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ON THE NECESSITY FOR TRAINING SEAMEN FOR THE SEA SERVICE.

*By Admiral the Right Hon. Sir J. C. DALRYMPLE HAY, Bart.,
G.C.B., D.C.L., F.R.S.*

Thursday, 14th January, 1904.

Admiral Sir N. BOWDEN-SMITH, K.C.B., in the Chair.

UNTIL the middle of last century no plan for training men for the Navy by the Admiralty existed. The Mercantile Marine was the source from which these men were drawn; apprentices were entered by it in considerable numbers, and, after a year's training in a man-of-war, formed good crews to navigate our ships and fight our guns at sea. The Mercantile Marine, however, not only trains no men for the Navy now, but it does not enter apprentices in any numbers or train enough seamen for its own purposes.

The manning of the Royal Navy until the middle of last century was very badly provided for. When a man-of-war was commissioned it took several months to man her. Her commissioned officers were sent to the various ports to collect a few men: one lieutenant was sent to Tower Hill, another to Liverpool, a third to Newcastle or elsewhere. He had a rendezvous at a public-house, and there he sat under gaudy recruiting bills, which described in favourable colours the character of the captain and the service on which the ship was likely to be employed. At last, after four or five months' delay, the ship sailed for her commission, and in about a year's time the captain and officers succeeded in disciplining the crew. This ship's company, at the end of three years, was again disbanded, and the ship which replaced the one paid off had again to undertake the recruiting and disciplining of another crew.

To the late Admiral Lord FitzHardinge belongs the credit of inducing the country to man our ships fully and to train boys for the Navy. In 1845 he persuaded his colleagues at the Admiralty to obtain authority from the Treasury to train 300 boys. In the following year the Chancellor of the Exchequer struck this expenditure out of the Estimates, and Admiral Berkeley (as he then was) in consequence resigned his post at the Admiralty. He was fortunately a member of the House of Commons, and after explaining to Parliament the cause of his resignation, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was persuaded to continue the grant for training boys for the Navy. Admiral Berkeley rejoined the Board of Admiralty and remained in office until 1851.

The difficulties the Navy had to contend with until the training system was established may be confirmed by some cases in my personal experience. In 1835 I was serving in H.M.S. "Trinculo" on the Cape of Good Hope and West Coast of Africa Station. Until that

year smugglers who had been convicted were sentenced to serve in the Navy as a punishment. About nine of our best boatmen were Deal men serving out their sentence. An Act of Parliament very properly ordered that the Navy was no longer to be used as a place for penal service, and ordered their discharge. We were then engaged in the suppression of the slave trade and our boats were constantly employed on the Bonny River, and the other Oil rivers where the slaves were embarked. These men were suddenly ordered to be discharged, and no British seamen being obtainable, we had to complete our crews by enlisting some Kroomen, of whom we already had our due proportion.

Again, in 1836, a Channel Squadron of seven sail of the line was commissioned under Admiral Sir Charles Paget. I was then serving in H.M.S. "Minden," and, like the other ships, we could get no men. The "Minden" was sent to the Shetland Isles and scraped together about 200 fishermen who did not speak, or even understand, English, and who nearly broke the hearts of the officers who tried to keep them in the necessary cleanly habits and discipline of a man-of-war.

At the outbreak of the Russian War I was in command of H.M.S. "Victory," which was the receiving ship at Portsmouth for the men sent down from Tower Hill. They were positively of every class except seamen. It was my business to appropriate them to the ships which were being commissioned. Many I tried to discharge as unfit; but the Admiralty were determined to man the fleet somehow. A wooden-legged sweeper was sent to me; I discharged him; he was sent back; I again discharged him; not only was he sent back again a third time, but Admiral Berkeley came down from London to ask my reasons. I tendered my reasons and he gave me a wiggling for delaying the manning of the fleet. The wooden-legged sweeper was sent to the "St. George," and her captain landed him at Dover on his way to the Baltic; he was again sent back to me from Tower Hill, and my friend Commodore Hastings, going in the "Cyclops" to the West Coast of Africa, took him as ship's cook, but landed him as useless at Falmouth. I saw him no more.

Such were the exigencies of manning the Navy before boys were trained for that Service, and such are now the exigencies of the Mercantile Marine, because boys are not trained for it.

The Royal Navy at present employs about 83,000 seamen, who have entered as boys in the training-ships at the ages of from fifteen and a quarter to sixteen and three-quarters, and who then engage to serve until they are thirty years of age, and may then re-engage until they are forty. Of every 100 who complete their first engagement to thirty years of age, 65 re-engage until they are forty, 12 rejoin at some later period, and 23 are lost to the Navy.

To keep this number of (in round numbers) 83,000 men complete, it must be remembered that the reduction of this number is effected by:—1. The discharge of those who have reached the age of forty. 2. Those who have failed to re-enter at thirty years of age. 3. The loss by death and other mischances of the Service. To meet this waste, 4,700 boys are annually entered for the naval training-ships, and about 1,000 in H.M.S. "Northampton" and her tenders. There are now 9,900 boys borne for training, which is completed in about two years and two months, after which, at about 18 years of age, they begin their period of 12 years' service, as stated above.

The number of 83,000 seamen is sufficient for the peace force now in commission; but if war should break out the Naval Reserve is the only trained force on which we can rely for manning the additional ships now completing, without considering the larger number of ships which may soon be built to make our Navy sufficient for its many duties.

The Naval Reserve, a very reliable force, consisted up to 1897 of two classes:—1st class—11,700, serving in the Mercantile Marine; 2nd class—11,300 employed as fishermen and in the coasting trade; 23,000 in all. But it must be remembered that these men being taken from the Merchant Service in time of war, will deprive it of its best men at the very time that our Mercantile Marine would be fully employed in provisioning this country and in distributing its commerce.

R.N.R. STRENGTH, 31ST DECEMBER, 1903.

Qualified seamen	..	..	..	..	5,170
Old First Class	..	..	..	..	6,023
					<hr/> 11,193
Seamen	..	..	..	..	6,393
Old Second Class	..	..	..	..	3,901
					<hr/> 10,294
Firemen	..	..	..	..	4,544
					<hr/> Grand Total 26,031

A further Naval Reserve is being created of those men who, at thirty years of age, after twelve years' service, prefer to join the Reserve to re-engaging for the extra ten years in the Navy. This Reserve is to number 15,000 men, and will apparently require an additional number of entries of boys.

R.N.R. SEAMEN AND FISHERMEN.

Employed in Merchant vessels	..	..	7,000 ¹
„ Fishing „	..	..	11,000
„ in Docks, etc.	..	..	3,000
			<hr/> 21,000

It seems to be supposed by many persons that, because we live on an island, our population is born with nautical tastes. This does not seem to be so, as was recognised in the Navigation Laws now repealed. The sea service requires, like every other trade and profession, a long apprenticeship, and it is proved to demonstration that after the age of 17 lads are not attracted by its adventurous character. An attempt was made at Portsmouth to train lads of 18, who were called "Novices," for the sea; but they did not turn out satisfactory seamen, or compare in efficiency with those entered and trained as boys.

There is no doubt of the fact of the increase of foreign and corresponding decrease of British seamen employed in the Mercantile Marine.

¹ About 3,000 in foreign-going ships.

In 1888 there were 158,959 British and 24,990 foreign seamen employed in British merchant vessels; in 1901 the numbers were 151,376 and 37,174 respectively—a decrease of 7,583 British, and an increase of 12,184 foreign, seamen in 13 years. In the quinquennial period ending 1901, the census shows a decrease of 4,597 British seamen, and an increase of 5,168 foreigners. In the same census 33,610 lascars are employed. The lascars are British subjects, and are excellent for tropical service. A good proportion are drawn from the Northern Indian races, and are not wanting in courage and endurance, even when serving outside the Tropics.

The Board of Trade Return for 1902 shows (p. 74) a total of 253,540 persons employed afloat in the Home and Foreign Trade. Of these 39,177 are Asiatics and lascars, 39,825 are foreigners, and only 174,538 are British.

We hear a great deal about the unemployed. The best way to deal with the unemployed is to employ them, and here we have a statement that in the most manly, healthy, and active of all employments one-fifth of those employed are foreigners.

No doubt, as suggested in the Report of Sir F. Jeune's Committee, it may be due to the greater attractiveness of shore employments to grown men; but it must also be observed that grown men will not take to the sea.

Again, it is doubtless true that one in thirty-six of our population are employed in the Navy, and Merchant Service, and as fishermen; but the numbers in the Navy and Merchant Service stated above leave 30 per cent. of the total as fishermen.

The apprentices entered for the Mercantile Marine in 1902 are given as 1,342, but not all of these are in training for able seamen. At the present time there are 5,419 apprentices on the books, but they are mostly training for officers. In the sailing merchant navy alone under our flag are 22,071 ships, 11,500 of these aggregating 2,237,000 tons, sailing on distant voyages, and which are manned by 35,825 British, and 9,668 foreign seamen; a service providing the best remaining training for sailors, and yet abandoned as a training place for our own men to nearly 10,000 foreigners, who cannot be expected to defend our merchant-ships from an enemy's privateer or to join our own Navy to fight our enemies.

On 6th July, 1900, as reported in the *Times*, Mr. Ritchie, then President of the Board of Trade, said: "That with regard to the employment of British seamen on British ships He deplored the fact that so large a number of seamen on our ships were foreigners, and he would gladly see those replaced by British sailors, but he could not undertake to ask Parliament to legislate so as to compel British shipowners to employ seamen of a certain nationality; the ship-owners must be left to choose without restriction men who were to man their ships."

Thus the Minister admits the evil, but does not accept the responsibility of providing the remedy, which is the employment of the seamen of the British Empire in its own ships. The ship-owner has, however, no choice; there are no trained seamen for him to choose from; the Naval Reserve men—23,000—are all engaged; and the ship-owner no doubt, as a sensible man, would prefer well-trained and well-disciplined British seamen to those of any other nationality.

The cost in pay of the 84,000 men serving in the Royal Navy is, including all charges but victualling, £3,215,000, or an average per head of about £44 a year.

If we turn to page 40 of the Board of Trade Returns, June 19th, 1900, we find that the average pay of merchant seamen is about the same.

The remedy for the evils indicated above, in the large employment of foreign seamen to the detriment of our own fellow subjects, would seem to be to adopt for our merchant navy the same training of our boys which has redeemed our Royal Navy from evil habits too often distinguishing the seaman, and has now made them men of character and conduct of whom the nation is justly proud.

We have seen above that an entry of 4,700 boys annually is sufficient to keep up the number of 84,000 seamen for the Royal Navy. It is obvious that a further entry of 9,500 boys would supply the 175,000 men required for the Mercantile Marine, unless the waste in the Mercantile Marine is much greater than in the Royal Navy.

It seems to me that the State must step in and do for the Merchant Navy what the State has already done for the Royal Navy. Is it too much to hope that the Admiralty and the Board of Trade could arrange for such an increase of training, and make the men of the merchant navy all subjects of the King, and a real reserve for the Navy in case of war? The cost of manning our Merchant Navy with respectable British subjects, by educating our boys, now running to swell the host of unemployed, in a healthy, active and useful profession, and adding incalculably to our naval force, would certainly not cost more per head than the boys we train for the Navy. The 40,000 foreigners whom our Mercantile Marine now trains would have to leave it on the outbreak of war, as subjects of belligerent or neutral States, and there are no British seamen to take their places.

I may be told that it is not the business of the Admiralty to train boys for the Mercantile Marine, and that it is not the business of the Board of Trade to educate boys for the sea service. The Lord President of the Council is, however, at the head of the Board of Education; the President of the Board of Trade and the First Lord of the Admiralty are his colleagues; it surely would be possible for them to combine so as to consider the best mode of training our boys, or some of them, to man the Mercantile Marine with British subjects, provide a real reserve for the Navy, and so get rid of the disgrace of having foreigners to man our Merchant Navy.

The training of boys for the Mercantile Marine was recommended so long ago as 1859 by the Royal Commission over which the Earl of Hardwick presided, and of which Mr. W. Shaw Lindsay was a member who had moved for it in the House of Commons, but their recommendations have never been carried out. Let me explain in detail how it seems to me that this Commission's Report could be carried out with great advantage now.

There are, as we have seen, 40,000 foreigners and about 175,000 seamen to be recruited as time goes on by men of the same quality as our naval seamen. If it takes an annual entry of 4,700 boys to keep up the 80,000 men for the Navy, an annual entry of 10,000 boys would supply the 215,000 men required for the merchant navy. Instead of having 10,000 boys in training for the Navy as at present, 30,000 boys would be under training for both Services. The Commission recommended training-ships along our coast—not crowded, but

with about 200 boys in each. This would require 100 small training-ships, say ten in Ireland, at Londonderry, Belfast, Kingstown, Waterford, Youghal, Cork, Bantry, Limerick, Galway, Killybeg; ten in Scotland, at Leith, Dundee, Aberdeen, Cromarty, Stornoway, Oban, The Clyde, Loch Ryan, Kirkwall, and Lerwick; and 80 in England and Wales. I will not indicate the ports, but the ships should be assigned not only to the sea-board fringe, but also to the great cities. Thus the Birmingham training-ships could be at Bristol, the Manchester training-ships in the Mersey, and those from the Nottingham and Yorkshire towns in the Humber.

Boys sent to them should be volunteers, physically fit, and having passed the sixth standard, having the full consent of parents and guardians, and their terms of admission and enlistment should be identical with those in force with the entry of boys in the Navy. They would thus become a real Naval Reserve, and we should have a Merchant Navy in good order and discipline instead of a disgrace to our country and flag, in many cases now too well known to require description.

May I hope that these suggestions may be worthy of consideration, and that we may soon see a larger number of boys who have volunteered for the sea afforded the opportunity of being trained to take the place of foreigners, who now take the bread out of the mouths of forty thousand of our fellow subjects.

Commander W. F. CABORNE, C.B., R.N.R. : — In taking part in the discussion of the very important subject brought before us by Admiral Sir John Dalrymple Hay—whom we are all so pleased to see here this afternoon as lecturer—I do not intend to deal with statistics, for it is an incontrovertible fact that while the whole *personnel* of our Mercantile Marine is becoming larger year by year, its European British-born element is becoming smaller, the foreign section at the same time constantly expanding. Against the increase in the number of lascars—seafarers with the merits of whom I am personally well acquainted—I can have nothing to say, for, as a rule, they are very good men, and most of them, like ourselves, are born subjects of the King, and may in the future be advantageously utilised in the scheme of Imperial Defence. Indeed, looking at what is going on at the opposite side of the world, it seems to me that if the Government of the Australian Commonwealth, instead of trying to exclude East Indian seamen from their ports, would heavily tax British ships arriving on their coasts largely manned by aliens, they would be engaged in a far more patriotic work. All those who have paid attention to the question of the defence of these Islands, will, I am sure, share the opinion that it is of the utmost importance that our merchant-seamen—and in that generic term I include masters, mates, engineers, sailors, firemen, mechanics, and other ratings of a similar character—should be British-born subjects, not only to furnish a recruiting area for our Naval Reserves, but also for the purpose of carrying on our indispensable food supply and our trade in raw materials and manufactured goods in time of war. In fact, in the public interest it seems to be quite as essential that the *personnel* of our Mercantile Marine should be genuinely British, as it does that the *matériel* should belong to the same nationality. Although the Navigation Laws were repealed in 1849, a certain amount of protection was preserved for ship owners, and, according to law, the owners of British

merchant-ships must be British subjects; yet, in an age of limited liability companies, this wise provision is frequently eluded. If it is desirable that the ships should be British—and the legislature appears to hold that view—then, as I have already said, it is equally desirable that the masters and crews of those vessels should be British also. In short, while all possible protection and encouragement should be given to our ship-owners, all possible protection and encouragement should also be extended to British seamen. All this indicates and emphasises the necessity for training seamen for the sea service, and also for providing for their subsequent employment. Successive British Governments, with one exception (and then only in a very modified form), have evaded what would seem to be a plain duty in this respect, with the result that we have arrived at the present unhappy state of affairs. Of course, in advocating the employment of British-born crews, one is liable to be met with the stock arguments, that the shipowner has as much right to employ foreign seamen as an inn-keeper has to employ foreign waiters; that this is a Free Trade country, wherein no restrictions upon industries can be imposed; and that the foreigners engaged on board our ships are mostly Scandinavians, who would not be likely to assist any other nation in hostile acts against Great Britain. The answers to these arguments are simple. If the authorities do not interfere with the employment of foreign waiters,—and these men hardly come into the question of national defence—they do interfere with the general conduct of the liquor trade, in the interests of health and morality, in much the same way that they also interfere with the management of theatres for the protection of life; and if, by becoming ship-owners, men engage in what is really a business of vast national importance, they must consent to conduct that business with due regard to national interests. Although this is a so-called Free Trade country, at present there can be no Free Trade permitted in our national defences, and the private interests of individuals must ever be subordinated to the general welfare of the State. Again, the Scandinavians employed are in a minority, instead of being in a majority, as is so very frequently erroneously stated, and, lastly, we have some recollection of a Scandinavian brigade having fought against us during the recent war in South Africa. We shall probably be told that, however much shipowners might wish to employ British seamen, there are not enough of them to go round. That, no doubt, is the case; but a well thought-out and efficient training scheme, practically administered, combined with a workable plan for the after employment of boys and young seamen, would eventually set the matter right. We shall be reminded that there is a depression in the shipping trade, and that the carrying of boys would be an additional tax upon the already over-burdened shipowners. Well, depression in sea carriage may be caused in a natural way by a shrinkage in the volume of trade to be dealt with, or it may be caused by too keen competition; in the present instance, I think it is largely due to the over-production of new tonnage, and to owners selling their older boats to foreigners, who then run them, in an exceedingly cheap manner, and without the same restrictions as to deep-loading, in rivalry to their former proprietors. Of course, the tonnage expressly built for or by foreigners, as well as the shipping bounties paid by some countries for the encouragement of their Mercantile Marine, must be taken into account when considering this problem; and I will leave it to you to judge for yourselves how far these periodically recurring depressions might be averted. I do not propose going into the various causes that have led to such an

influx of foreigners into our Merchant Navy, for time will not permit; but I may remark that the statement of Sir Francis Jeune's Committee, that the falling off of British-born subjects in the Mercantile Marine is largely due to the greater attractiveness of shore employments, must not be taken too literally. Naturally, one modern aspect of the case must not be overlooked when dealing with this part of the question, and that is the spread of education. Years ago, when many boys went to sea completely, or almost completely, devoid of the rudimentary elements of education, most of them were well content to remain in a ship's fore-castle until such time as they became incapacitated by age or infirmity. But since the establishment of free education all this has been changed, and numbers of the foremast hands of to-day very properly seek some form of advancement, either afloat or ashore; and this is an important factor which must be taken into consideration in connection with all schemes having for their object the providing of a sufficient supply of British-born able seamen and stokers. There is no lack of boys offering themselves for service in the Royal Navy—I believe that only one out of about eight applicants, including those who from some cause are ineligible, is accepted—for they know that once they are enrolled in that great service, their future, subject to good conduct on their own part, is assured, and they do not dread what may be termed the legitimate hardships of the sea. On the other hand, coming to the merchant navy, it may be that boys, who otherwise would enter the Mercantile Marine—with its many comparative disadvantages at the best of times—when opportunities are afforded them for doing so, are sometimes frightened away, not by the legitimate hardships and perils of the sea, but rather by the illegitimate hardships and dangers. It is true that of late years the crew accommodation has improved, the food is better, and the cooking is more frequently done by men with greater pretensions to knowledge, than was the case when cooks were constantly selected more out of deference to their bodily infirmities than to their culinary skill. Nevertheless, the progress made has not been so rapid as could have been wished, in order to keep the comforts at sea *relatively* advanced with the greatly improved comforts of home; while the drawback of youngsters being herded with representatives—and not always desirable ones—of all nationalities, has not been without its effect. Then there is the question of so-called “desertions” in some foreign ports, a matter which was touched upon by Commander Dawson on the occasion of my lecture here last June, and in this connection it is interesting to note the remarks of the United States Commissioner of Navigation, in his recently issued report, on the shipping frequenting San Francisco. He says:—“Desertions from British ships from Europe amount to 43 per cent. of the crews. British masters and owners, under ordinary conditions, profit by such desertions, as in some cases from Australia.” Certain of our own consular reports are equally outspoken. The more frequent payment of wages, the compulsory granting of allotment notes, the handing over of deserters' wages to the Board of Trade, and some energetic diplomatic pressure brought to bear upon the Federal Government of the United States with a view to putting down crimping, and other rascalities, with a strong hand, would do much in the way of reducing the euphemistically termed “desertions.” It may be thought that I am digressing from the subject of the training of seamen, but I would submit that all my remarks are really relevant, for it is obvious that it is absolutely useless to expend time and money on the training of boys, unless the conditions of their after service are

such as to induce them to remain at sea, at least for a period. In short, my view is, that any training scheme adopted should be backed up by another one specially devised to ameliorate the conditions of life and service afloat. It must not be forgotten that on board our mail steamers and best vessels, where the conditions are generally favourable, the crews are principally British, the foreigners flourishing most in the ocean tramps and long-voyage sailing-ships, and forming an insignificant minority in our coasting trade and fisheries, where, once more, undeniable advantages are to be found. Now what is the attitude of our shipowners towards the manning question? The best of them would, no doubt, like to see some improvement effected, but many are indifferent, and many others are even hostile. For instance, Sir Francis Jeune's Committee, while making a recommendation with regard to the easy and cheap naturalisation of foreign seamen—a proposition which I strongly commented upon, and vigorously protested against, last June, and have also referred to at a more recent date in this Institution—threw a small sop in another direction, by suggesting that the superintendents of Mercantile Marine offices should be empowered to refuse to permit foreigners to sign the articles of agreement of British vessels—with which, by the way, they alone have to deal—if, in their opinion, such men had not a sufficient knowledge of the English language to enable them to comprehend necessary orders that might be given them. This would seem to be most reasonable and proper. But what is the result? Why, many of the shipowners are up in arms at the infringement of what they are pleased to call their just right to employ any persons whom they may select. Before sitting down, I should like to remark that we have had two small sea-going training schemes at work during the past few years—one being a Government scheme in connection with the Light Dues, and the other one being in connection with the Shipping Federation—but much cannot be said for the success of either. The good work done by the training-ships and other establishments already situated round our coasts, and the difficulties with which their managers have to contend, I must leave others to speak about, as my time is now up; but, in conclusion, I would remark that in the same way that, owing to persistent advocacy, a feeling seems to be gradually stealing over the country that some form of universal service is desirable if we are to continue to hold up our head among the nations, so, by great and continued persistence on our part, we may eventually convince all classes of our fellow-subjects, and particularly those placed in authority, that it is indispensable to the defence and welfare of the Empire that the *personnel* and the *matériel* of our merchant navy should be British alike in name and in fact.

Captain J. D. CURTIS, R.N.:—I very much regret that Admiral Boys is not here this afternoon, because he would be able to tell us something about the manning of ships. He was a lieutenant of the "Impregnable" in 1838, and the ship lay at Spithead for twelve months before she was manned. I happened to be in the "Queen," and she took about six months to get manned in 1842. I should like to say a few words with regard to the manning of the merchant service. I was talking to a young fellow, who is now employed by the Thames Conservancy, who had been an officer in the merchant service. I said to him, "How did you get on?" He replied, "I was on a 4,000-ton ship, and we only had a crew of thirty men, nine of whom were apprentices. Of course, they were no good when we first went to sea; they were sick." I asked him, "How did you shorten

sail?" He said, "We let go the upper top-sails; we kept the main tack lashed down; put the helm up, and let her rip, or blow out of the bolt ropes, if necessary." I think it is very wrong that a 4,000-ton ship should be allowed to go to sea with only thirty men on board. This young fellow also told me that the donkey engine counted for four men. Sir John Hay said in his lecture that the pay in the merchant service and in the Navy was about the same. I do not think that is so. The yearly pay may be the same, but the men of the Navy have a very good pension to look forward to if they behave themselves well. They are always paid every week, which is quite a different condition of affairs to when we went to sea. With regard to what I have said, as to a 4,000-ton ship going to sea with a crew of thirty men, you will find it means one man to every 133½ tons. Sixty or seventy years ago, or more, I believe there was a law, before the Navigation Laws were repealed, that there should be two men and a boy to every 100 tons. What I would suggest is that there should be two classes of training-ships, one for cadets, gentlemen's sons, or middle-class people, who would pay, say £30 a year to be taught navigation. The other class would be for boys who would be paid for out of the rates or trade,¹ or some tonnage due might be imposed. Supposing a penny a ton was imposed upon every class of goods, that would go a long way towards paying for them. I should very much like a return to be made of the number of apprentices that have gone to sea, and have afterwards given it up in disgust; I think you will find there are a great many who have done so.

Commander Hon. HENRY N. SHORE, R.N., Retired:—The subject brought to our notice by the distinguished lecturer is unquestionably one of the most important that can engage the attention of a people dependent on the sea transport service for almost everything that supports existence besides affording a means of livelihood for the industrial classes. The problem of finding a remedy for the evils complained of, however, has taxed the intelligence of some of the ablest politicians and men of business, and would seem almost impossible of solution under our existing institutions. The difficulties are greatly enhanced, moreover, by the apparent inability of the people of the United Kingdom to realise that they are islanders; that by the sea they live and move and have their being; and that legislation, which may suit a country forming part of a great continent, is not necessarily adapted to the exigencies of a kingdom which draws practically the whole of its supplies—food stuffs and raw materials, from beyond the seas. The curious incapacity of Britons to realise their geographical position, and the responsibilities attaching to it, is reflected in the Legislature, which, incredible as the fact might be deemed by strangers to the land, comprises amongst its 600 odd members almost every class of the populace, as well as representatives of almost every industry, except that particular one on which the very existence of

¹ See *Daily Telegraph*, January 14th, 1904. Export and Import trade for 1903:—Export, £542,900,000; import, £290,900,000; duty, 1d. per pound, will give £1,787,083. Would be sufficient to train 35,621 boys at £50 per annum per head. However laudable for charitable people to pay, I maintain it is the duty of the State to do it. They are proud of their Mercantile Marine, so merchants and ship-owners should do it. In the end the public would pay and be none the worse, but all the better,—J.D.C.

the nation depends, the sea transport service. Occasionally, a naval officer strays into Parliament; but of the great sea transport service, never a member is returned to Westminster by the electors of these islands. It would seem, indeed, as if, in spite of our boasted educational system, we had made but little advance in wisdom since Pepys compiled his diary, some 240 odd years ago:—"March 23rd, 1663. To the Trinity House, and there dined very well; and good discourse among the old men. Among other things, they observed, that there are but two seamen in the Parliament; which is a strange thing in an island." Strange, indeed! But what can be expected, while, according to the author of "Efficiency and Empire,"—"we choose the majority of our rulers, not because they are organisers, administrators, or men of affairs, but either because they can talk, or because they are related to propertied politicians, who formerly talked copiously." Too true also, alas! is the following:—"That the artist in words still holds the field as against the man who knows, and can think and do, we have only to look at Parliament." Until all this is changed, how can we expect anything but one-eyed legislation—a sort of meddling, and muddling by philanthropic, ignorant landmen, who seem to imagine that our Mercantile Marine has the field to itself, without competitors? What, for example, is to be thought of legislation which makes it an offence for a British ship-owner to load his ship beyond a certain draught, or to send it to sea without a specified number of crew; while vessels under foreign flags are allowed to overload in our ports to any extent, give false tonnage registrations, and then proceed to sea with as few men on board as their owners think fit? Is it surprising that the "intelligent" foreigner laughs in our faces? If Government thinks it desirable to hang necklaces of legislative mill-stones round the necks of ship-owners, it ought to protect them from the competition of foreigners who are hampered with none of the obstructions which handicap British vessels. It seems strange, at the time when other nations are fostering their ocean trade by offering inducements to merchants to embark capital in it, that our Government, alone in the world, should cling to a system of irritating interference; while endeavouring to soothe the ship-owner by babbling to him of the blessings of free trade. Perhaps the root of the evils complained of must be sought in the educational systems of the kingdom. These have been framed by landmen for landmen. The sea calling meets with no recognition at their hands, and even landmen complain that the education is best adapted for the production of clerks and young "lydies." But surely it is as important to man our merchant-ships as to man our office stools? Some time ago, Mr. George Barnes, Secretary A.S. Engineers, was reported in the *Times*, as saying that "there was no disguising the fact that elementary education had been a failure from the view of the social and industrial reformer. Before the era of the School Board, a young man was thrown upon himself, and was led to reflect. The outcome of the School Board system was, that the young man no longer thought for himself, but became an easy prey to the cheap newspaper." Has it been of advantage to the shipowner? The general complaint is, that the Board School system creates a distaste for manual labour, an aversion to the sea service. "When the sailor becomes a respectable, God-fearing member of society," says Mr. Frank T. Bullen, the great sea-writer, "the first thing he does is to try and get work ashore." One hundred and twenty years ago, a distinguished philanthropist wrote, "It is so much our proper province to carry on traffic by which other nations are enriched as well as ourselves, that, if this is impeded, we may with propriety say

our occupation's gone. . . . If by a judicious application of skill and industry we can establish nurseries in time of peace, rendering our country more maritimised, and giving our fellow subjects more honourable impressions of a sea life than is vulgarly entertained, it will be an acquisition of importance to us. We ought to diffuse a naval turn through every class of people, and by this means increase our numbers ready to try their fortune on the great deep. The sea may thus become more familiar, and a sea life be more universally approved."¹ As islanders, it should be our first care to provide men for the sea transport service; for, if this traffic is impeded, "we may with propriety say our occupation's gone." Great Britain is not the only country which has experienced difficulty in attracting men to the sea service. Spain, formerly a great maritime Power, once found herself in this predicament; and the means she adopted may be commended to the attention of our legislators. Briefly, King Ferdinand, in 1748, issued certain instructions relating to the government of "The Marine of My Kingdom, to secure its important encouragement, etc.," containing the following remarkable passages:—"As it is convenient for the preservation and increase of the Navy that boys should apply themselves to sea affairs, who, in time, may become useful, the Ministers shall take care that the patrons of vessels shall breed and maintain in them such orphans who are destitute of education, obliging the patrons to employ them in navigation, fishing, and the care of barks, providing them with victuals, and proper clothing, etc., and the justices of the towns shall deliver to the marine commissaries the boys who, under the aforesaid circumstances, they ought to take up, and apply them to the sea service. Of these same orphan boys, there shall be a number employed in the trading vessels of Europe and America, obliging the patrons to take care of them, and on reaching a proper age, they shall be passed to that of matriculated sailors. And the said orphan boys shall not only apply to navigation, but shall also be aggregated to the master carpenters, and calkers, etc. The Ministers shall practise the same in the fabrics of sailcloth, rigging, pitch and tar, avoiding by this means the ruin of such children, who, for want of a determined application and instruction, are lost, etc." Are there no orphan boys in the British Islands, who, "for want of a determined application and instruction, are lost"? And would it not be well for the State to take these lads in hand, and train them for the sea, "avoiding by this means the ruin of such children"? At the present time our cities are prolific breeding-grounds for loafers and hooligans. And the people love to have it so! To sum up: our national system of education should be framed with a view to the full recognition of our geographical position, and with the object of impressing on the rising generation that they belong to a nation of islanders, and that by the sea they live and move and have their being. Young and old, members of Parliament and magistrates, parsons and politicians, all require to be taught that the welfare of this kingdom depends on the efficient conduct of the sea transport service. It is of far more importance to the industrial classes that our ships should be manned, rather than the office stools. In fact, in default of a well-manned transport service, the occupants of the office stools would soon be driven to confess that their "occupation's gone!" Finally, the inhabitants of the United Kingdom must remember that unless the ocean transport service is preserved from falling into the hands of aliens, who would use it to their own advantage, and to our detriment,

¹ "Proposal for County Naval Free Schools."—Jonas Hanway, 1783.
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we shall all of us be forced to admit ere long that "our occupation's gone."

Commander C. W. CRUTCHLEY, R.N.R. (Secretary of the Navy League) :— I would beg to thank you, Sir, in the first place, for another service rendered to the country by bringing this great subject forward. I almost despaired of anything more being done in the matter. I will confine my remarks to the two points mentioned in the paper : "that the Minister admits the evil but does not accept the responsibility of providing a remedy"; and, further, that "the State must step in and do for the Merchant Navy what the State has already done for the Royal Navy." Let me, in the first place, say that I think your suggestion that the boys should go from the sixth standard to be trained is an absolutely right one. I have long been an advocate for what could be called a "country-service class" in all the board schools, comprised of boys of good character and physique who intend to serve in the Navy, Army, or Mercantile Marine. I will not detain you more than a few minutes by stating the share that I have had quite recently in this matter. When Mr. Clark Hall's celebrated return came out in the year 1897, it opened the eyes of, I think, everyone to the fact that there was a dangerous increase in the number of foreign seamen in the Mercantile Marine. I think even the Board of Trade rubbed their eyes on that occasion, and thought something of it. The Navy League picked up the matter, and a committee was formed to go into the question. It was a committee of eminent business men, such as lawyers, educational authorities, and naval officers; at all events the proposals that this committee brought forward were common-sensed and eminently workable. We had long communications with the late Sir Courtenay Boyle, who was then Secretary of the Board of Trade, and eventually we organised a large deputation to Mr. Ritchie, then President of the Board of Trade, who, with Mr. Goschen, received us. Before this deputation, however, the Government had practically admitted the necessity for doing something by the remission of a proportion of light dues to those ship-owners who would carry boys. Mr. Goschen's remark was that that was just a little sweetening of the pill to the nation that had to pay the Bill to get it through the House of Commons. Sir John Hay said in his paper that the Minister admitted the evil. Mr. Ritchie said : "The Government for their part have not the smallest apprehension with regard to the Naval Reserve, or to men serving in H.M. ships. They believed that the sources from which they derive their supply are sufficient for the purpose, and sufficient for all the responsibilities which are likely to fall on us in case, unfortunately, we are driven into war." The adverse reception given to that deputation put back the hands of the clock a long way. Almost immediately after this, however, in May, 1901, we called together a conference, at which representatives of some twenty or thirty County Councils and shipowners were present, and they unanimously passed a resolution that the time had come when an organised effort should be made to introduce a system of training boys for the Royal Naval Reserve, and consequently the Mercantile Marine, upon the lines recommended by the reports of the Royal Commission of 1858, and already successfully adopted in the case of the Royal Navy. Furthermore, these County Councils were willing to grant scholarships for boys, tenable in training-ships, out of the technical education money provided them; the sole thing wanted to carry the scheme through was the consent and goodwill of the Admiralty and the Board of Trade—little more than that was required. Mr. Ritchie, at the time that he and Mr. Goschen received the deputation, said the

sources of supply were ample, and yet in the year 1902 two Commissions were appointed to enquire into this matter: one, the Naval Reserves Committee at the Admiralty, and the other the Committee at the Board of Trade. The Navy League, I may say, tendered evidence before both those committees, and the Naval Reserves Committee of the Admiralty practically went some way towards carrying out our scheme, because they recommended what was practically a short service system. They said the Navy League proposals were interesting, or something of that sort; but at all events, they did go somewhat in the direction indicated, by suggesting that short service should be recognised in the Navy—presumably that the men having done their short service in the Navy might pass into the Mercantile Marine. I have nothing to say against that if it can be worked, except that to my view it begins wrongly. But they also reported in favour of the Admiralty encouraging any well-considered scheme of training-ships or homes for boys which might be established for the advantage of the Mercantile Marine. They reported that it was practically not possible, certainly not feasible, to create an adequate reserve by establishing training ships for boys which would be greatly to the benefit of the Mercantile Marine and the boys themselves, but would entail a pecuniary cost on the country which would be out of all proportion to the results obtained as regards national defence alone. I call special attention to these words, because so far as I can understand—my understanding may be limited—I think our Mercantile Marine is the greatest industry we have; in fact the existence of the country as a first-class nation depends upon the maintenance of the Mercantile Marine. If other trades have a right to be supported out of the taxpayers' money, I do maintain most emphatically that the Mercantile Marine has a right to its share of the money. I now come to the thing that has perhaps grieved me more than anything during late years, and that is the Report of the Board of Trade Committee. I cannot say that I expected the Admiralty Naval Reserves Committee to do much for the Mercantile Marine, although I knew they were sympathetic; but coming to the Board of Trade, I did think that, with a Committee appointed as it was, with men there who knew what they were doing, who knew the gravity of the evil, and recognised that the time had come when it was necessary to stop it, that effective recommendations would be made. I can find in the Report of that Committee nothing—absolutely nothing. The Committee was formed “to enquire into the causes which have led to the employment of a large and increasing proportion of foreigners and lascars in the British merchant service, and the effect of such employment upon the reserves of seamen of British nationality available for naval purposes in time of peace or war, and to make such recommendations with respect to these matters as they may think fit.” The principal result of this very unsatisfactory Committee, so far as I can see, was a recommendation as to the employment of cooks, a lessening of the power of the master, and a recommendation that facilities should be given to foreign seamen to become British subjects. That is the outcome, Sir, of that Commission that we hoped so much from. To come down to the bedrock, the Board of Trade shirks the enormous responsibility that would attach to it, if it were partly responsible for the training of boys for the Mercantile Marine: that is the entire bottom of the business. Apart from that, the Board of Trade is so anxious to keep in with shipowners, and to avoid getting on their backs, as it were, that they hesitate to take action for the good of the country for fear of offending the shipowners. I call your attention to the fact that the prosperity of this country was mainly built up when the Navigation Laws were in full force. The Navigation

Laws were repealed at the instigation of shipowners, who clamoured for Free Trade, to manage their own business, and to have all restrictions removed. It may be within the memory of many people here present that there was a gentleman named Plimsoll, who lived some few years since, and we know what Mr. Plimsoll did for the Mercantile Marine, and what the shipowners of his day did when they were left to work their own sweet will. I can speak of that from actual experience, and I know there was no assertion that Mr. Plimsoll made that was not absolutely true. I say this because I wish to lead up to the point that, in a business such as the Mercantile Marine, it is necessarily a thing that *must be* interfered with by the State; if it is too important to be left alone to drift in the way it is drifting at the present day, and most large industries are subject to State interference. Then there is another point. It is said to be necessary for Imperial unity that we should get the colonial forces side by side with our own in war time. Well, if it is necessary to do that in war time, if we are to call for their assistance then, why should not we, in peace time, send as the connecting link with our kinsmen over sea the best men that we have in our country as our merchant seamen, in place of sending the rakings and scrapings of the street. My contention is that it is possible for a seaman's life to be made a business life that any man can adopt. Are we to send these alien men, as we do now, as the representatives of the sea power in this country—culled from the rakings and scrapings of Continental towns? I say it is a crying shame to the nation. But as showing what may be done in a small way to remedy the evil, even by a little Society, I would like to mention the Liverpool Sea Training Home for boys. I do not altogether approve of it, and I will tell you why; because I have said that what we want is to send the best men to sea, and not the worst; and the Liverpool Home, good as it is (and I can assure you that there is no establishment, even under the Government, that is better fitted out and better carried on than this particular place; I cannot speak too highly of it), takes the poorest class of boys, and I maintain it is not necessary to go to the poorest class of boys in the streets to find sailors.¹ Years ago, on more than one occasion, I put two or three lines in the *Daily Mail* to say that I could place boys at sea. What was the result? You could not get near my office; there was a string of boys fifty yards long, such was the eagerness to find employment at sea. I do not know that I need detain you any further; I think I have pretty well said what I mean. I am afraid I have not made myself more popular than I was in some quarters, but I cannot help that. I maintain that the missing link in the chain that could bind the Empire together is lost to-day in the dirt and squalor and polyglot jargon to be found in the forecables of our merchant vessels.

Lieutenant H. T. A. BOSANQUET, R.N. (Secretary of the Marine Society):—Admiral Sir John Hay in his paper has so clearly shown you the state of things that existed in the Royal Navy before the introduction of the training-ship system, and the excellent results that have come about since the system was started, that I am sure you must be more or less convinced of the necessity that exists for establishing a similar training service for the Mercantile Marine. We must not, however, overlook the

¹My contention is that it should be possible for a boy to go to sea in the merchant service without being under obligation to any charitable society. It should be his right, granted by a nation risen and existing by its sea power.—C.W.C.

fact that the happy results in the Navy are not solely due to the training system, but to the improved conditions of life and prospects in that service, which have made it so popular that it is now manned by the pick of the population. Any training scheme for the merchant service must therefore go hand in hand with some plan for improving the conditions of life at sea, or it will assuredly fail. As to the proposed training scheme, I am quite convinced of its necessity, and if in my remarks I put before you some difficulties which are bound to be met with, and must be overcome before any such plan can be a success, I am doing so merely with a view to helping towards the desired end. In the first place, when you have decided to establish your training-ships, and have found the necessary funds to do so, you must be more or less certain as to the number of recruits you will get to fill your ships, and have some plan for disposing of them after training. It is the greatest mistake to draw any conclusions on either of these points from naval statistics. The Navy is exceedingly popular, and the merchant service is not—that is, in comparison—and if you have a certain number of recruits for the Royal Navy, of whom a large proportion are rejected, it does not follow that all, or any of these, will be at once prepared to join the merchant service. However, I do not think there will be so much difficulty in getting recruits for your ships, as there are always numbers of boys anxious for a sea life of any kind, so I will not dwell on this point, but I do think you will find very great difficulty in disposing of your boys after training. Here, again, you must not compare conditions with the Royal Navy. In the Navy the managers of the training-ships are also the managers of the ships for which the boys are intended. As soon as a boy's time is up on board the training-ship there is sure to be a vacancy for him somewhere in the fleet, and he is immediately sent to fill it. In fact, vacancies occur by thirty or forty at a time. No difficulty, therefore, exists in the Navy in disposing of the boys. In the merchant service, however, it is a very different story; the fleet is made up of ships belonging to a thousand different owners and companies, some owning twenty ships, and some one only, and all of them having their own private interests to pursue, and not the good of the State. Many of these take British boys, and are favourable to training-ship boys; on the other hand, a great many take no British boys at all, and a number of shipowners look unfavourably on boys from training-ships. I have here a list of forty large shipping companies; twenty-one of these take no British boys at all, and only nineteen accept them. Again, the taking of boys for any individual ship depends upon the chief officer or master, and not necessarily the marine superintendent of the company. We must consider, therefore, that each ship in the merchant service must be dealt with separately—one chief officer may favour training-ship boys, another will not, and I must say that my experience at the present time is that training-ship boys are not over popular. There are two reasons for this; the first is that the majority of the mercantile training-ships are for boys of bad or doubtful character, and as all those ships, when their boys are sent to sea, endeavour to conceal their reformatory character, because the boys are presumably reformed, ship masters frequently find themselves saddled with thorough bad lots, whom they are only too ready to be rid of at the first opportunity, and one experience makes them cautious of accepting any more boys from any other training-ship. The second reason is that the managers of the good character training-ships expect their boys to get good wages, their contention being that, after a boy has been turned

from a rough bumpkin into an intelligent, smart, disciplined lad, he is worth higher wages than the raw article who has never seen a ship or boat. However, some shipping companies do not agree with this, and I know a particular company who refuse to have anything to do with one of the training-ships because they ask twenty shillings per month wages for their boys, and it is possible to get untrained boys for fifteen shillings. I have endeavoured to show you a very great difficulty which you will have to contend with after you establish your training-ships, unless any scheme of the kind has the hearty co-operation of the majority of the shipping companies. These must insist on their officers giving preference to training-ship boys. I see no reason at all why this should not be done. If the Government take the matter up they could induce the shipowners to assist. The reduction of the light dues for R.N.R. boys carried has been a partial success, and were a further reduction allowed for training-ship boys borne there would be no difficulty in getting these boys taken. I should mention the fact that the Shipping Federation, a body comprising some of our largest shipping companies, has a scheme of its own for getting boys, and this will be found to enter into serious competition with any training-ship scheme. How far their system is a success I do not know, as they keep their failures dark, but one of their number at a recent public meeting said it was a great success; so they will probably not lightly abandon it. There is one more point to which I would like to draw your attention. That is the fact that the decrease of British seamen in the Mercantile Marine is not so much due to the falling-off in the numbers of recruits for the service, as to the wastage that goes on of boys and ordinary seamen who throw up the service, disgusted with it, after a voyage or two. You may send your boy to sea, but you cannot keep him there. Boys are more or less in demand, but when the boy becomes an A.B. he feels foreign competition, and finds difficulty in getting employment, and throws up the service for the shore. I consider the crux of the whole thing is the want of continuity of employment. A man engages for a voyage only, and at the end of that voyage has to begin again and find a fresh berth. If he is ill he has to look out for himself, and is thrown entirely on his own resources. In the Navy, a man, well or ill, knows that he is all right for a certain number of years, and has the prospect of a pension at the end of his time. The merchant service will never be popular like the Navy until it is managed on nearly the same lines, or until it becomes more of a State and less of a private business. I will not take up your time much longer, but I would suggest that Admiral Sir John Hay's proposal be put on trial as soon as possible. There are now only three ships for training boys of good character and physique. None of these are full, through lack of funds. For the sake of experiment, the Government should allow these ships to fill up, and bear all the extra expenses. If the present ships can do this, and show that they are able to obtain and dispose of their boys satisfactorily, let further training-ships be established by degrees as they appear to be required. I am perfectly confident the "Warspite" could be filled at once, and I daresay the "Arethusa" officers present would say the same of their ship.

Lieut.-Colonel T. H. BAYLIS, K.C., V.D. (late 18th Middlesex V.R.C.):— I should like to be allowed to take part in this discussion. It is a subject of the deepest interest to all of us, but unfortunately men and boys put things off until the time of trial arises. The most important matter in the present day is to be prepared for

emergencies. You cannot improvise a soldier, nor can you improvise a sailor; he must be a man who has had good training and discipline. I think you will admit with me that war has become a science, and the more scientific and intelligent men you have in the Service the better it will be for it. It is not so much the quantity of men you require as the quality of the men for active service, whether for the Navy, the Army, or the Militia. Sir John Hay has, by his paper, proved to the utmost the necessity for the training of seamen for the sea service, but, independently of his paper, the high authority of the admiral is sufficient in itself to make his opinions most worthy, and we are much indebted to him for bringing the matter before us, which, from his rank and long experience and enthusiasm on the subject, cannot fail to be of the greatest benefit. The remarks made by Commander Caborne also proved, not only the necessity, but the increasing necessity for the training of seamen for sea service. Are we ready? We ought to do in peace what is too often left for war. There is no time in war; it is too short, sharp, and decisive. Therefore, let us have those who are efficient. How is that to be done? We have had some admirable suggestions from the lecturer, and also from other gentlemen who have spoken. When I came here I took up a little book which I found on the seats, and found it contained some very pretty illustrations of the training-ship "Warspite"; it also embraced some photographs of the boys and the masters, and showed them performing various exercises. I daresay many of you have been on board that ship. I am a very old subscriber to the institution, and I think it is delightful to see the way those boys are trained, whether for their own good, or for the good of the country. For it certainly does good. Training and discipline are essential to a boy. I have been not only on board the "Warspite," but also on board the "Arethusa" and the "Chichester." If this book could be very widely circulated, so that more subscribers are obtained for these training-ships, it will be a benefit to training-ships generally. With regard to what one of the speakers has said, it occurs to me that the boys of England and Ireland have a natural love for the sea. I have a love for the sea, and I regret, even to this day, that I did not go to sea. I think we should encourage that feeling in every possible way. I think in Board Schools there should be pictures of ships on the walls, so that the boys will be encouraged by looking at them. The great thing is to get the boys when they are young. It was said in the *Times* only to-day or yesterday that if you do not get a boy to become a farmer when he is young he will not become a farmer afterwards; he will take to some other employment. That is my only fear with regard to the training-ships, that after you have trained a boy for the Mercantile Marine, he may go in for some other employment; but by making the Service attractive and encouraging the boys, by giving them prizes, an immense amount might be done. Personally, I should like to see the School Board give prizes to boys who take an interest in seamanship. There is one word more I wish to say with regard to foreign ships. Our own ships are obliged to obey curious legislative requirements, from which foreign ships are exempt when they come here. It is unfair competition, and it acts hardly on our shipping. That is a very great difficulty. I am very earnest in what I have said; I have been a judge at the Admiralty Court, so I know something about shipping.

Commander G. O. MOORE (Superintendent of the training-ship "Arethusa"): — My excuse for taking part in this

discussion is that I was for seven years Instructor of the London Brigade of Naval Artillery Volunteers, and have been for fifteen years the superintendent of a voluntary training-ship. Some points occur to me in regard to this paper. The first one that strikes me is the difficulty which would be experienced in getting ships for the purpose. At the present moment the "Formidable," at Bristol, and the "Exmouth," at Grays, both want new ships. The "Formidable" proposes to build a shore establishment at a cost of £30,000, and the Metropolitan Asylums Board intend to build a substitute for the "Exmouth" at a cost of £52,000. The second point I wish to refer to is, Where are we to put the ships? The smaller ports round the kingdom could not take a ship drawing twenty feet of water. The port authority, as we found with regard to the "Chichester," thinks a great deal more about a chalk-tip than they do about a training-ship. The "Warspite" was removed from Woolwich a short time ago on account of Woolwich being considered insanitary. It was first proposed to put her at Grays, in Essex, but the "Exmouth" authorities objected to that. Then it was proposed to put her in the lower part of Greenhithe bight; that the "Worcester" objected to, and in consequence she was dumped down on top of the "Arethusa." I do not wish to say anything against the "Warspite," but it is unpleasant to have an institution which spends half as much again doing the same work as you do constantly compared with you, even in small matters; my boys tell me that the "Warspite" boys get plums in their pudding on Sunday, and jam with their tea every day. There will be considerable difficulty in finding places for the ships. Then I want to know where you are going to find the boys. The "Arethusa" for the last twenty years has been short of boys. When she was started she was intended to carry 300 boys, and for the last twenty years she has only once touched 200, and that was only accomplished by advertising in every paper in the kingdom, and sending circulars round to every authority that could be thought of. We do not confine ourselves to the very lowest class. I asked the Council of the Institution to be kind enough to allow the card I hold in my hands to be distributed, and the ladies and gentlemen present can read that there is a provision that where the parents are well-to-do they can pay for their boys, and that is taken advantage of in a great many cases. But of late we cannot get the boys. It is not the want of money with us. We could scrape the money together, I believe, for 300 boys if we could get them, but we cannot get them. When the "Chichester" was first started with a flourish of trumpets by Lord Shaftesbury, he had the boys at the Old Refuge in Great Queen Street, Lincoln's Inn Fields, in numbers; but that very soon went off. When you come to inquire about the boys' antecedents, and see whether they really mean business, you will find the numbers dwindle down very low indeed. The next point I wish to refer to is the disposal of the boys. At the present moment the London market is glutted with boys. The "Warspite" ships at Cardiff; we ship at Newport, Monmouth, because we cannot get rid of them in London. It is just the same in Scotland: the "Mars" at Dundee, send their boys right down to Cardiff to get rid of them. The Welsh ports seem to be the only ports where we can get rid of the boys in anything like a stream. With regard to the boys coming to us. There is one thing I omitted to say on that point. We are not unpopular, and I will give you three incidents to prove it, that have occurred in the fourteen days of this year. The first two boys that were sent to the ship this year had had brothers in the ship; one went to the

Navy and the other into the merchant service, and they are at sea at the present time. I had a boy visit me last Sunday who had been one voyage to the Cape in a Union-Castle steamer. He stayed for a few days on board, which we frequently allow them to do, because it does the other boys good. His three brothers had previously been trained in the ship, and all of them—if there is anyone here from the Shipping Federation present I hope they will make a note of it — all of them have been quartermasters in the P. & O., and one is commanding a launch in the Docks for the P. & O. Company. The third case that I wish to draw attention to, in order to show that we are not unpopular, is that a man who was in the ship about twenty-five years ago brought us his son to train. That boy is in the Navy now, and we now have another son entrusted to us by this man to bring up in the steps of his brother. I mentioned when I first rose that I was seven years Instructor of the Naval Artillery Volunteers in London. They were disestablished by a Committee before which I was not called to give evidence; neither was my predecessor, who is now the chief inspector of life-boats under the National Life-Boat Institution. A Commission afterwards sat which recommended the formation of a Naval Volunteer Reserve. Both my predecessor (the inspector of life-boats) and myself were called to give evidence before that Commission, and we gave evidence strongly in favour of volunteers. What do you want? You want an intelligent man who will not be sea-sick, who knows one end of a gun from another, and who is handy in a boat; my experience of naval volunteers is that you can get as many of them as you like, if you give due attention to their business calls, and give them ample opportunity of embarking in a man-of-war to get used to the routine. You will have men upon whom you can put your hand at any moment, because they will be thrown out of their regular business in time of war, and would be only too glad to serve. In conclusion, I would say: Support the voluntary training-ships that are now in existence, and the Naval Volunteer Reserve.

Mr. H. D. CAPPER (Chief Gunner, R.N.):—I rise with a certain amount of diffidence to address this meeting, fully conscious of being the very first officer from the lower deck of the Royal Navy who has ever had the honour to address such a distinguished audience, or to offer any remarks on behalf of the class to which I have the honour to belong. I did not hear the early part of the discussion, and some of the notes I have made may perhaps travel over ground that has already been covered by previous speakers. It struck me, first of all, that there always must be a great difficulty in providing an adequate Naval Reserve, from the fact that we must have Naval Reserve men who are trained to the habits of the sea; and it has been proved by the lecturer that we have, in the existing Naval Reserve, exhausted all the men who, in the Mercantile Marine, have any desire to associate themselves with the defensive forces of their country. I presume that, in the event of war, slow steamers and sailing vessels will be laid up in the nearest port, and a number of British subjects who are manning them, who may not at present be members of the Royal Naval Reserve, would, from patriotic motives, join the Navy; but they would be scattered all over the world, and it is probable that very few would be where the Admiralty desired them to be. I think it is a truism to say that "grown men will not join the Navy," as the lecturer very aptly put it. Some speakers who addressed the meeting have emphasised the point that after you have trained them to the sea there is a difficulty in keeping them there. It

has also been clearly proved by the lecturer that the system of training boys which is in existence in the Royal Navy has raised the standard of morals and character of the seamen on the lower deck, and has also adequately met the difficulty which he, in the early part of his lecture made clear to us, of obtaining the men to man the ships. If that is so with reference to the Royal Navy, then I agree with one of the speakers that it is our duty, if we can, to urge upon the Government to copy this arrangement for the purpose of the Mercantile Marine. There is one other point which arises, and which has caused me to claim the honour of addressing you. I do not know if I quite understood the lecturer to mean that it is the lads who, to use a sailor's term, "sway away," and eventually join the unskilled unemployed that he would look to to fill the training-ships he proposed. I should like to say with reference to that, that certainly in the Royal Navy it is not such lads who join the training-ships. I speak from experience (being an old training-ship instructor and an officer of the Training Service) when I say that the majority of the boys we get in the Royal Naval training-ships are of a type above that. They are the sons of artisans, yeomen, and small shop-keepers, and there is no difficulty at all in obtaining such lads. The only difficulty is one that I shall advert to later on with reference to their age. To prove that point, if one hundred boys from one of our training-ships who had served six months, and who would therefore be a little over sixteen years of age, were paraded side by side with one hundred second-class stokers just recruited, who would be some two to four years senior to them in age, it would be seen at a glance that the physique of the boys of the training-ship, their general appearance and characteristics, would set them in a higher plane to the men that were recruited at a later age for the services connected with the stoke-hold. Twenty years ago I was an instructing officer in one of the West Country training-ships, and it used to be my duty to march the boys out to their training field. On one occasion I was in command of from 250 to 300 boys; and in our passage along the streets we passed about four companies of the Rifle Regiment going in an opposite direction; I well remember comparing notes with a colleague of mine, who was with me, upon the superior appearance and swing of our boys, who were four, or perhaps five, years junior in age to the Army men. It is not my business to disparage other services; I only want to make it clear that the lads we get in the training-ships are not those who afterwards swell the ranks of the unskilled unemployed. It may be said that, supposing the proposals of the lecturer were adopted, there would be a difficulty in obtaining boys, and that statement has been put forward in another form by the Secretary of the "Warspite." There is no difficulty in getting boys for the Navy. I can assure you that we now get applications from certainly two boys for every one we want, and that the advantages connected with the Service are so favourable to the men of the lower deck that there is never any difficulty in obtaining the number and class of boys we want. I and some of my colleagues desire to associate ourselves with the suggestion that boys should be regularly trained for the Mercantile Marine, but would amend the gallant lecturer's proposal by expanding our Royal Naval Training Establishments to accomplish this. We think it is the grandest suggestion that has ever been put forward, not only for the purpose of manning the Mercantile Marine, but at the same time to provide an adequate Naval Reserve in case of war. The suggestion I would put before you is that supposing extra ships were set up under the Admiralty, and three times the number of boys were trained, that periodical examinations should take place,

and the cream of the boys should be kept for the Navy. Then surely some arrangement could be made with the larger and more responsible shipping companies so that the remainder of the lads could be passed over to them under an engagement similar to that of those who are retained in the Service, with an annual retaining fee and annual gunnery training for the Royal Naval Reserve. You should also always hold before them the reward that at certain periods they may be able to pass an examination and join the Service to reap all the great advantages which now accrue to those who enter into the Royal Navy through the lower deck. Coming back once more, and finally, to the remarks made about the numbers of boys who could be obtained by recruiting, I may say that the great advantages that are now open to the boys on the lower deck of H.M. ships, and the concessions that have recently been given, have so largely augmented the number of boys who are desirous of serving that the Admiralty have been enabled to raise the standard of age and girth of the chest so as to keep down the number of recruits. I would also like to say finally that it is the opinion of those with whom I have consulted on the subject—men of my own class—that, for the Mercantile Marine first, secondly for the Navy, and lastly, and altogether, for the country, the suggestions put forward by the gallant lecturer are those which, in our opinion, should be adopted.

Mr. T. HOLMAN (Chief Gunner, R.N.) :—In following my colleague, I would like to say how very interesting and instructive I found the early remarks of the lecturer, the historical sketch that he put before us. Personal experience of that kind, enabling us to compare the past with the present, brings us very close indeed to the subject. The main object of the lecture, as I understand it, is to get a reliable Naval Reserve. I think there will always be one abiding weakness in our Naval Reserve in a country of this kind, namely that as we want our Naval Reserve men to be men of the sea, to keep their sea stomachs and sea legs and the habits of the sea, it is necessary that they should go to sea; and if they go to sea, then, in time of war, we must take them from the sea and from our own ships, so that it seems to me that our Naval Reserve can never quite be ideal. I have for many years past thought over the best way of raising an efficient and sufficient Naval Reserve, and I would endeavour to do so in this way: I would first of all organise the counties into recruiting districts, under capable lecturers. I quite agree with the gallant lecturer, that we should catch the boys very young, when we can fire their imagination and arouse their adventurous spirits. Yet we cannot take them all down to the coast and show them the ships of the Navy; but if it is not possible to take the nation to the Navy, yet I think it is possible to take the Navy to the nation. It has been made possible by animated pictures, and that sort of thing. If we had capable lecturers, and sent them throughout the country with animated pictures, we should have no end of boys coming along. Having got the boys and taken them into ships or large training establishments, such as has been mentioned, I think we should not send them straight from there into the Mercantile Marine. I think we might go to the Treasury for money, and ask the Admiralty to considerably extend the machinery of training. I think all the boys we get in that way should have a naval training first under a short service system, or there might be so many allowed to take the training in the long service way, according to their inclinations and the necessities of the country, but the others should be trained on the short service system. I think that would be more popular for other reasons. I

think it would be better, while the boys were young and their bodies were pliable and their minds fresh, to give them their individual training, rather than to send them into the loathsome fore-castle of our present merchant-ships to first acquire bad habits and wrong-headed ideas of conduct, and then afterwards to try and break them into naval discipline, and to yoke them to naval work. All that we put through a short service system would, on finishing their period of service with the flag, probably find themselves joining the ranks of the unskilled unemployed ashore; but although they would be unskilled landmen, yet they would be skilled seamen and workers on the sea, and I think you would find that when they got hungry, or when those around them wanted food and could not obtain it, they would turn to the sea. The merchant service can no longer train men for the Navy, but the Navy can nowadays train for the merchant service. I think the kind of men that such institutions would be able to send to the Mercantile Marine would be such as to induce the merchants themselves to offer them very much better wages, what we might call a living wage, and better conditions of life generally in the fore-castle. That is the way in which I think we might build up a Royal Naval Reserve, and in that way turn the foreigners out of our fore-castles, and man British ships with British seamen.

Admiral Sir J. C. DALRYMPLE HAY, in reply, said :—I have to thank those gentlemen who have kindly criticised my paper. I do not think I ought to detain the meeting, because I believe there have been no special objections taken to it, nor have any particular questions been asked for the purpose of eliciting a reply. With regard to obtaining boys, my own recollections of the matter when the thing was first begun was this, that I, as Captain of the "Victory," had a correspondence with the landowners and clergy of the six nearest counties to Portsmouth, and that I had on an average about twenty-seven applications a week for boys to complete the vacancies in three hundred boys; but I found that such a large number of persons applied, that with every boy who came to the "Victory" (this was in 1853, just before the Crimean War) I made them all bring £2 (two pounds), which was placed in the paymaster's charge, and which was returned when they went to sea, if they behaved themselves, otherwise it was forfeited. They also brought two suits of duck clothes, necessary under-clothing, and two suits of serge. These boys came from a tolerably good class in society, and there was no difficulty in providing these boys. But I found out some time back, when the old theory that all men were equal, was brought to the fore, that it was quite wrong to take boys from the classes, who could provide that amount of money and clothes, and, therefore, that was done away with; but I understood from my successor that when that process was stopped, they obtained rather an inferior class of boys, but they made just as good seamen; they were licked into shape while they were boys, and made the best seamen that you could possibly have. Therefore, I daresay that I was wrong, and that those who succeeded me were right, and that it made a more general field from which to draw the lads to be trained for the Navy. I tender my humble apologies for having done wrong at the beginning, and I admit now that the change was a right one. Probably, the field would not have been so large if it had been restricted in the manner in which I restricted it. I have now, only to thank the meeting for the kind manner in which they have received my paper, and I suppose it is not a very bad one, because it has not been very severely criticised,

The CHAIRMAN (Admiral Sir N. Bowden-Smith, K.C.B.) :—In bringing this discussion to a conclusion, I think you will all agree with me that the subject which has been brought before us by the Right Hon. Baronet is one of the greatest importance to the nation, and I venture to hope that the paper which we have heard to-day, and the discussion which has ensued, may lead to the question being more carefully considered, and acted upon than it has been in the past. Of course, the question of expense comes in. You cannot train ten thousand boys without incurring a very large outlay; but the cost ought not to deter the Government from taking some action. I doubt the wisdom, however, of training ten thousand boys. We have recently, as you know, determined to spend £10,000,000, on the pacification of Ireland by settling the land question; but the question of our Mercantile Marine is just as important, and if we can afford to make a great outlay there I think the country might face the expense and the responsibility of training up a Mercantile Marine. Some rather disparaging remarks have been made as to the action of the Board of Trade, and other departments. I can only say, as regards the Admiralty, they are always ready to assist the Marine Society. I have been, for over twenty years on the Committee of the Marine Society, and we work most harmoniously with the Admiralty; in fact, when boys go to Spring Gardens to volunteer for the Navy, and it is found they are not tall enough or of sufficient girth for their age, they are sent down to us; we take them in hand for a few months, and feed them well, until they become sufficiently big to join the Navy. I am very glad that the gallant lecturer and those who have spoken do not propose to interfere with the 35,000 lascars on board our merchant-ships. As has been pointed out by the lecturer, they are excellent men. After a period of service extending over fifty years, and having frequently travelled in mail steamers, I can say that they are well conducted, sober, industrious men, and well-fitted to work in the stokeholds in the tropics; besides, as Sir John Hay has pointed out, they are British subjects, and even if we wished to replace them by white seamen we could not do so. With regard to the 40,000 foreign seamen, it does seem a monstrous pity that such a large number of foreign seamen should be serving in our Mercantile Marine when we have at the same time thousands of unemployed in the British Islands. One of the difficulties of the situation has been pointed out by some of those who have taken part in the discussion, namely, that when you have trained the boys, you cannot get them afloat in our Mercantile Marine, unless there is some compulsion—unless the ships are compelled to take a certain number of apprentices or boys. We find this difficulty at the present moment. As the secretary of the Marine Society pointed out, our trouble is to get the boys afloat after we have trained them. The training-ships that are around the coast at the present moment cannot get their boys to sea when they have been trained without great difficulty. I am not speaking of such ships as the “Exmouth,” which are supported out of the rates, by the Metropolitan Asylums Board, or reformatory-ships like the “Cornwall,” as none of the boys from these vessels engage to adopt a seafaring life. If we trained eight or ten thousand more boys as proposed, we should find a still greater difficulty in getting them to sea, unless there was some compulsion enforced, and what should ship-owners say to that? Competition is keen, and freights are low, and ship-owners will say that unless they are given a free hand in selecting their crews they cannot make a profit, and then what will become of the trade? So that it does not seem to me to be an easy question by any means. I venture to

suggest, therefore, a slight modification of the scheme proposed by the lecturer, for another difficulty is, after you have got the boys on board a merchant-ship to keep them there. They may take one or two voyages, and then they give it up. I would suggest that the State should give a bonus to a man after he had served a certain time in the Mercantile Marine; say ten years, with a good character, on condition that he joined the Naval Reserve, and with an annual retaining fee, remain in the Reserve till he was forty-five years of age. We know that the Admiralty at the present moment are trying to increase our Reserve, especially of stokers. I believe they are inviting men from gas factories, and such like industries, to engage as reserve stokers. I would not interfere with that arrangement, but I would give the men, who had been at sea for ten years, and who have borne a good character, a preference over other men, and in that way our Naval Reserve might be considerably increased. I would like to emphasise what has been said by Mr. Bosanquet, and Commander Moore, viz., that the training-ships round our coast at present are not full, and that there has been a difficulty in obtaining suitable boys. At the present moment there appears to be rush of boys for the sea, and the Admiralty have quite recently increased the chest measurement required for entrance by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches, which shows that they can get more boys than they want, and boys are offering also for the Marine Society's ship, the "Warspite"; but we cannot take more at present, for want of means. We could accommodate 300 boys there, instead of 200 now on board, without increasing our staff or ship expenses, and I believe the "Arethusa" could do the same. Therefore, under present conditions, I earnestly deprecate increasing the number of training-ships or training establishments, until those at present in existence are full. I am sure you will all concur with me in according a hearty vote of thanks to Sir John Hay for his excellent paper, for which the Institution is much indebted to him.