Royal United Services Institution. Journal

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rusi19>

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Published online: 11 Sep 2009.

To cite this article: Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle G.C.B., C.M.G. (1915) Naval War Past and Present, Royal United Services Institution. Journal, 60:440, 285-306, DOI: [10.1080/03071841509419292](https://doi.org/10.1080/03071841509419292)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03071841509419292>

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THE JOURNAL

OF THE

Royal United Service Institution.

VOL. LX.

NOVEMBER, 1915.

No. 440.

[Authors alone are responsible for the contents of their respective Papers. All communications (except those for perusal by the Editor only) should be addressed to the Secretary, Royal United Service Institution.]

NAVAL WAR PAST AND PRESENT.

By ADMIRAL THE HON. SIR E. R. FREMANTLE, G.C.B., C.M.G.

THE facts of the successful mobilization of the navy in August last year are too well known to need repetition in detail, but it is certain that for once the British Navy was fully prepared for war when the storm burst, and it is well to note how it compares with our former experiences.

We must not, however, claim too much for our successful efforts at the expense of former periods of history, though the contrast is startling, as it is mainly the result of modern progress which has forced on all nations the necessity for preparing in peace for war, which our ancestors did not consider necessary or attempted in a perfunctory and desultory manner.

Times have changed in this as in many other respects; the advance of science and the consequent more comprehensive and intricate material at disposal urgently demanded preparation beforehand, so that Clausewitz, Bernhardt, and others were induced to consider peace as only an interlude between wars which could be used for quiet preparation for the clash of arms. Germany, as we know, has been preparing for war systematically for forty years, and the allied nations now in arms against her were forced to follow her example, though with far less consistency and regularity. In England this meant that our insular security, our ocean Empire, and our relations with the Dominions beyond the seas, rendered it necessary that our maritime supremacy should be maintained, and, though the army might be reduced, and to some extent neglected, it was left to

a few cranks to deny the necessity for a powerful navy—"Ready, aye, ready," in old sailor language, for all emergencies.

Fortunately, then, the navy was ready in August last year, and that it was fully complete at that time and prepared for all emergencies has been attributed to Mr. Winston Churchill, then First Lord of the Admiralty, and to Prince Louis of Battenberg, the First Sea Lord. I must here refer to a somewhat barren controversy which has arisen in relation to the share taken by Mr. Churchill and Prince Louis respectively for the satisfactory result that the navy was not caught napping, but was, in fact, far more ready than were our adversaries, though they had counted on dealing blows to our fleet before it could be concentrated. I have called it a barren controversy, as it is quite evident that in this case, at all events, the civilian and naval heads were of one mind.

The assembling of the entire fleet at Spithead for the inspection of the King, and the test mobilization of the reserves, was carried out on July 15th and two following days, and was successful, but shortly before the declaration of war the reserves had gone home, the First Fleet, then at Portland, had been ordered to disperse to its respective ports to give manœuvre leave, and the Second Fleet had dispersed to the home ports, the balance crews returning to barracks. This was the state of affairs on Sunday, July 26th, when matters appeared so threatening that Prince Louis thought it necessary to telegraph to Sir George Callaghan, who was then, and had been for three and a-half years, in command of the First Fleet, to "Stand fast" at Portland and await further orders. Mr. Churchill was then in the country, but he returned to town that evening and approved of Prince Louis' action. The First Fleet sailed from Portland on July 29th, and throughout the world our ships were ordered to their war stations.

War having been declared by Germany on Russia on August 1st, all naval reserves were called out on the following morning, and on the evening of August 3rd the Admiralty were able to report as follows:—

"The mobilization of the British Navy was completed in all respects at 4 o'clock this morning. This is due to the measures taken and to the voluntary response of the reserve men in advance of the Royal Proclamation which has now been issued. The entire navy is now on a war footing."

From a letter from Prince Louis we know that the possibility of action being taken to keep the fleet fully manned had been contemplated by Mr. Churchill, and that he felt sure of the First Lord's approval. At the same time, the first decisive step was taken by the First Sea Lord, and, in view of his well-known appreciation of international politics, we may fairly credit him with it. On the other hand, Mr. Churchill had the duty of defending the first warlike action taken on this side of the Channel, and possibly he preferred this to asking for authority to do so at the Cabinet Meeting.

This is important, as I know that when peace and war hung in the balance during the Fashoda crisis, our Government insisted on there being no preparation or movement of ships which might be interpreted as readiness for hostile action. There is, indeed, often a danger in this country that, in our determination not to provoke a war, we may fail to take necessary preparatory steps, but it was less dangerous in the instance quoted as it was known that the French were unprepared, and though the ships were scattered the manning arrangements were satisfactory, so that any loss of time could be made up.

Before leaving the question of mobilization it is well to point out that the satisfactory result is due to constant attention and organization for many years past both at the Admiralty and by the local Manning Committees at the naval ports.

What I have mentioned above refers to what is generally understood by mobilization of the fleet, but modern warfare demands more and more auxiliaries of various sorts, without which a navy, however powerful, is as helpless as a motor car without provision for replenishment of petrol. It has long been a shipping truism that freights are high in war time on account of the demands on our mercantile marine for colliers, store ships, provision ships and other auxiliaries.

As long ago as the Armada anxiety was felt by our ships at Plymouth from the non-arrival of overdue store ships, and in Hawke's time the delay of expected victuallers after the glorious action of Quiberon Bay gave rise to the amusing sailor's distich:—

“Ere Hawk did bang McConflans,
You sent us beef and beer;
Now Monsieur's beat we've nought to eat,
Since you have nought to fear,”

the seamen believing that they were forgotten after the action. But this is a digression. If auxiliaries were necessary in sailing days, how much more are they required in modern times! Nor can they all be improvised after the declaration of war; and the Admiralty had taken steps to fit ships as mine-layers, trawlers as mine-sweepers, repair ships, mother ships for destroyers, submarines and aeroplanes, etc., but, besides ships already provided, the demands for colliers, store ships, and hospital ships were numerous, and they wisely commissioned fast liners, yachts and smaller vessels as auxiliary cruisers or patrol vessels.

The number of vessels so employed is shown by a list occupying forty-eight pages in the January “Navy List,” and a Royal Naval Motor Boat Reserve was established for inshore work. By these means not only was the North Sea and seas adjacent to the British Isles soon swarming with cruisers, but no step was omitted to make sure that the ocean should be occupied by British cruisers. It is to Mr. Churchill's credit that this action was taken, rendered so specially necessary in home waters by the enemy's submarines, but the Admiralty are to be congratulated on the prompt steps taken for trade protection

which some theorists held could wait until after the enemy's main fleet had been destroyed!

In Lord Sydenham's words to the Navy League in March last, "One of the most startling features of this war was the employment of the general maritime resources of the country, and the seafaring population drawn upon for dangerous duties had shown great heroism."

Officers from the retired lists of the navy, and Royal Naval Reserve, have been called upon and have zealously come forward to command and officer all these auxiliaries, so that we have retired flag officers and captains in charge of yachts and patrol vessels and performing executive functions at the various ports round our coasts. An instance of the extent to which this has been carried is shown by the name of Lieut.-Commander H. Gartside-Tipping appearing recently in the Roll of Honour as having been killed in action. This officer, though sixty-seven years of age, was no doubt active and competent and had devoted much of his life to the benefit of men of the mercantile marine.

These details show that Mr. Churchill was justified in claiming that our premier service was quite as well prepared for war afloat as was the German Army on land. The exploits of the German submarines have given rise to a notion, especially in America, that our enemy had forestalled us in submarine development; but, as a matter of fact, we had 90 submarines completed to Germany's 48, so that Mr. Balfour's reminder that they were not a German invention was much to the point. In aeroplanes and seaplanes, again, much was due to Mr. Churchill's enthusiasm for aerial development, though we were late in appreciating the value of these necessary adjuncts to war by land or sea in this country. A question arises whether we were right in neglecting the airship which may yet prove to be of greater value than we are inclined to admit. It is a technical question on which I am not competent to give an opinion, but it seems to me that we have too easily discarded the idea of the airship, and that we may yet find that some form of dirigible, not necessarily a monster Zeppelin, may have important functions, one of which would be the detection and possible destruction of submarines. However, I am glad to see that Mr. Frederick A. Talbot in his recent work, "Aeroplanes and Dirigibles in War," sums up the question as follows:—

"So far the stern test of war as applied to the science of aeronautics has emphasized the fact that as a naval unit the dirigible is a complete failure. Whether experience will bring about a modification of these views time alone will show, but it is certain that existing principles of design will have to undergo a radical revision to achieve any notable results. The aeroplane alone has proved successful in this domain, and it is upon this type of aerial craft that dependence will have to be placed."

I have endeavoured in the above summary to show something of the preparations made by the Admiralty, but it would be incomplete

if I omitted to refer to Mr. Churchill's prompt action in purchasing the vessels building or completing in British yards, when war broke out, for foreign Governments. These were as follows:—

“Osman I.,” battleship; building by Armstrong for Turkey, 27,500 tons; renamed “Agincourt”; main armament, fourteen 12-in. guns.

“Reshadich,” battleship; building by Vickers for Turkey; 23,000 tons; renamed “Erin”; main armament, ten 13.5-in. guns.

“Almiraute Laterre”; building for Chile; 28,000 tons; renamed “Canada”; main armament, ten 14-in. guns.

Four destroyer leaders, building for Chile, of 1,850 tons each, which have been named “Broke,” “Faulkner,” “Botha,” and “Tipperary.”

Three armoured river gunboats, building for Brazil, of 1,260 tons each.

All these ships, except the “Canada,” were commissioned before the end of last year, the river gunboats, or monitors, have already done good service on the Belgian coast.

These additions to our fleet were all valuable vessels, the “Agincourt” and “Canada” being two of the most powerful Dreadnoughts in the world.

Our enemy has always disbelieved in our being able to man our ships, but there has been no shortage of men, and no difficulty has been found in providing the necessary crews for these vessels, though three of them are heavy battleships. I do not propose to deal generally with the actions which have taken place or the losses sustained, though submarine warfare and its bearing on trade must be considered in view of the protective measures taken, but the resiliency of our naval resources in personnel is aptly shown by the non-existence of any manning difficulties which loomed so largely in former naval wars, in spite of the losses which we have unfortunately suffered by the sinking of many of our ships. An official statement published in November last gives our losses of officers and men through the sinking of the three “Cressys,” “Hawke,” “Hermes,” “Niger,” “Formidable” and “Boyano,” as 2,854 officers and men, and to these must now be added an almost similar number from the destruction of the “Bulwark,” the loss of the “Irresistible,” “Ocean,” “Goliath,” “Majestic” and “Triumph,” in the Dardanelles operations, the “Good Hope,” “Monmouth” and “Pegasus” in action with the enemy, so that the total naval losses by the enemy or explosion must be taken as between 5,000 and 6,000. The losses of officers and men in the Dardanelles were stated to be small. I am not including the losses of the naval divisions at Antwerp, as though nominally naval, they are a hybrid corps with doubtful seamanlike qualifications, and not, I believe, intended to serve afloat.

It is interesting to compare these losses in little more than a year, when there has been no general engagement, with the losses we sustained at Trafalgar, Copenhagen and the Nile. Thus in Trafalgar

the killed and wounded in the battle were 1,690; at Copenhagen, 1,200; and at the Nile, 896; or 3,786 killed and wounded in the three actions, 922 of whom were killed.

It is well to remember that, including all auxiliaries under the pendant, we have now some 300,000 men serving in the navy; in 1805 the number was 124,000, including officers.

Having now given the modern arrangements necessary on the outbreak of war, let us see how our ancestors prepared. The question of material was, of course, always important, and Hawke, when First Lord of the Admiralty, laid down two ships to each ship building in France. In peace time most of the ships were laid up "in ordinary," that is, as sheer hulks, only a small number of ships being kept in commission. The position in 1793, when war broke out with France, was as follows, according to "James' Naval History": At the close of 1792, he tells us that upwards of 60 out of the 87 line of battle ships in his abstract were in good condition, this being partially due to an expected rupture with Spain in 1790 and with Russia in 1792, but more probably to the prescience and system of Sir Charles Middleton, afterwards Lord Barham, who was controller of the navy. James is so immersed in material that he scarcely touches on the question of manning, but men could not be got in a day, and only 45,000 were voted for 1793. That we were not ready, from the difficulty of manning the ships, is shown by a French fleet of from 14 to 17 sail of the line, subsequently increased to 21, having sailed from Quiberon for the West Indies early in June, and it was not till July 14th that Lord Howe, with 15 sail of the line, sailed from St. Helens. In the following year, however, before the "glorious first of June," Howe had a fleet of 26 sail, which, according to Captain Brenton, was "remarkably well manned," though the officers in many cases lacked fleet experience.

It is unnecessary in a service journal to give in detail the present system in force before war broke out. It is well known that all available ships have for some years past been kept in commission complete with coal, ammunition and stores, the battleships being divided into three fleets, of which the First was to be kept with full crews as a home fleet, the Second had "full nucleus crews" and did its share of gunnery exercises and drills, the "balance crew" being active service ratings in the barracks and training establishments; the Third Fleet had "reduced nucleus crews" and could not be completed without the reserves, so that the question of manning the whole fleet was simply a matter of calling out the reserves and touching a button, the men being all trained, or at least partially trained, in the reserves.

In former periods very few ships were kept in commission in peace time, while the available ships "in ordinary" had to be fitted out, and, beyond a very few marines, the crews had to be got from the mercantile marine. The difficulties of such a system, if system it can be called, are manifest, but our ancestors could only endeavour to solve them by bounties and the press gang.

I am indebted to Commander Robinson's book, "The British Fleet," for much information about manning in former days and the

press gang. He shows the abrupt fluctuations which took place, and the number of "missing" seamen through desertion and sickness; thus, in 1784, at the close of the War of Independence, the navy was suddenly reduced by 80,000 men, or to 26,000, and though in 1892 it stood at 16,000, yet in 1910 we had 150,000. In 1763, after the Seven Years' War, out of a total of 183,893 who had served in the navy, no less than 133,708 were returned as "missing." Seamen were entered for the commission, nominally for three years, but it might be six or seven. The "Shannon's" crew, when the "Chesapeake" was captured in 1813, had been nearly seven years in the ship under Captain Broke, and the nominal three years' commission was so often exceeded in comparatively recent times that a popular parody in the midshipman's berth in my early days began: "It may be four years but it can't be for ever." But to return to older days. I have mentioned sickness, and though the food, the treatment of the sick, and the navy of the time of Vernon is described by Smollett in "Roderick Random" with the licence of the novelist, and is much exaggerated, there is enough truth in it to account to a great extent for the 133,708 missing above referred to.

There has been some confusion between the "prest" men and those "pressed" by force through the press gangs, but the difference was only one of degree of willingness or unwillingness. Every mariner was liable to serve when called out; if he came out at once he received the prest money of a shilling, and in many cases a bounty, if not he could be arrested and forced on board ship. Captain Cook is said to have joined the navy, to his own advantage and that of the world, to escape "a hot press on the river." The press gang had an evil name. It was dreaded in the seaports, and perhaps even more in the homeward-bound merchant ships, and occasionally met with resistance. Commander Robinson tells us of a case in which a press gang from a tender were fired upon from a British merchant ship, three of the crew of the merchantman being killed in the subsequent scrimmage. They were acting under Rodney's orders, the circumstances being referred to Sir Edward Hawke, who directed the ship to be taken to her moorings in the Thames and the bodies to be thrown overboard!

No doubt it was a very rough way of taking seamen for the King's service, for which there was more defence than appears at first sight. I conclude these references to the press gang with one more extract from Commander Robinson's work. Douglas Jerrold, in his story of "Jack Runnymede," most graphically explains how his hero, from having a holy horror of the system, experiences its hardships in his own person, and thus in the service gets a better insight into the causes which had called it into existence. Returning home, "Pray, Sir," said he to a Parliamentary candidate who solicited his support, "what are your views on impressment?" "I am opposed, most assuredly, to the infamous and inhuman system of pressing," was the reply. "My service to you, Sir," replied Jack Runnymede, "you don't have my vote. What, sweep us from the world as a naval power, by doing away with impressment? No, Sir, not while I can lift my voice will I consent to this. By losing this I should cease to be grateful, as I

am, for my country—should no longer bless my stars that I am a Briton—no longer thank God that I am an Englishman.” This may be quoted as a full-blooded defence of national service.

Fortunately we have found a better way in modern times, but there is no royal road to such success as we have attained, and it could only be done by keeping a large force in commission, involving unprecedented Naval Estimates to which I must refer later, and by organizing our reserves, Fleet Reserve, R.N. Reserve and R.N. Volunteer Reserve which were liable to be called out in case of war, all reserve men having retaining fees and performing short periods of drill and service on board the ships of the fleet.

Some illustrations of the manning difficulties with which our ancestors had to contend may now be given. I do not propose to say anything more about the press gang, but it was a very old institution, and we find Pepys, in 1675, observing that “it was what had been seldom done in time of peace; but press warrants were nevertheless offered to fifteen commanders”; and as late as 1859 a Royal Commission on manning the navy referred to the “press” as an undoubted prerogative of Her Majesty which could be again made use of in case of emergency. At the time of the Crimean War many old officers will remember the shifts to which we were reduced to man our ships, the bounties and the lack of seamen. Our Royal Naval Coast Volunteers who served on board coast defence vessels, and would not be employed more than 100 miles, or it may have been leagues, as I write from memory, of the coast! But these are somewhat wearisome details, so I propose to give a few instances of manning difficulties of historical interest.

Let me give as an instance Anson’s memorable voyage round the world. It was in 1739, the nadir of British military efficiency, when Walpole, our peace Minister, had been forced into the “Jenkins ear war” with Spain by an indignant public, and had said with some forecast of his own neglect of warlike preparation:—

“They are ringing the bells now—

They will be wringing their hands soon.”

That his prophecy did not come true can only be attributed to the extraordinary unreadiness of the Spaniards and to the determination of a few naval officers.

Anson, who commanded the “Centurion,” of 60 guns, was recalled from the West Indies, and, as Commodore, placed in command of six ships, two of 50 guns, one of 40, one of 28 and a sloop, besides the “Centurion,” to be fitted out to harass the Spanish ports and shipping on the west coast of America, but there were neither stores nor seamen available and inevitable delay occurred. He received his commission in January, 1740, but his instructions were not given him till June. He was to embark 500 soldiers, but the troops were not to be had, so 500 pensioners were supplied by the military authorities, in spite of Anson’s remonstrances backed by the Admiralty. Naturally most of these pensioners were invalids, those who had legs ran away and none of them survived the terrible hardships of the voyage. There was lack of seamen, and when Anson asked for 300, 170 were sent him, of

whom 32 were discharged from hospital to make up the number. The squadron sailed on September 10th, but it was not till March, 1741, that they were off the Horn, and the ships separated in bad weather, one being wrecked, two failed to round the Horn and returned to England, and the "Centurion" reached Juan Fernandez in June, 1741, where she was joined some time later by the "Gloucester" and "Trial," two of the squadron. All three ships had suffered heavily from scurvy, deaths being numerous, which continued for some time after their arrival at the islands. In September, the disease having disappeared, the squadron sailed, having lost 626 men out of 926 who left England. After arriving off the Mexican coast it was found necessary to abandon the "Gloucester" and "Trial," and the "Centurion" crossed the Pacific and went to Macao, where she arrived on November 12th, 1742, remaining there till April, 1743. She had then only 227 men on board, many of whom were lascars and negroes. With this motley crew Anson waylaid and captured a galleon from Acapulco bound to Manila, after an action, and the vessel was sold at Macao for £300,000. In December, 1743, after refitting, the "Centurion" sailed from Macao and anchored at Spithead on June 15th, 1744, after an absence from England of nearly four years, during which he had circumnavigated the world.

Sir Albert Markham, from whose sketch of Anson¹ I take these details, sums up by saying that "in spite of the losses, both in ships and men, the expedition must be regarded as in great measure a successful one," an opinion that can scarcely be concurred in, though it may be admitted that it was a personal triumph of a good man under difficulties, for Commodore, afterwards Lord Anson. With the above exception it is, I fear, an object-lesson of the inefficiency of the navy at that period.

Some three years after Anson left England, Hawke commissioned the "Berwick," of 70 guns, for service in the Mediterranean; there was "a hot press" which filled up the ship with human beings, Hawke reporting that several of the pressed men were "very little, weakly, puny fellows that have never been to sea," and, after passing Gibraltar in October, 1743, he writes that 123 of his working men were sick! However, this distinguished officer landed his sick at Port Mahon, then in our hands, probably getting some good men from the merchant ships, and in the unsatisfactory action with the Franco-Spanish Fleet off Hyères in February, 1744, the "Berwick" was the only ship which gained any credit, as she captured the Spanish line of battleship "Poder," which was subsequently burnt by Admiral Mathews' order. As the "Poder" was totally dismasted it is evident that the "Berwick" was in good gunnery order, and afforded a proof of what could be accomplished by a leader of men in a few months, even with an indifferent crew. It also shows that when men were needed there was no mawkish sentiment about the quality or qualification of the men pressed. An illustration of the leisurely and inefficient war conduct of our Government a few years later is afforded by the loss of Minorca in 1756, which cost Admiral Byng his life from his failure

¹ "From Howard to Nelson"—"Anson," by Admiral Markham.

to relieve it. Recent letters published by the Naval Records Society show that for months previously the Government had been warned of the French preparations at Toulon which were obviously aimed at Minorca, yet they made no sign, being reluctant to spare ships from the Channel, and when at last Byng's squadron was ordered there was difficulty about men and the ships were ill-equipped. This, indeed, was Byng's defence, and he was not the man to make "poor puny fellows" into good sailors. With the controversy about Byng's execution I have no concern here. Macaulay considered it as "unjust and absurd," but Boscawen certainly approved it, as he signed the order for court-martial as a Lord of the Admiralty and the executive order for the execution as Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth. Posterity will, however, probably agree with Pitt in saddling the Government with much of the blame, for their hesitation in commissioning ships for the relief, and for entrusting an important duty to an officer whose antecedents were far from giving confidence.

It must, however, be admitted that strong party feeling obscured the issue, but Voltaire's satirical comment notwithstanding, it showed that however leniently military miscarriages might be regarded, the country will not condone any failure on the part of the national service which has always been, in the King's words, "our sure trust and shield."

I have endeavoured to show something of our manning difficulties in former times, and how they were overcome by the zeal of our officers and seamen. If we turn to our last great naval war, the mutinies at Spithead and the Nore showed that under our happy-go-lucky system the seamen had many grievances, and the stern discipline of a St. Vincent was necessary to preserve order. But much depended upon the captain, whose powers were autocratic, and, as the mutinies of the "Bounty" in 1789, and of the "Hermione" in 1798 showed, were sometimes used with brutal ferocity. I wish to touch lightly on questions of discipline, but in Nelson and others these powers, well used, produced splendid results, the seamen as a rule being intensely patriotic and responding readily to any demands made upon them. Towards the end of the war want of seamen was very severely felt, whilst after Trafalgar the over-confidence of the Admiralty and of the navy itself resulted in neglect of the necessary precautions or gunnery, and it appeared to be the rule to despatch ships to sea with crews picked up anyhow and anywhere, trusting that they could settle down after sailing.

Owing to the difficulties experienced by French ships in getting to sea at all, this answered fairly well, for if our ships were ill-manned the French ships were manned with landmen, and their officers had little experience. When it came to fighting the United States ships we found out our mistake, but this is chiefly a question of gunnery to which I must return later. It is well here to refer to the case of the "Java," which was taken by the U.S. frigate "Constitution" off the coast of South America in December, 1812. The "Java," a first-class 38-gun frigate, was commissioned at Portsmouth by Captain Lambert, in August, 1812, and sailed for Bombay in November.

A detailed account of her crew is given in "James' Naval History" which is too long to repeat here. Brenton, who, as a naval officer ought to know, says:—"She had a bad mixture from the guard ships at the Nore and in Hamoaze such as at the close of the war were the generality of our crews." When Captain Lambert remonstrated he was told that "a voyage to the East Indies and back would make a good crew."

On December 29th she fell in with the American frigate "Constitution," of greatly superior force, and after a smart action, in which the "Java" was dismasted and Captain Lambert killed, she was captured, being subsequently burnt as "she could not float."

I am tempted to tell a story which was told me by a Mr. D—, who was born in the 18th Century. As a boy he was on board an Indiaman when the "Macedonian" was fitting out in 1812, and he met Captain Carden, who commanded the frigate, at dinner. On being asked by the Indiaman's captain: "I suppose, Captain, that you would not mind taking on two American ships?" he modestly replied that he would rather take on one first. The "Macedonian" was, of course, taken by the "United States" a few months later. The anecdote shows that our too easy naval victories over the French, for the reasons above given, had at that time so debauched the public mind and affected the naval service, that everyone was convinced that nothing was necessary but to get alongside the enemy and fight, so manœuvres and elaborate training were useless. Indeed, when I first joined the service, before the middle of the last century, this was still the general idea; the well-known paragraph in Nelson's famous battle order before Trafalgar that "no captain could go far wrong who placed his ship alongside one of the enemy" being quoted as the be-all and end-all of tactics, though it was really a reminder that no failure to understand a carefully drawn up battle order would excuse inaction. We are not, I trust, in any danger of underrating our enemy now, though I think that the Germans believed that their gunnery was superior to ours, and we may suppose that such actions as have taken place have probably caused them to reconsider this opinion.

I need say no more on the question of manning in former days. We adopted "continuous service" in 1853, boy-entry for ten years, and subsequently for twelve years from the age of 18, which gradually embraced the whole navy; and other improvements followed, especially increase of leave and more frequent payments, but it was long before the present system was in full working order. It was some years before the seamen, accustomed to choose their ships and their captains and to change at will from "the navy trade" to the merchant service, became reconciled to the change, but the extra pay, and new men, gradually conquered previous prejudices, and the present war is linking the two services together in a way that would not have been thought possible a few years ago, when the Royal Navy and the mercantile marine seemed to be drifting apart to the detriment of the maritime interests of the country.

Captains have, no doubt, lost much of their absolute power, but no good officer finds that his legitimate authority is weakened.

Let me now turn to principles of naval warfare past and present, and as an old officer I am keenly appreciative of the changes which have taken place in armaments, motive power and communications, all of which regulate tactics and, to some extent, strategy.

In Corbett's "Principles of Maritime Strategy" he tells us that "war is a continuation of policy, a form of political intercourse in which we fight battles instead of writing notes"; as I have before observed, our peace policy should contemplate possible war, and we have acted on this principle in occupying ports of vantage such as Gibraltar, Malta, Egypt, Aden, etc. Corbett then quotes with approval Clausewitz' statement that "the greatest and most critical decision upon which the statesman and the general have to exercise their judgment is to determine the nature of the war," from which he enlarges on what he calls "limited war." All this means, in plain English, that in war as well as in peace we must cut our coat according to our cloth, and not undertake military operations which are politically undesirable, still less engage in dangerous adventures from political motives.

In the present war, as in most wars in which this country is involved, there is no question but that the command of the sea is the first necessity for the life of the Empire and our insular security. Corbett's definition of command of the sea is as follows: "Command of the sea, therefore, means nothing but the control of maritime communications, whether for commercial or military purposes. The object of naval warfare is the control of communications and not, as in land warfare, the conquest of territory." If we accept this definition it is evident that it applies universally to naval war, whatever may be the material of which fleets are composed.

The control or command of the sea is, then, our strategical object, but when we come to the manner in which this control can be carried out, it clearly infringes on the domain of tactics and the perfection of the machinery at our disposal. Generally speaking, the more complete, efficient and powerful the ships, and appliances such as wireless, the more thorough will be the command. This has already been proved to be the case in the present war, notwithstanding the disturbing factor of the submarine menace.

Admiral Mahan, in his latest work on naval strategy, covers much the same ground as Corbett, to whom he refers with approval, so that it is unnecessary to quote his opinions. In his introduction to "Lectures on Naval Strategy," in 1909, he pays much attention to the rise of Germany as a naval power, and asks, with reference to the Monroe Doctrine, "Where ought Great Britain to stand in case we have trouble with Germany, and where ought we to stand in the reverse case?" and continues: "Corbett's remark is, that in the Seven Years' War the strength of the British nation lay in the fact that one great man, the first Pitt, controlled the naval, the military, and the diplomatic factors." Showing that this great naval authority was fully alive to the ambitions of Germany, and I quote his words as one "who, being dead, yet speaketh."

The main principles of strategy, then, being conceded, the question arose as to how they were to be carried out under modern conditions, and here the menace of the submarine came in. We endeavoured to occupy the seas with our cruisers as we had done in the French wars, as I have shown, though with different material; but the close blockade of enemy's ports as in the time of Hawke, St. Vincent and Cornwallis, was obviously impossible, so that we had to be content with what Bacon would have called "an abridgment of monarchy" in the North Sea. That the enemy could only make his appearance in blue water at great risk has been proved on several occasions; but we have found to our cost, as indeed was generally expected by naval officers, that a regular patrol by large vessels was dangerous owing to submarines and mines, so that we have had to trust to destroyers, patrol boats, and small craft to maintain a sort of "suzeraineté" in the waters near the enemy's coast. Fortunately, as Count von Reventlow has recently found out, though we made the discovery in the Dutch wars of the 17th Century, the British Islands "lie as a long mole" between German harbours and the Atlantic, so that it was sufficient to occupy the Channel and the northern entrances between Scotland and Norway to ensure an effective blockade.

Meanwhile, our big ships are not afraid to go to sea, when necessary, protected by destroyers, but they are kept in reserve "somewhere in the North Sea" ready to move at short notice in case the enemy's fleet should venture out from its protected anchorage. These arrangements have answered admirably, though the passive rôle left to our magnificent fleet must be even more wearisome than the constant cruising of those "storm-tossed ships" of Nelson and Cornwallis in the Napoleonic Wars, to which Mahan eloquently refers.

We may fairly congratulate Sir John Jellicoe on the success which has attended his dispositions so that no such attrition as has been aimed at by the Germans has taken place; but the submarine is a new order of naval being with rules of its own, so that no blockade appears to materially affect its operations, though we are learning how to deal with these insidious enemies. They are an unknown factor, but for all their offensive power they cannot convoy their own ships, or materially affect the effectiveness of the blockade.

A word may be said here about German submarine losses and the means we have adopted to destroy them. We know that the losses have been numerous, and that they include von Wettingen's "U 20," the commander who, in another submarine, sunk our three "Cressys" and the "Hawke," and that the submarine which sunk the "Arabic" has also been disposed of, but the number of losses stated in America is probably exaggerated. The methods used have been nets, bombs, ramming and guns, and American invention has been fertile in designing special vessels for the discovery and destruction of these piratical craft, so that we may feel sure that there will be various antidotes to their destructive agency as their powers and limitations are better understood. An account of a cruise in "U 29," taken from an American paper by a young sailor who had been taken out of a Norwegian ship, was given in the "United Service Magazine" last

month. I have, perhaps, dwelt too long on modern naval strategy, which has only changed in some details from the strategy of former periods, and let me now turn to tactics.

It is a truism that tactics depends on weapons, and in naval warfare the weapon was often the ship herself. Thus we had close quarters and ram tactics with the galleys in ancient times, and even as late as Lepanto, in 1571, though the gun was then coming into use. At the Armada, in 1588, the Spanish ships were high out of water with castles and poops, manned chiefly by soldiers with a few mariners to work the ship, though they had ordnance, and were propelled mostly by sails, and there were some galleasses and galleys. Our ships were lighter and handier, with better guns, on which Howard and Drake preferred to depend to the boarding which the Spaniards expected.

But I need not carry this further. From about the time of the Armada we had the sailing-ship tactics, the gun being the principal weapon, and, as the smooth-bore guns of the 17th and 18th Centuries were very erratic at even 300 or 400 yards, close action became the order of the day if decisive results were to be obtained, and, the guns being on the broadside, the fleets were formed in line of battle. Then we had the Fighting Instructions, a rigid adherence to which resulted in many indecisive actions and recriminations between admirals—complaints, on the one hand, of want of support, and, on the other, that it could not be rendered without breaking the formation ordered. The fetish of the line was much weakened when Rodney did not hesitate to break the French line with a portion of his fleet, and Howe ordered every ship in his line to cut through the French line on the First of June. I do not propose to deal with Nelson's tactics, but at St. Vincent he showed that even as a subordinate he was not to be hampered by strict rule, and his impetuous nature always made him ready to make any sacrifice for close action.

No doubt he was right, and though a deep student of tactics he made everything subordinate to the circumstances of the moment, feeling sure of victory if he could only bring the enemy's fleet to close action. But I doubt if the service ever entirely understood him, and after Trafalgar we had no general action. I have already spoken of the tradition which remained even at the time when I first went to sea.

Let me now turn to single-ship actions. Our ships and those of the French were of similar classes, and there was little difference in their respective armaments, so that seamanship consisted chiefly in closing with the enemy and raking her if possible; but a captain was quite happy if he could get alongside and engage "yard-arm to yard-arm," in Nelson's phrase, "to complete the business."

It is a common error to suppose that no attention was paid to gunnery in former days, as General Sir Howard Douglas' "Naval Gunnery," first published in 1819, can testify, and it is to his exertions that the establishment of the gunnery school in the "Excellent" in 1831 is mainly due. He shows that his father, Sir Charles Douglas, who was captain of the fleet in Rodney's action of "the saints" in 1782, had introduced flint-locks and other improvements. Sir Howard, in his introduction to the fifth edition of his work, published in 1860,

speaks of the gunnery of the battles between 1793 and 1815 as "giving abundant proof that the navies of Europe had in the latter epoch much deteriorated in the practice of gunnery," and in his account of the action between the "Macedonian" and "United States" he states that the "commanders of the American frigates would not permit us to join in close battle until they had gained some decided advantage from the superior facilities of their long guns in distant cannonade. . . ." And he refers to "the intrepid uncircumspect and often very exposed approach of their assailants."

In so doing the American captains were clearly in their right, and some hints of lack of courage in James are beside the question. That "close action" so permeated the service in 1812-13, that the fact that it is the duty of a commander to win with as little loss as possible was lost sight of is shown by the court-martial on Captain Carden of the "Macedonian," which, while exonerating him from blame, excuses him from failing to bring the enemy to close action sooner from a desire to keep the weather-gauge. Probably in this case "close action" was the best chance for the British frigate, whose 18-pounders could be no match for the American's 24-pounders at any distance, but the court-martial seems to have assumed that close action was the plain duty of any British ship irrespective of her armament.

That armament does govern tactics was clearly shown at a later period of the American War in the action between the British frigate "Phoebe" and the U.S. frigate "Essex," which is worth recalling. The "Phoebe," Captain Hillyar, was a 38-gun frigate with the usual armament of her class; the "Essex," Captain Porter, was entirely armed with 32-pounder carronades, except three long 12-pounders. The action took place off the coast of South America in February, 1814, and resulted in the capture of the American frigate, Captain Hillyar having taken care not to close till he had reaped all the advantage of his long 18-pounders. President Roosevelt, in his history of the naval actions of the war, agrees that Hillyar's action "was eminently proper," and he quotes Sir Howard Douglas' remarks that "Captain Porter's sneers at the respectful distance the 'Phoebe' kept are, in fact, acknowledgments of the ability with which Captain Hillyar availed himself of the superiority of his arms."

I have said enough about gunnery in the time of the French and American Wars and I must bring it up to date. It was demanding more attention, as I have shown, even in 1830, and at the commencement of the Crimean War, in 1854, our guns were very superior to those of the Russians, but the war stimulated the call for rifled guns and we had the Lancaster, Whitworth and Armstrong guns, which were more or less experimental, though the latter were partially adopted. The breech-loading of the Armstrong guns, however, proved unsatisfactory, especially in the higher calibres, and the muzzle velocity, due to the lead casing, was low, so muzzle-loaders, rotation being given by studs and grooves, was the principal method in use for some 30 years after the Russian war, the largest guns being the 80-ton guns mounted in the "Inflexible," which did some service at Alexandria; but these were not repeated, and, with this exception, the

largest gun in the service was the 38-ton gun mounted in the "Dreadnought" in '84. But breech-loading soon afterwards became universal, all difficulties having been overcome. Improvement has been continuous since the present century opened, and we have now guns of 13.5 in. and 15 in. in our newer dreadnoughts and battle cruisers, but the system adopted in the last ten years of the 19th Century of copper rings and grooves in the navy is still the one in use in our heavy modern ordnance. This is not a gunnery manual, but a comparison between the 38-ton gun above referred to and the 15-in. guns of the "Queen Elizabeth" may be admitted. The "Dreadnought's" 38-ton gun threw a shell of 818 lbs. with a muzzle velocity of 1,575 f.s., the "Queen Elizabeth's" 15-in. guns throw a shell of 1,950 lbs. with a velocity of 2,500 f.s., so that there is no comparison in their ballistics.

Given the guns, it remained to make a good use of them, and it may be admitted that gunnery was insufficiently encouraged though gun practice was rigidly enjoined; but in the latter part of the last century drills were in many cases carried out in a perfunctory manner, and excuses for the omission of the quarterly gun practice, or for having thrown away the whole of the quarter's allowance of ammunition in a single forenoon were too easily admitted. The gunnery experts were helpless in the face of the preference given to appearance and smartness, even aloft, though the masts and sails were leaving us, and gun firing spoilt the paint work and not infrequently caused minor defects through the concussion of heavy ordnance. Commanders-in-Chief and the Admiralty were no doubt to blame for this state of things, but the younger officers were studying naval warfare and naturally appreciated gunnery, so a change came with the new century, and prize-firing returns and newspaper comment all had their part in directing more attention to gunnery.

Prize-firing targets, battle practice, and gun-laying practices were adopted and fire-control positions established, the advance being to a great extent due to Lord Fisher, who had been Staff Officer and Captain of the "Excellent," when in command in the Mediterranean and at the Admiralty, but the great improvement in practice was undoubtedly due to Captain, now Admiral Sir Percy, Scott from his system of dotters and other devices, which taught aiming by results, revolutionizing gunnery firing in the navy. The invention was scarcely understood at first, but the results in the "Sylla" in the Mediterranean, afterwards followed by the "Terrible" in China, were so startling that the Admiralty adopted them in the gunnery establishments, and Admiral Scott as the first Inspector of Target Practice has further improved the whole gunnery system of the fleet. Experts tell us that it is far from perfect yet, and in the American, German and French navies similar principles have been adopted, so that we cannot stand still; but our war experiences have already shown that our naval gunners have attained a perfection of gun-laying which would not have been dreamed of even a few years ago.

As I gave some details of former naval actions I propose to make some remarks on our recent engagements; the Coronel, Falklands Islands, Dogger Bank, and "Sydney"- "Emden" fights. I do not

propose to deal here with a question which ought not to be lost sight of, namely, as to who is responsible for the extraordinary mistake of the late gallant Sir Christopher Cradock having been allowed to go in chase of a squadron of greatly superior force. The excuse of "Where was the 'Canopus'?" I dismiss as having no bearing on the question, as she was not a cruiser, and my object is simply to show how actions are fought under modern conditions and armament.

In the Coronel action we have practically similar accounts from Captain Luce who commanded the "Glasgow," and from Admiral von Spee who was in command of the German squadron.

Mr. Pollen, in "Land and Water" of August 14th, has given us a well-argued, scientific account, with diagrams, of the actions above referred to, and he points out that in each case the stronger and faster squadron or ship fought the action at the range best suited to his armament; that his guns being more powerful he preferred long range which the great perfection of modern guns and gunnery made effective, and, as in the case of the "Phoebe" above referred to, he obtained his victory with small loss. This is "quite proper," as Mr. Roosevelt puts it. The days of chivalry have passed, and we do not give the enemy any chances just to make things fair.

In the Coronel action the fight began at some 11,000 yards, and till the very last the distance was not less than 7,000 yards. Von Spee shows that he had the advantage in speed and position, and Cradock could do little but fight under the conditions chosen by his adversary. According to von Spee the British ships seemed to make worse weather of it than the Germans, and the latter could wait till they had the advantage of the light after the sun had set. The fire control of the Germans was evidently better for this reason, so that the British ships were knocked out in the first few broadsides. In any case, in order to bring his 6-in. guns into action it should have been Cradock's tactics to close, and apparently he made some attempt to do so, but only after the action had continued for some time, in order, as von Spee assumed, to use his torpedoes; but with the improvement in gunnery, and the speed at which ships are moving, making boarding impossible, the attempt to close would be likely to have even less chance of success than it had in the action between the "Macedonian" and "United States."

In the Falklands Islands action we have the same lesson; the action was fought throughout at distances from 16,500 to 12,500 yards. It lasted three hours before the "Scharnhorst" was sunk and five hours before the "Gneisenau" sank. In this case, too, the Germans made several attempts to shorten the range, but Admiral Sturdee had everything in his favour, and he preferred to win with small loss.

Turning, now, to the Dogger Bank action, the really remarkable thing is the distance at which it was commenced, fire having been opened by the "Lion" at 18,000 yards. "We began to hit at 17,000 yards," says Admiral Beatty—about ten statute miles. Reports have certainly been made showing that this has been done in practice, both in our navy and in that of the United States, but it seemed almost impossible, and rather a yarn to be taken with the proverbial grain

of salt. But here we have the fact stated from our own Admiral's report but corroborated by an enemy, a survivor of the ill-fated *Blücher*, whose account was as follows:—

"About nine o'clock columns of smoke could be seen on the far horizon behind us. The enemy were after us, but as yet we could not see them. Suddenly from the blue sky above us a shell fell near us, with a moaning, groaning whine. We could see no ship. From somewhere below the horizon had come this shot. Nowhere visible were there any warships of the enemy which our gunners could find for a target. Still out of the skies above us more shells continued to fall, in front of us, beside us, and behind us.

"Finally the observers at the mast-head were able to make out through their telescopes the tops of the masts of a ship, but her hull was buried out of sight, and yet those British gunners in their turrets, who could not see even the tops of our masts, were rapidly getting the distance and range of the '*Blücher*' from the fire control officers far up in their own mast tops.

"We were the first under fire in the action and we were the last under fire. Practically every British ship poured projectiles into us. I have never seen such gunnery, and there has never been the like of it before in the history of the world."

In the *Naval Warrant Officers' Journal* for October, after quoting the above letter, there is an apt comparison made, between this latter day action of first-class ships, and a theoretical action depicted so vividly by the late Mr. Arnold Forster in his sketch, "*In a Conning Tower*." It was only twenty-five years ago that Mr. Arnold Forster wrote, and the guns supposed to be engaged were the heaviest in the service, of 110 tons. But the first shots were fired when the ships were only 2,000 yards apart, a bare nautical mile, and verily "the old order changeth." The change is not only or chiefly due to the guns, but to the accurate range finding, spotting and fire control, which appear to me, with my old navy knowledge of guns and gunnery, to be little less than miraculous.

Yet, as Mr. Pollen tells us, and it is confirmed by the "*Blücher*" narrator, though in the next hour after this wonderful opening of the action between 9.45 and 10.45, the range was probably reduced to 11,000 yards, no corresponding damage took place, and the two German battle cruisers which had been on fire an hour previously escaped. The reason probably is that as the Germans altered course our Admiral had to put his ships under helm to follow, and to avoid destroyer attacks. It is a nice question for experts, but there is no doubt that frequent changes of course seriously interferes with fire control. Still, most people would argue that if you can hit at ten miles, it should certainly be easier to do so at five and a-half.

Turning now to the "*Sydney*"-"*Emden*" fight. Again we find the stronger and faster ship capturing her enemy, with little loss to herself, the "*Sydney*'s" 6-in. guns being more than a match for the 4.1-in. guns of her enemy, and again we find the "*Emden*," the weaker ship, trying to close to use her torpedoes, causing the British cruiser to sheer off so as to retain the advantage of her superior gun

fire. The "Emden" was well fought, but Captain Glossop of the "Sydney" took every advantage of his superior armament, saying in his report, "I kept my distance as much as possible."

How, then, are future battles to be fought? This is a question which I cannot answer, and if I knew our Admirals' intentions I would not divulge them, but though some modification of the old line of battle may remain in an action between powerful fleets, it seems imperative that there should be flexibility and some discrimination between the different divisions, varying as they must do in speed and power, so that large discretion will probably be left to junior Admirals. The tactics of single ships have been sufficiently shown by the experience of the war.

A few remarks may now be made on future naval power. For the present the Dreadnought battleship and battle cruiser, carrying monster guns remain as the bed-rock of navies, though their sphere of activity is much reduced, and unless they can be made unsinkable it is hard to see how they can continue to exist in view of the future development of the submersible, for certainly submarines will largely increase in number as well as become more powerful. On the other hand the larger the submersible the more she will become a surface water cruiser. American papers are full of the submarine and its future, and anti-submarine motor boats of extraordinary speed intended to ram, and being capable of carrying a light which can show for a mile under water, are proposed as antidotes. Such is the "Tiddlywink," with a speed of 70 miles an hour—really a hydro-plane. Then we are told of giant aeroplanes with a speed of 95 miles an hour, of which England has ordered a few hundreds! Of baby-submarines, and other developments which may or may not ever be realized. Nearly all these inventions are for the benefit of the British Government, and we know that Mr. Lansing has refused to stop the construction of fast motor boats to be used against submarines.

It is satisfactory to know that inventors are being encouraged on the other side of the water, and that we are making use of the inventive genius of our American friends. We know less of what is doing here, but we may feel sure that our contractors have not been idle, and I can only guess that, as we evidently have recently built monitors carrying heavy guns though of light draught, so other vessels may have been designed with special qualifications to meet modern requirements.

The enemy has been credited with many surprises for us, but we may rest content that the ingenuity of naval architects, public and private, in this country will prove equal to any shown by the enemy, and in this case I am quite willing to wait and see.

As to the submarine blockade, the pirates will no doubt continue to exact toll from our mercantile marine, and the loss of life from the inhumanity with which their attack on trade must almost necessarily be carried out is deplorable, but it is only a pin-prick of about one per cent. on our mercantile marine, shippers being more than remunerated by increased freights. At the present stage the losses of our ships are not increasing and the German submarines are being

destroyed quite as fast as they are built. The latest development of the submarine is, we are told, a vessel which can lay mines from below the water and be replenished with petrol from a submerged dépôt ship. These mines would, of course, be as dangerous to a neutral as to an enemy. No doubt the war will produce many changes in naval construction and warfare which we cannot foresee, and I trust that inventors will have every encouragement, though their name is sure to be legion, and patience will be required to wade through ingenious devices of fertile brains of many men ignorant of all sea experience.

In referring to that misused phrase, first made use of by Napoleon, of the "freedom of the seas," I feel that it is difficult to do justice to the importance of the question that it raises for this country and Empire. It is a sort of catchword in the United States from the war of 1812, and it was adroit to raise the cry now that neutral States are prevented by our navy from carrying on a lucrative trade with our enemy. It raised the questions of contraband, of the Declaration of Paris of 1856, of the Hague Conventions of 1907-8 and of the Declaration of London of 1909, which was fortunately never ratified through the action of the House of Lords in throwing out the Prize Bill which would have placed our prize courts under a hybrid arbitration court. Then there is the mischievous claim of what is erroneously called the freedom from capture of "private property at sea," which assumes possible that the "peaceful traffic on the roads of the sea" can continue "during war, whatever the flag might be that carried the traffic, even though it were that of a belligerent."¹

In comparing the navy of to-day with past periods it is of some interest to see how the navy has increased in expense, though it is waste of time to sigh over the vast sums which are now needed.

A friend of mine going over a ship which I commanded made the following remark, "Now I see why the navy costs so much," and those who follow Mr. Frederick Palmer's account of his visit to the Grand Fleet will appreciate the elaborate system now in force, and the scientific completeness of the control in the hands of the Admiral. The contrast with the simplicity of former periods is indeed great, and as invention succeeds invention the cost steadily rises.

It is amusing to read in an old book in the Royal United Service Institution called "Rise and Progress of the Royal Navy," published in 1805 and dedicated to Lord Barham by Charles Derrick, of the early days of a Royal Navy. Thus in Queen Mary's time, the navy having fallen into decay, a commission reported that £14,000 was necessary to put it into a satisfactory state, after which it could be maintained for £10,000 a year. It was, I think, two years ago that a deputation of little-navyites called upon Mr. Lloyd George, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, urging him to reduce the navy, which was then costing nearly forty-eight millions. The Chancellor, in a sympathetic reply, pointed out that if we could go back to our expenditure of twenty-five years previous, he could reduce the income tax to 2d. in the £. No doubt. The navy of 1888 cost about twelve

¹ Sir N. Barnaby's "Naval Development of the Century."

millions, but there were few ironclads, no destroyers, submarines or wireless. Our ships were even then rather obsolete and were armed with muzzle-loading guns. One Dreadnought could easily have sunk the whole of our fleet of 1888.

It may be a misfortune, but it is one that the navy shares with all modern improvements—expenses continue to increase. In the days of the sailing battleship it was considered that they cost £100 a gun, so that a first-rate cost £120,000. Now a super-Dreadnought costs two and a-quarter millions. In 1812, 145,000 seamen and marines were voted and the navy cost twenty millions. Just one hundred years later the cost had risen to nearly forty-eight millions for the same number.

To compare with former days is accordingly what Rudyard Kipling would call foolish talk. If we require a navy it is evident that it must be up to date and an expensive article, but it preserves the Englishman's home, which is of even greater value.

This last "reductio ad absurdum" is the ultimate goal of the restriction on legitimate maritime power, but it has received the support of Lord Loreburn, the late Lord Avebury and others.

The whole question of the value of maritime power is raised in the above conventions and declarations, the danger of which should not require any demonstration after our war experience, but for what a naval correspondent of the *Morning Post* calls "the hopeless misconception of the nature of war involved in the above proposals shown by Sir Edward Grey in his offer to discuss the 'freedom of the seas' with the United States after the war."

It must have been at once obvious to the Government after war was declared that, unless we were to admit that our sea power was of no importance, and that we were prepared to fight the war on shore, our naval rights, not only against German merchant ships and men of war but against neutrals carrying contraband, must be enforced, yet, though it was pretty generally admitted that the Declaration of London was "made in Germany" to protect neutrals, except in the case of their carrying food to England, when they could be sunk, it was fatuously declared that our conduct of the war would be guided by the unratified Declaration. That it has been since practically destroyed by numerous Orders in Council is well known, and at last it has been finally put on one side by the Order in Council of March 11th, cotton, copper and other articles being declared contraband. It is unnecessary to argue the matter more fully, but it seems clear that as everything in modern warfare is used by the State for the national army, the distinction between contraband and non-contraband is obliterated, and the doctrine of ultimate destination must be enforced if we are to prevent the enemy from being supplied through neutrals.

It is unfortunate that the Foreign Office seem to look upon the Declaration of London as personal, as it was to seal the Conventions of The Hague in which they had taken so strong a part, so it is necessary briefly to refer to the Conventions.

The brief given to Sir Edward Fry before the Convention of 1907 was to propose the abolition of contraband altogether, which was fortu-

nately not entertained; if it had been we should probably have reduced our Estimates and have been powerless at sea!

With the long lines now held by armies no neutral goods can pass into an enemy's country by land and all trade is stopped, yet it is contended that a strong maritime Power has no similar right except by blockade, the terms of which make it impracticable with modern weapons.

"Freedom of the seas" was first put forward in the Milan Decree of 1806, and it has always had the support of the strong military Power, but we rely on sea power and can say, with Byron, to the tyrant:—

"Man marks the earth with ruin—his control
Stops with the shore."

Mahan tells us that when Pitt was pressing Russia to join in an alliance against Napoleon, she demanded a relaxation of our right of search of neutrals, which our great Statesman, even in the hour of his greatest need, refused.