequent—we have not taken into consideration any possible augmentation of traffic that might arise through bottling tactics being adopted with the Suez Canal. We have recently had two instances of this being attempted: one at Santiago Harbour, the other at Port Arthur. In neither of these cases was it even approximately as easy as it would be to block the Suez Canal. I am not for one instant minimising the advantage of the British position in Egypt and the consequent power it would give us to exercise watchfulness and care with the traffic that passed through the Canal in unsettled times; but it would, I think, be madness were we to shut our eyes to the possibility of interruption with that stream of commerce that is constantly passing to and from the Far East. With the Dardanelles in the possession of a great Power the situation would be still more complicated.

In former papers read by myself in this Institution I have always thought, and my opinion received a considerable amount of backing from competent authority, that the Suez Canal would be blocked in time of warfare. I find myself at the present time somewhat weakening upon this opinion; perhaps the wish that it may be possible to maintain our communications uninterrupted may be father to the thought. But be that as it may, we cannot shirk either the duty or the necessity of contemplating the possibility of inconvenience in this direction, especially when we consider the enormous results that will hang upon it. The more one investigates this matter the more one is confronted with the absolute hopelessness, at all events in the first days of war, of possibly diverting the Suez Canal traffic round the Cape of Good Hope. In days when ships' bunker coal is cut down to its lowest limit, the difficulties in the way of any great divergence would appear to be almost unsurmountable.

Suez Canal Traffic, 1902.—2,165 British ships, tonnage 6,772,911 tons; total for all nations, 3,708 ships, 11,248,413 tons.

H.R.H. Prince Louis of Battenberg stated in 1893 that we could not possibly keep the Suez Canal open in war time. It is obvious that the divergence of a portion only of this traffic would be attended with considerable difficulty, and apart from the question of blocking the canal, there is the risk of torpedo attack on this route that is so clearly outlined in the diagram so kindly lent for this occasion by the R.U.S.I.

In all the operations of modern warfare the supply of fuel is the principal governing factor, consequently in any question which affects the abandonment of the Suez Canal as a trade route, and brings forward the Cape route as an alternative, the first question to be considered is the possibility or otherwise of sufficient coal supply.

NOTE
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AT SUNSET AND RETURNING AT DAWN
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SPEED (CROSSING 18.4000)

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716

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From the latest information that I have been able to procure, I find that the stock of coal in Cape Town on 31st March was 21,600 tons, of which quantity 10,000 tons only was steam coal. There were in port on that date 11 sailing and 12 steamers—23 in all. During the course of the South African war, and with the plentiful supply of labour, 6 transports were sometimes coaling at once in Table Bay. It is doubtful whether in the near future this number could be greatly increased, and the power of the port for supply would probably be 2,000 tons daily, as a liberal estimate; this, however, would depend upon whether merchants had had any considerable notice as to possible demands for steam coal, quality and quantity of the local Cape coal being inferior. In dealing with the Cape, however, it would not be fair if, in considering possible resources, we were to deal with Table Bay only.

The advantages of Saldanha Bay would hardly appear to be quite appreciated at the present time. That harbour affords very great facilities for coaling in smooth water, and with extreme ease, from two colliers at a time. If one might venture the suggestion, it would be that the Admiralty might do worse than to verify this statement, and consider the possibilities of this port in conjunction with Simon's Bay.

Durban, however, is a port that, besides possessing a fairly efficient supply of steam coal, offers exceptional facilities for transshipping and doing the ordinary work of steamers with the minimum of inconvenience.

There is now at that port a large output of Colonial coal at a very cheap rate per ton, and every facility is given by the Natal Government for the bunkering of steamers. The supply, moreover, is an always dependable quantity, and as regards quality it is about equal to ordinary North Country coal. The resources of that port at the present time probably would run to 70,000 tons per month, and in an increasing quantity; and I find that for the end of February, 1904, the average depth of high water on the bar was 31 feet.

The harbour authorities at Durban, Natal, are now, moreover, considering very wisely the question of the supply of steam coal.

In the month of February the Agent-General for that Colony was advertising for the supply, erection, and completion of the following plant:—Export coal, to deal with 4,000 tons of coal in 10 hours, to consist of one fixed and two movable appliances to discharge into ships' hatches direct from trucks; also appliances to coal ships at the rate of 200 tons per hour for bunkering coal. This indicates that very considerable progress is being made, and that the port of Durban would be capable of sustaining considerable calls upon its resources. It would serve as an excellent feeder to ports at the Cape, such as Saldanha, Simon's, and Table Bays.

The disability of Durban as the main coaling port on this route would be that vessels after a long run, and with a scanty supply of coal remaining in their bunkers, might find it a little difficult to pull up the last 300 miles of the run up the coast in the teeth of a strong adverse current, and this remark would apply more especially to slow tramp steamers than to the faster class of vessels.

The coaling supplies procurable at East London and Port Elizabeth are of a very meagre nature, and not to be considered as a source of supply.

It would be possible perhaps to supply coal at the rate of 1,000 tons daily at Sierra Leone; that, however, would be but a mere drop

in the ocean compared with the demands that might possibly be made upon it. It is not altogether out of place to state that in this long run between the Cape and Gibraltar there is no dry dock in any English port where ships having suffered accident can possibly be repaired; although the Germans are now sending a floating dock, capable of raising a vessel of 2,000 tons, out to the Cameroons.

I will now refer to the chart reproduced, which shows the positions of the ordinary steamers engaged on the Cape route on 31st March. I have thought it best to make a note, showing the vessels in port at each end, but in addition to this there is to be taken into consideration the amount of tonnage that passes Cape Finisterre day by day.

From the best authority that I can get—that is, the Secretary of Lloyd's—I find that 120,000 tons is a fair amount to be assumed for the vessels passing Cape Finisterre on 31st March.

There are engaged in the Cape trade eight lines of steamers:—

Rennie's ○ 4 vessels in port.

New Zealand Shipping Company + 2 in London.

Aberdeen White Star Line ◇ 2 at Cape Town.

Bucknall Bros. ⊕ 3 at the Cape, 1 in London.

Shaw, Savill and Albion Company □ 2 in London.

Bullard, King & Co. △ 3 in London, 1 at Natal.

Union Castle Line and the ☒ 12 in Home Ports,
7 in Cape Ports.

Harrison Line H 2 in Home Ports.

The symbols on the map show the vessels that are at sea in their approximate positions on 31st March, and although these positions may not be absolutely accurate, they are sufficiently correct for the purpose of this paper, and show very clearly the actual steam vessels that are in what may be termed regular employment on this route. It takes no account of what may be termed irregular steam traffic or the sailing-ships. From this it will be seen that there are 44 vessels that are susceptible of attack by improvised cruisers on the outbreak of war. I submit that any steps that can be taken to give them greater security is worth the most attentive consideration on the part of our rulers. The ships in port at either end of the route show those that would be available to form convoy.

I do not imagine or encourage the fallacy that attacks on commerce can decide naval supremacy; that always did and probably always will remain with the battle-ship. My object is to call attention to the inconvenience, to say the least of it, that would be caused by a well-planned and determined attack upon our merchant vessels, such as might be delivered by the cruisers and the mercantile auxiliaries of a hostile Power in the early days of war, before our battle-ships and cruisers had had time to sweep the sea and to do their police work.

Into the question of my assumption that we have sufficient naval power to make this clearance, I do not here enter. There are many that hold the view that our naval strength is insufficient; it is assumed, however, that we have it, and I now deal solely with the measures that in my view would in some measure tend to alleviate the terrible panic that would be almost unavoidable in the early days of a war.

1. The necessity for the State issuing a guarantee that insurance liabilities should be met so far as shipping is concerned. There must be no hesitation in our ships putting to sea to carry on their ordinary avocations. If they are captured, the State must replace them, or it must be done by a common levy on the nation, but the trade must not stand still, neither must it be more interrupted than actual physical necessity demands.

2. To call attention to the value of our mail steamers as a means of disseminating information. Before this advantage can be utilised to its fullest extent it must be in the power of officers commanding squadrons of British war-vessels to know exactly where to find these steamers at sea, hence the necessity, as I have pointed out on former occasions, for mail steamers to pass over certain fixed points which can be varied at the discretion of the naval authorities.

3. The last issue of the International Code of Signals is dated July, 1899. So far as I am aware there is nothing later that concerns the Mercantile Marine. The book itself is a distinct improvement upon anything that has preceded it, inasmuch as it deals to a limited extent with light and sound signals. It actually gives a matter of seven of these signals, and the assumption is that it is considered that those seven signals are as much as the collective intelligence of the Mercantile Marine is capable of receiving for a series of years. I think it is matter for regret that its scope of usefulness is thus limited, but it is only in keeping with ordinary procedure, so far as the Mercantile Marine is concerned. The plan has been, and is, not to recognise a great difficulty and grapple with it, but rather to temporise and put off the evil day until a more convenient season. We have recently had more than one testimony to the necessity that exists for means of better communication between British men-of-war and our merchant vessels. To quote from the *United Service Gazette* of 19th May:—"There is a circular issued by the Secretary of the General Shipowners' Society stating that attention had been called both by the Board of Trade and by the Committee of Lloyd's to reports made by British naval officers pointing out that although his Britannic Majesty's war-ships under these officers' command had made signals by means of the International Code in numerous instances to steamers of the British Mercantile Marine, no notice had usually been taken of such signals by the officers in command of the merchant vessels to which they were made." To quote again from the *Globe* of 20th May:—"It is again accentuated how essential it is that in war time the ships of the mercantile and fighting navies of this country should be able to readily exchange messages by means of flags in the International Code." That is right so far as it goes, but it does not go far enough, for, when all is said and done, flags only serve as a communication for a part of the 24 hours; in the Channel in the winter time there are occasions when there is less than eight hours of daylight, hence the necessity for the adoption of something that will serve both for the light and the dark hours. Lord Charles Beresford has since put this matter forward very strongly.

In my very humble opinion the services of the Mercantile Marine are not utilised in the manner that they might be. We have now in our merchant vessels more than 2,000 Naval Reserve officers, a large proportion of whom have served in men-of-war. They are all, thanks to the existing regulations, more or less acquainted with the usages that obtain on board men-of-war, but, so far as my knowledge serves me,

the question of signalling, which I submit is of primary interest, forms no important part of their general training when doing their drill. I certainly think that it should be so, and that opportunities should be afforded for them to go through, we will say, an elementary signal course. It is certainly necessary, and as we have the pick of the men of the Mercantile Marine in the Naval Reserve it should be quite possible to turn out enough signallers from them to form a leaven in most of our large steamers. It should not be impossible to impart such knowledge of the Morse system of signalling as would be of infinite use to merchant vessels if we found ourselves at war in the near future.

Last, but not least, would I again urge the necessity of encouraging the youth of this country to take to the sea as a calling; in other words, that we should have British seamen for British ships. If all the men in the Mercantile Marine of this country were British, and trained to arms, we should not have one man more than we require to guarantee the freedom of the seas, but the difficulty of grappling with this problem is apparently so great that the official mind is not disposed to make any attempt to overcome the trouble in the first place. In the case of the two recent Committees that have been sitting on this matter, the Admiralty Naval Reserves Committee was, at all events, passively favourable to any working scheme that can be brought forward, although they consider that the expense that would be incurred by training British seamen for the Mercantile Marine would not be compensated for by the advantage we should derive. The Board of Trade Committee, on the other hand, however, in their report have done the cause of advancement positive injury by the lukewarm manner in which they have reported on the question; apparently the many obstacles that stand in the way have caused them to make a report that, I fear, has shelved the question for years. Can a case for conscription be made out until we have at least done all that is humanly possible to strengthen our first and only line of defence—the Navy?

Major STEWART L. MURRAY (late Gordon Highlanders):—I think the very able and interesting lecture to which we have just listened has been delivered at a very opportune moment, because it is not possible for anyone to say what will be the outcome of the present struggle in the Far East, or what will happen there in the course of the next 18 months or so. I think he would be a bold man and a rash man who would venture to prophesy what the grouping of the great Powers will be when the time for settlement arrives. It is, as Clausewitz says, always necessary to take into consideration the state of popular feeling in any hostile nation, and in any nations which may be its possible allies. The state of popular feeling in Germany is, as we know, unfortunately one of hostility to Britain; and the state of popular feeling in France is, as we also know, one of very deep sympathy with Russia, because they regard Russia as having very largely helped them to regain the position in Europe which they forfeited by their downfall in 1870; and also, the French have got an enormous amount of money invested in Russia. Such being the case, it is quite possible—I do not say it is probable, but *it is possible*—that if at the end of this war Russia should find herself in a very dangerous position, as she may very well do, and should appeal to France *ad misericordiam* for aid, it is quite possible that such a wave of sentiment may sweep over France as will force its Government, on

pain of overthrow, to go to the aid of its old ally. If France should act in that manner, it is also quite possible that Germany may join in also and strike a blow at Britain. We shall then have to face that combination which has so very often been talked about: of three Naval Powers against us. I do not say, of course, that this is what *will* happen; but I say it is what *may* happen, and, what is more, it may happen in the course of the next year or 18 months. I therefore contend that, as reasonable, practical men, we ought to assume that it *will* happen, and prepare for it. In view of that possibility, what is to happen to our Mediterranean trade? I will not enlarge upon the magnitude of that trade, or of its vital importance to this country, because it is well understood and known by everybody. But the first thing that strikes one in considering this matter is that there are two totally divergent views on it. There is the one school, who maintain that our Mediterranean trade is of such tremendous importance that it must be defended at all hazards, even if we are engaged in war with France. There is another school who maintain that if we are engaged in a naval war with France, it is not, and will not, and cannot, be possible to properly protect our Mediterranean trade. I wish to quote the authority of the Naval Prize Essay for 1904 to back up that argument, because that view is very strongly taken in that essay. It says:—"The Mediterranean is admirably suited to torpedo-boat warfare, and it is France's evident intention to render the Toulon-Corsica-Algiers-Bizerta area as dangerous as possible to hostile fleets; a sure index of this is the large number of torpedo-boats and submarines building at present." Then from that he goes on to deduce that:—"The Anti-Toulon Fleet would lie W. of Gibraltar, with a Cruiser Squadron of 2 armoured cruisers, 1 first-class protected, 2 second-class, and 2 third-class cruisers, with 6 destroyers watching Toulon"; and he further goes on to say that:—"The Toulon Fleet may remain at its base for some time while the cruisers harass trade, and a torpedo-boat warfare is directed against the British Battle Fleets." He further goes on:—"As regards trade, any idea of keeping the Mediterranean route open at the commencement of a Franco-Russian war should be abandoned, and arrangements made for deflecting all trade round the Cape." If that view is to be taken as correct, or even as an approximately correct expression of naval opinion, then I say the situation is most serious and grave; for if it is possible that we may find ourselves at war with France, Russia, and Germany in the course of the next year or 18 months, then it appears probable that we shall find ourselves compelled to deflect our trade round the Cape, whether we like it or not. The lecturer has said that he considers it, as far as he can see, almost hopeless to attempt to do so; but we should have no option, apparently. Looking at the map which he has exhibited, how on earth is our Mediterranean trade to pass through? How on earth are our slow 8 or 10 knot tramps, in which the greater part of our trade is carried, to pass slowly along in front of Bizerta, Tunis, Oran, Algiers, etc., etc.? This Gold Medal Prize Essay, which I conceive is to be accepted as a fair expression of naval opinion, otherwise it would not have received the gold medal, regards it as absolutely impossible; we shall have no option but to send it round the Cape. Of course, there are those who say that it could not be done owing to the smaller size and small bunker capacity of the vessels which use the Suez route, and owing to the absence of coaling and docking facilities on the Cape route itself. That seems a thing which may be got over. I should say that part of our preparation, therefore, should be to deal with this matter of the coaling and docking facilities on the

Cape route, and not talk or think about it only, but *do* it. I cannot see what there is to prevent us doing it. It merely means an expenditure of money, which no other nation except ourselves has any objection to spending when necessary. It would be a very small expenditure of public money compared to the great expenditure which foreign nations unhesitatingly adopt in their frontier fortresses, and could not be compared with the expenditure France has made with a view to making her eastern frontier safe, or which Germany has made both on her eastern and western frontiers. No other nation except ourselves grudges the money to make itself safe against all eventualities because of a slight expenditure. In this country it appears to be held that it is sufficient to say a thing will cost money for it to be regarded as impossible. I protest with all my strength against that; it is a view which is not worthy of being held by such a nation as ours. And if it is necessary, as it does seem necessary, that the Cape route should be prepared as an alternative for the Mediterranean, it should be done at once, and should be completed, if possible, within the next 12 months, because at the end of 12 or 18 months we may find ourselves compelled to use it, whether we like it or no. Preparations similar to those which the lecturer has referred to at Durban should be made at one or two other points along the route. This is not an operation which a great nation like ours should shrink from. We should then be "prepared for either fortune." Optimism is all very well *after* every possible precaution has been taken, and every possible preparation made; but optimism is a very dangerous thing if it leads to the neglect of necessary precautions and preparations. Our motto should be, especially with the Eastern outlook so obscure and so menacing: "Prepare for the worst and hope for the best."

Admiral the Hon. Sir EDMUND R. FREMANTLE, G.C.B., C.M.G. (Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom):—I did not have the opportunity of reading this paper before coming to the lecture, and I consequently feel that any remarks I may make may be somewhat discursive or disjointed. But there are a great many points in the paper which I think are deserving of attention, to which I should like to allude. First of all, the question of sinking merchant-ships is a most important one. It has been stated over and over again, it was stated in the days of the late Admiral Aube and from others on the French side, that they would have no scruples in launching a torpedo against a liner and sinking her. I always thought that that was quite impossible, that the claims of neutrals would be so great, and the objection made to the possibility of torpedoing your friends instead of the enemy would be so great, that that would not be done. But I confess I am a little shaken in my opinion, when I see what has been done recently by Russia, and nobody, apparently, has taken the trouble to make any very strong objection, or at all events, if our Government have made any representations, or the United States Government have made any representations, we are not exactly aware of them. I certainly think that the neutral Powers ought to assert themselves on these occasions. I think that some restriction should be made on so-called belligerent rights. We should support what has been generally the rule in the law of nations, and we should, as far as possible, endeavour to insist that vessels should be taken into a port for adjudication, and not summarily sunk on the high seas. It stands to reason that if you do sink them summarily on the high seas you are making yourself a judge as to what the vessel is, and the particular officers may or may not be very scrupulous as to whether the

vessel really is an enemy. Some discussion has taken place as regards the Suez Canal and its closing. It has been very often stated that it would be to our advantage to close it. I confess I cannot see it; but, at the same time, I am very much of opinion—and I am strengthened in that opinion by the opinion of those officers who have served recently on the Mediterranean station, men like Prince Louis of Battenberg,¹ Sir John Hopkins, and others—that there would be, at all events, extreme difficulty in keeping open the route to the Suez Canal, in passing along the coast of North Africa, with the French torpedo flotillas as we see them on the map on the wall. At the same time, we must recollect that the seas are large—even the Yellow seas are large. Recently the Vladivostok Squadron has shown what can be done in the way of evasion, and it is extremely difficult, really, to stop any traffic which is determined to run a certain amount of risk. I think, therefore, that though certainly the Canal wallahs will probably have to stop, some of the faster vessels will run the risk, and by taking the northern course some distance from the land, may be able to run through. But with regard to the Canal wallahs, I am afraid those vessels are quite incapable of going round the Cape. The lecturer did not go into that question very closely, but I have no doubt that he has given some study to it. It seems to me that those vessels, built as they are almost entirely for the Canal route, with frequent opportunities of coaling, could not go round the Cape; even if we made coal depôts, it would be practically impossible for them to take the route round the Cape. This is a very serious question undoubtedly. The lecturer touched on the question of insurance. I confess I am very much in favour of some sort of system of national insurance. It is a subject on which the Chairman, I am quite sure, could enlighten us very much if he likes. I know that Lloyd's have given some attention to that subject, and that the Government also have given some attention to it. I understand it has been calculated that, taking the average of the whole Napoleonic war, although many ships were lost—frequently even the British Channel was extremely unsafe, notwithstanding our nominal command of the seas—still, it has been found that our percentage of loss due to the enemy has been something like 5 per cent., certainly not more; it is likely, I should think, to be less. The question arises as to whether steamers have increased the risk or decreased the risk. I am inclined to think that, on the whole, they have decreased the risk. I am inclined to think that we might do a great deal more than has been generally supposed in the way of convoying. In former days, with sailing-ships, the ships convoying kept to the windward and looked out for an enemy. If any of the convoy fell to leeward, and if she ran down to make them keep the wind, to carry more sail, or anything of that sort, it was hours perhaps, or even days, before she could get into her proper position to convoy again. That is not so now with steamers. You can run the steamers practically at the same speed, the speed of the slowest ships, I admit; but there are no such things as shifts of wind, and calms, and ships falling away to leeward. Of course, a ship may break

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¹I am now informed that I have somewhat misrepresented the views of Prince Louis, now the able Director of Naval Intelligence, as, while he does not underrate the difficulty, he believes that the Mediterranean route can be maintained in case of war, if proper dispositions are made, and British steamers do not skirt the Algerian and Tunisian shores.—E.R.F.

down altogether, but in that case she would be left to her fate. Assuming that to still be the case, that only 5 per cent. is the real risk of war, so far as insurance is concerned, I never can understand why the Government, so as to prevent a panic—because it is acknowledged that the insurance would go up very largely at first—why the Government should not have a small official department in connection with Lloyd's and say: "We will take the war risks; you take the ordinary risks." We will take them at the Government's calculation of, say, 5 per cent. If there is any less loss than that the Government sustains no loss; if the loss is much greater, why, the country benefits, because you have greater security of trade and more ships running the cargoes, which are now so absolutely essential to our very existence. The lecturer touched upon the question of communication with merchant-ships. I think that is a very important matter. We ought to be able to make of our great Mercantile Marine a system of intelligence, so that every one of those passing vessels ought to be able to give us information as to what they have seen, what they know about the enemy, or about your friends. That would be of the greatest value. As it is at present, they do not give us half the information they ought to under proper regulations. I think we are generally inclined to depreciate, at all events in times of peace, the value of intelligence. It appears to me that people do not take the trouble to try and get intelligence. During the China and Japan War I succeeded in getting extremely good intelligence of what was going on. I warned the Admiralty once or twice, against the opinion of many others, as to what was going to take place; they were anxious to know. Twice the *Times* correspondent came from Tientsin on purpose to find me, because he was pleased to say that I was the only person who had any information. I quote that because I think it is quite possible to get information, even with such reticent people as the Japanese; you can find out what is really going to take place if you take the trouble. We have always neglected the whole question of the General Staff; we are neglecting to this day the extreme value of procuring accurate information. We trust that the Food Supply Commission will do good in that respect. There is one word more I should like to say. After all, we are mainly dependent on the strength of the Navy. Sir John Colomb wrote a letter the other day in which he showed that our so-called bloated Estimates of to-day amount after all to only 5½d. per £ of sea trade, as against Germany's 4½d.; United States, 8d.; France, 10½d.; Japan, 1s. 2½d.; and Russia, 2s. Great Britain in 1851 had Naval Estimates of something under 7 millions, but her sea trade then was about 325 millions. In 1901, the latest date which Sir John Colomb got out, our sea trade was 1,400 millions and our Naval Estimates were 33 millions. Great Britain's proportion per £ of sea trade in 1851 came to 4½d., and therefore these enormous Estimates which we hear of are not so very much out of proportion even to the sea trade of the Empire, and I need not say that that is not the whole reason why our Estimates are so large. Under those circumstances, I hope that whatever else we may do, whether we try to get more for our money, which we may do, perhaps; whether we take careful stock of all the directions in which we expend money, and the directions in which we can economise, I hope that, at all events, we shall not grudge the money which is so absolutely necessary for the security of this country. I also hope that, while it may be expended with economy, we shall not allow certain fads which are brought out, first to-day and then to-morrow, to run away with the valuable sums which we ought to send in the very best direction. I trust that something will be done in the Cabinet Committee which will

allow us to advance in a certain direction, systematically and not spasmodically; and I hope that we shall never grudge the amount of money which is absolutely necessary for the security of our commerce and for the very existence of this country.

Commander W. F. CABORNE, C.B., R.N.R. :—With regard to the first point put forward by the lecturer, I quite agree with him that in the event of our being engaged in a naval war, our enemies will do all they can to damage our sea-borne commerce, and I have always held the view that very little respect will be paid to the so-called rights of private property afloat. There is a theory cherished by some people that great leniency will be shown to such of our merchant vessels as are not actually engaged in carrying goods, comprehended in the extremely elastic term contraband of war; but there is frequently a great difference between theory and practice. For instance, only a few short years ago, representatives of the various States assembled at the Hague, upon the initiative of the Sovereign of a great Power, and with much blowing of trumpets it was proclaimed to the world that the object of their meeting was the promotion of arbitration among the nations, and the introduction of brotherly love and universal peace. And yet, such is the irony of fate, we now see the Imperial convener of that Conference locked in a deadly struggle with a gallant and progressive Eastern foe, mainly owing to the action of his own servants. With respect to the proposed nationalisation of the food in this country upon the outbreak of war, we were told by a Labour leader last November, during the discussion of a paper on "Food Stuffs in the Time of War," that when the price of provisions rose much, great numbers of working men would be starving, and that those persons would compel the Government to make what terms it could with the enemy, or, in default of its doing so, they would raise the standard of revolt. In view of the gravity of such a statement, I ventured to suggest, as an extreme and purely temporary measure, until such time as the safe conduct of our food supply was assured, the nationalisation of the provisions then in hand. Coming to the question of the national insurance of shipping, a scheme favoured by the lecturer, and one strongly advocated by the late Vice-Admiral Sir George Tryon and others, no doubt much may be said both for and against the adoption of such a course; but personally I do not consider that the proposal can be brought within the range of practical politics while the present unsatisfactory system of largely manning our merchant-ships with aliens continues. The suggestion that mail steamers in time of war should pass over certain defined but varying points appears to be well worthy of attention, and might, perhaps, be somewhat enlarged in its scope. The next point upon which I wish to touch is the complaint that certain merchant vessels have failed to answer signals made to them by H.M. ships. From the correspondence in the public press I have failed to ascertain the class of vessels the conduct of which has been impugned, or the circumstances under which default was made. There may be various explanations, one of them being that the merchant-ships may have supposed that the men-of-war were signalling to one another; but whatever may be the right one, it is certain that the omission was not the result of ignorance, all officers of the Mercantile Marine being required to pass a satisfactory examination in the use of the Commercial Code of Signals. The use of the semaphore is not altogether unknown in the Mercantile Marine. For instance, on board one P. & O. steamer, with which I am personally acquainted, the master, all his officers, and two quartermasters semaphore well, while they nearly all can make and

take in Morse signals slowly, one of the quartermasters being an adept. However, they are, with one or two exceptions, members of the Royal Naval Reserve. I am informed that the same ability to semaphore and Morse is by no means uncommon on board other mail-steamers. Nevertheless, the suggested general introduction of Morse flash-light signals into the Mercantile Marine bristles with difficulties. No doubt merchant officers are quite capable of learning the Morse system, but without constant practice they would soon become inefficient; and how is the imperative constant practice to be obtained? It is almost needless for me to say that I most heartily join with the lecturer in his desire to see our merchant-ships manned by British seamen¹; but at the same time, I would most certainly not exclude lascars, who, like ourselves, are British subjects. However, before much can be effected in the wished-for direction, it will be necessary to strongly impress upon our fellow-countrymen the danger of the present mode of manning, and also to imbue them with a larger amount of patriotism than they now appear to possess. A popular and favourite fallacy is that all that is good and noble is indigenous to the West, and that it is our duty to stamp upon the East our transcendently civilised ideas; but if from our high moral altitude we condescend to turn our gaze towards the Japanese and note the manner in which those wonderful people have rallied round their Emperor and supported their country in a great crisis, we must, however reluctantly, admit that the West has also much to learn from the East, particularly as regards the right and practical definition of the word patriotism. With respect to the lecturer's remarks upon the subject of conscription, while I have never favoured conscription pure and simple, I have long been of opinion that every young man capable of bearing arms should be liable to enrolment in one of the various armed forces of the Crown for a time. While the overwhelming importance of the Navy to the country will be universally acknowledged, the fact must also be recognised that the British Empire is a world-wide one, and that in order to maintain it intact we have no option but to show the world that in addition to being a great naval Power, we are also a great military Power.

Dr. B. W. GINSBURG (Barrister-at-Law, Inner Temple, and Secretary Royal Statistical Society):—I should like to say a word with regard to what Commander Caborne said. Commander Caborne and Commander Crutchley, from their large experience of the Mercantile Marine, know something of the reason why signals are not noticed at sea by merchant-ships. An officer on the watch has a good deal to do besides merely looking out. Probably there is, beside him, a man also at the wheel and a look-out man, and nobody else on deck, and I do not see exactly who is to make signals in the way which has been suggested in the paper. I do not think it is necessarily ignorance, and I do not think it is necessarily laziness, but it is simply the impossibility, on a vessel in which every man has his work cut out for him, to take on any extra duty of that kind, for which they do not see any immediate advantage in the way of £ s. d. There is one other point to which I should like to refer, namely, the question of the bunkering of vessels which are in the habit of going through the Suez Canal. It does seem to one who is not a sailor that it would be quite possible for vessels which go through the Suez Canal now, if they had to go *via* the Cape, to carry a little less cargo and a

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¹Objections raised by the Chairman in winding up the discussion I have fully dealt with upon previous occasions.—W.F.C.

little more coal. There are ways of altering the arrangement of the ship by which it would be possible to increase the amount of coal which such a vessel could carry. I happen to remember a case in point; it was not of cargo vessels, certainly, but of mail steamers. If I remember rightly, during the time of the Egyptian trouble, the Orient Company, as they were then, discontinued sending their vessels through the Canal, and actually did send them out to Australia by the Cape route. What was possible on one occasion, and with one important line of steamers, would, it seems, be equally possible on another occasion, and with equally important steamers.

The CHAIRMAN (Colonel Sir H. M. Hozier, K.C.B., *p.s.c.*):—If no other gentleman wishes to speak, I should like myself to say a word or two upon some of the subjects that have been so ably handled, both by the lecturer himself and by the speakers. I entirely concur with Sir Edmund Fremantle in what he said about the sinking of merchant-ships; but it appears to me that the point which really strikes most of us is not the destruction of private property at sea—that we know must always stand the risk of war—but the destruction of human life so recklessly as appears to be the case when merchant-vessels are torpedoed and sent to the bottom without giving the crews a chance of escaping. I cannot but think myself that when the nations of Europe have, in the cause of humanity, formed conventions for the observance in land wars of the Geneva Cross, that by acting together they might come to some conclusion, and bring some pressure to bear upon belligerents, to ensure that, as far as possible, when it is necessary to sink a ship which cannot be taken into a Prize Court, and the destruction of which, of course, the laws of necessity may sometimes demand, that at least some provision should be made for rescuing the unhappy seamen, and not sending them to the bottom without a chance of escaping. There seems to be a certain difference between sinking an ordinary merchant-ship with her crew and sinking a transport full of soldiers. Soldiers, when they are being transported to the seat of war, are as much engaged in belligerent duties as if they were advancing to the front to attack an outpost, and therefore I think there is much more to be said in favour of the course which has been pursued of sinking transports loaded with troops than there is in sinking defenceless merchant-ships when there is nobody on board them except a crew which has to handle and manœuvre the vessel. But there is also another distinction. Although I know very little of maritime matters, it appears to me that it must be much more difficult for a naval officer who has to destroy a vessel to make provision for the rescue of some 600 or 700 or 1,000 soldiers than it would be for him even to take on board his own ship the small crew of merchantmen when a merchant-ship has to be sunk; and therefore I trust that the Powers of Europe will come to some arrangement with all belligerents on behalf of the unhappy sailors of merchantmen not engaged in any hostile operations when it is necessary for a naval officer to destroy their vessel. It seems to me that even in the present day, when men-of-war are very much encumbered with machinery and very much hampered for room, that the comparatively few hands which are employed in working a merchant-vessel might almost always be taken on board a man-of-war when she destroys a merchant-vessel, until the time arrives when it is possible for her to put them on shore at some place where they will get food and supplies, and not be left to starve on a barren island. The lecturer and Major Murray have brought under our notice a subject to which both have given considerable attention, namely, the question of the Government

taking up some mode of securing the food supply of the population in time of war. That is a very important subject. We all know that the subject has attracted the attention of His Majesty's Government and of various Departments of the Government—I believe especially of the Admiralty. We all know that a Royal Commission on Food Supply has been sitting and taking most valuable evidence for a long time. I do not know what has occurred before that Commission, but from what I see in the papers, and from what occasionally is dropped by some of its members, I am perfectly convinced that that Commission is fully alive to all the needs of the case, and that it has taken the opinion of the greatest experts in the country, and also of skilful and renowned naval officers, as well as others who could throw any light upon the subject. Therefore I think we may with confidence look forward to the report of that Commission as embodying the best opinion that can be formed upon this very important subject. Until that Commission reports, it seems to me that private individuals can do little, except, of course, retain the liberty which every private individual has of expressing his own views and his own conclusions. The question raised as to changing the Suez Canal route to the Cape route is a very difficult and very important one. With the limited knowledge in my possession I do not think that an enemy would find it so very easy to block the Suez Canal route. We must remember that an enemy depends as much as we do ourselves on the supplies of coal, supplies of food, supplies of water, and supplies of ammunition, and that unless he is within easy reach of his naval base it might be difficult for him to lie outside a port like Aden and block the whole of the entrance of the Suez Canal. But this is a question entirely for the naval strategist, and I am perfectly convinced that at no time within my recollection—and that extends over a considerable number of years—has more care, more thought, or more intelligence, been devoted to the Admiralty to an endeavour to solve all these problems than there is at the present time. I know nothing of what goes on in the Admiralty; but sometimes in my position matters have come to my knowledge which show me how the tendency of work in the Admiralty is going, and I am perfectly convinced that in this matter of the Suez Canal route we mercantile men may, with thorough confidence, rely on the decision arrived at by the Navy. There are, looking at it purely from a commercial point of view, great difficulties, to my mind, in the adoption of the Cape route. Not only is there the difficulty to which the lecturer referred, namely, the difficulty of coal supply, but we must remember that vessels are specially built to go through the Mediterranean, the Suez Canal, and the Indian Ocean, and are perhaps not equally well calculated to stand the stormy seas that rage round the coast of Africa. Therefore it is not only a question of saying at a moment's notice that they will not go through the Suez Canal but go by the Cape route, but it is a question whether our ship-owners could trust their ships to the Cape route. Then there is another important question. We must, in case of necessity, feed our garrisons in India and the East with troops, and it may be a matter of vital necessity that those troops should be hurried out through the Suez Canal, and avoid the waste of time which would be involved by their going round the Cape. I think for these reasons we may in this case also with the utmost confidence leave the solution of the question in the hands of the naval officers who are always at the disposal of His Majesty's Government. Admiral Fremantle has touched on a question which, to me, bristles with difficulties, namely, the question of national insurance. I belong to an association which is supposed to know something about the insurance of

ships and cargoes, and this question, as he says, has been very carefully considered. But the best and cleverest men in the insurance world—and there are clever men in that profession—have not been able to see light, or to lay down any scheme by which this system could be perfectly carried out. I think the Admiral went as near it as anybody has done, in suggesting that Lloyd's should take the maritime risks and that the country should take the war risks; but even in that there are considerable difficulties. I am given to understand that this matter is also being very carefully considered by the Commission on Food Supply. Of course, the Commissioners have the advantage of having evidence from everybody; they will have the advantage of having evidence from leading underwriters, from the experts of the Treasury, and from all the other Departments, and from the naval officers who look at the strategical view of the question; and I am perfectly certain that in this respect, too, we may rely with considerable confidence on whatever result may be arrived at by the Royal Commission. I think when that Commission makes its report it will probably be one of the most valuable reports that has ever been issued, and it will give us all, both naval officers, the men who are the suppliers of food, underwriters, insurance companies, and everybody else, much food for reflection. The lecturer has brought under your notice a subject with which I have something to do, and that is the question of signalling. Lloyd's has the control and management of the commercial signalling stations on the coast of the country, and we find that in some cases it is very difficult to get merchant-vessels to pay attention to signals. We have also lately had brought under our notice the importance that it must be in case of war that merchant-vessels should be able to communicate freely and easily with men-of-war, both in order to obtain orders from the men-of-war and to supply information as to what they may have observed on their passages. I am sorry to say that in both directions there is a considerable difficulty. We have found a considerable difficulty in signalling being properly and efficiently conducted by merchantmen. I do not think myself it is at all due to any fault on the part of the officers of the Mercantile Marine. As Commander Caborne has pointed out, all officers of the Mercantile Marine must pass in signalling before they can obtain their certificates. Therefore there are always on board a merchantman some men who are quite competent to read signals and to make signals; but, as Dr. Ginsburg pointed out, there is no doubt about it, that our merchantmen are often so short-handed that it is very difficult to spare men to make the signals. When a vessel is coming into harbour or near harbour every man is required to do necessary work, and they cannot be spared to make signals. In the same way, when a vessel is out at sea, all the crew are below except those who it is absolutely necessary should be on deck. Those men have their allotted duties to carry out, and it is very difficult for them to be sent away to get flags to run up signals, or to read signals. Some vessels are, perhaps, not as well equipped with telescopes and signalling flags as might be desired. It seems to me that the only practical solution of the difficulty would be by somebody, either the Government or some association, giving certain prizes or certain allowances in return for signals made. I think if there was anything to be got out of it the men of the merchant service would find ways of making the signals; but unless a man has some inducement it is very difficult to persuade him to do what he looks upon as extra work without any remuneration or reward. As to night signalling, I am glad to say that we already see a great reform in that respect; we are gradually extending our night signalling at our signal stations, and there is no doubt that

many more vessels are gradually taking up the means of signalling at night by flashing lamps than has hitherto been the case. As has been pointed out very ably in the lecture, at certain times at sea in this climate, if you do not have night signalling you might almost practically have no signalling at all, because if vessels are coming near port or near land, it is just at that time they ought to make their signals, and it is at that time that their owner wants to communicate orders to them. Within the last few days, in fact, I may say within the last few hours, one of my assistants has invented a system of electric flashing lamps, which has hardly been sufficiently tested yet; but, so far as it has been tested, we have hopes of its facilitating night signalling very materially, and I hope before long we shall be able to report to the proper authorities that we have a means which will make night signalling much more easy than it has been up to the present time. But there is one reform in signalling which I venture to mention now, namely, that a great many people think—and, I am rather inclined to think, justly—that flag signalling might almost be abolished. Flags are very difficult to read under certain circumstances. If there is a calm they will not fly out; if the wind is blowing straight towards the flag the flag blows out, and you cannot read it; and I think that what the Navy have adopted at their signal stations is superior to any flag signalling, viz., the ordinary semaphore. I cannot but think that the Mercantile Marine at the signal stations, which, for commercial purposes, communicate with the Mercantile Marine on the coasts of the United Kingdom and other countries, might much more advantageously adopt semaphoric signalling than continue to use flag signals. There is a great inclination amongst the signal-men to prefer the flags—they look prettier, and make a station smart with the flags blowing out; but for practical purposes I am inclined to think that we shall soon have to give up flag signalling and take to semaphoric signalling. If so, I think, then, the semaphore might be used on board merchantmen much more easily than flag signals are used at present. It will make it easier for the crews to signal, because they will not have then to send away for the flags; the semaphore will be there, and will be used at a moment's notice without any trouble. Indeed, I have seen young officers of the Navy able to semaphore with their hands very often quite as well as they do with the semaphore, and I do not see why merchantmen's crews should not be taught in the same manner, and without going to the actual semaphore, communicate at short distances in that way. The question of British seamen on British ships is one we all wish to see thoroughly adopted; but I think we must remember that there is one person to be consulted in this matter, and on him we ought not to be too hard, namely, the shipowner. Why should the shipowner be more bound to employ Britons in ships than the owners of the Carlton or Savoy Hotels? If we go to those hotels we find we are not waited on by Britons. We do not know the reason exactly; but all over the country, wherever you go, you find at any hotels that Britons are not waiting on you. Why do people give up that very lucrative employment, which employs a great number of men, and hand it over without a word to the foreigner? It is whispered that the reason is that the foreigner is more temperate in his habit than the Briton; and I believe officers in command of merchant-vessels will often prefer to take a foreigner, especially a Scandinavian, than they will a Briton, because the Briton has an unhappy desire always to stimulate his energies with abundant alcohol. That is one of the great misfortunes of our race. The shipowner is doing commercial work for the purpose of commercial results, and it is hardly right and just that he should be

expected to sacrifice himself and his property in a way that no other business or professional man in the country is expected to do. We should all, of course, like to see nothing but British men in British ships; but I am afraid until there is some reform in the manners of some of the classes of our countrymen, it is a result which will not be very easily attained. With these remarks I have trespassed already too long on your attention, and I shall therefore now ask Commander Crutchley to be good enough to make any remarks which he wishes to make to terminate a most interesting lecture.

Commander W. C. CRUTCHLEY, in reply, said:—I am much obliged to you, Sir, and to the other gentlemen who have taken part in the discussion. There are few points that require answering. The first is as to the capability of the ships which usually travel in the Mediterranean and through the Canal to go round the Cape with safety. You may perhaps remember that at the time of the Boer War many of the Canal ships were employed as transports, and made successful voyages to the Cape and Natal. I do not think the objection holds. With regard to your remark, Sir, that the small crews carried by vessels could be taken on board a man-of-war, I fear that in any attempts on our commerce, our passenger vessels would not be spared any more than the smaller vessels would. This paper was no argument for a divergence from the Suez Canal route, but it simply pointed out what would happen if we were ever compelled to take to the Cape route owing to the Suez Canal being blocked. Then, Sir, you spoke on the question of British seamen. My remarks were intended as supplementary to those I have made on previous occasions as to the necessity for the State training of merchant seamen. As to the shipowner employing them, I would point out that no great industry in this country is free from responsibility so far as the employés are concerned, whether it be mine owners, manufacturers, or anyone else; and I hold that, considering the importance of the Mercantile Marine to this country, it is essential that ships should come more under Government care than perhaps any other great industry. With regard to the British seaman being addicted to drink, that is a remark I have often heard. I can only be sorry that that opinion gains ground. It is not my experience that he is worse than anyone else in this respect; but I think we must remember when we talk about the British sailors being addicted to drink that they are our own countrymen, and that if they are addicted to drink it is because of their bad early training, and that is all the more reason why we should endeavour to remedy it. I beg to thank you.