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SHORT SERVICE AND THE NAVAL RESERVE.

By CHARLES S. JERRAM.

Tuesday, 8th March, 1904.

Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. FREMANTLE, G.C.B., C.M.G. (Rear-Admiral of the United Kingdom), in the Chair.

Admiral Bosanquet, at the Salters' Company dinner, 22nd April, 1903:—

"The great problem in the Service just now is the provision of an adequate Reserve."

OUTSIDE Service circles very little attention has been attracted by the Report of the Committee on the Naval Reserves, to give the document its official title, which was presented to Parliament early last year. Yet the Report deserves the earnest attention of all patriotic persons. Sir Edward Grey is a statesman amongst politicians, and the fact alone that he presided over this Committee should be sufficient to ensure that the whole matter of Naval Reserves would be considered on broad and statesmanlike lines, while the other members of the Committee were men well able to sift the evidence brought before them, and to afford the practical and technical knowledge required. Recollecting, though, the vastly greater difficulty of obtaining an adequate reserve of stokers than that of obtaining an adequate reserve of seamen, it would seem particularly unfortunate that no naval engineer officer served upon this Committee. However, if I may venture to express an outside opinion, the Report appears to be admirably drawn out, and especially reflects the utmost credit upon the very able secretaries, on whom so much of the work devolves in these matters.

But the Report not only deserves attention, it requires attention. In this country our memory is short (most of us, for instance, have already forgotten the lessons of the war in South Africa), and we fly rather aimlessly from point to point, from strict economy to lavish expenditure, from Navy to Army, from Army to Education, from Education back again to Navy, from Navy back to Economy. Just at present it is the fashion to cry aloud from the omnibus top, "We must have an all-powerful Navy"; but the mood may not last. Still, perhaps, at the back of the head of every thoughtful English man and woman this idea at least is fixed—we must, at all costs, have a Navy equal to our probable requirements.

Now surely it is hardly possible to imagine any matter of greater importance to the Navy, and therefore to the Empire, than that of the Reserves of the Navy. The present writer will never forget his astonishment and consternation, when, some years ago, he heard a naval officer of some distinction say in the presence of other naval officers, as

though it were a matter of course: "There can be no doubt that, on the outbreak of war, the Naval Reserve would at once disappear as a Reserve. It would all be taken to fill up the gaps in the first fighting line." It was, in its way, a consternation such as was that of Mr. Balfour when he found at a certain stage of the late war that there were not enough cartridges in reserve in this country to supply a single battalion of Volunteers. "What," he asked, "should we do then, if we had a prolonged naval war, such a war, for instance, as that at the end of the eighteenth and commencement of the nineteenth centuries?" To this question there were several replies. A long naval war could scarcely be anticipated in these days. In the naval wars of the future ships will perish at a rate out of proportion to the loss of men, and so forth. But several officers looked grave, and the writer could not help remembering Captain Mahan's dictum that in the naval wars of the future that Power will win which, when her first fighting line is destroyed, can most quickly and effectively bring her Reserves to bear.

Before proceeding to consider the details of the Report, attention should be called to the view held by many naval men that in future war-ships will be destroyed at a rate out of proportion to the destruction of men. This is the view of the Committee: "As far as it is possible to judge, the wastage of ships would exceed the wastage of their crews, and so set free officers and men from employment in the initial War Fleet." The Committee is cautious—"as far as it is possible to judge." We have so often made mistakes that it should be our aim to be on the safe side in a matter which so nearly concerns the safety of the Empire as that of an adequate supply of men for naval warfare. Let us for a moment push the idea to its conclusion, and suppose ourselves with a splendid first fighting line, with a reserve of ships at home, but no reserve of men. Following on the lines of the Report, let us imagine, for instance, a great naval battle in the Pacific, in which ships are wasted out of proportion to the wastage of men, as is the case at the present moment with the Russians at Port Arthur. Let us suppose a number of men stranded, so to say, at Hong Kong, or elsewhere, with nothing to do. It is not likely that there would be fresh ships for them in the Pacific. But meanwhile we might have the utmost need for men, say, in the Channel, to man our various reserves of ships in home waters. It is clear enough that in this case, even if the statement of the Committee is correct, it does not affect the question. A Naval Reserve of *men* is mainly required at a get-at-able distance from the great English naval ports, from Portsmouth, Plymouth, etc. Certainly it might be very desirable to have a reserve of *ships* all over the world, but that is not the question with which we are now concerned.

But is it the fact that in the naval wars of the future the wastage of ships will be out of proportion to the wastage of men? We have noticed that even this very strong Committee will not pronounce a definite opinion on the subject, and it would be impertinent for the writer of this paper to air any private opinions in regard to the matter (the case mentioned above supports the view of the Committee). It is certain, however, that we can fit out and supply ships at a more rapid rate than any other country, and war *matériel* as fast as any other country. I am not talking here of new construction, but of fitting out that second line to which Captain Mahan referred. The

old song said: "We've got the ships, we've got the men, we've got the money, too." But that would only be true at the commencement of the war. After war had continued for some time we should, as things are at present, at any rate in home waters—that is to say, from England to Gibraltar, or from England to Canada, or from England to France, Germany, or Russia where she touches the Baltic—have the ships and *matériel*, but not the trained men; while Germany, and probably France, could man her fleets twice over with, on the whole, sufficiently trained men—elaborately trained men are not, in modern naval opinion, absolutely necessary for all the members of a gun's crew.

To sum up this part of the subject. It is possible that abroad we might have more men than we had ships for, but at home we should lack men.

If, however, we cannot be certain that in future naval wars the wastage of ships *all over the world* will be proportionately greater than the wastage of men, we are justified in considering as of some value the statistics of men required in war-time, as compared with those required in peace-time in the wars of the past. A useful comparative table was given in the "Naval Annual" for 1899—that invaluable annual with which the generosity and patriotism of Lord Brassey supplies a rather careless Government and public. Subjoined is a table showing the numbers of seamen and marines voted in peace and war during certain years, and a paragraph commenting upon that table:—

Years.	—	Seamen.	Marines.
1764-75	Peace.	11,000-14,000	4,000-5,000
1783	War.	84,700	25,300
1784-92	Peace.	11,500-14,000	4,000-4,400
1793	War.	40,000	5,000
1811-13	War.	113,000	31,000
1815	War.	70,000	20,000
1824-52	Peace.	20,000-32,000	9,000-11,000
1856	War.	60,000	16,000

"In the three great wars in which we were engaged during the latter half of the last century we required from four times to eight times the number of men for the Navy that we had had in the intervening years of peace. In the last European war in which we took part we required double the number of men for the Navy that we had in the previous years of peace; and this although we were fighting in conjunction with an ally which was powerful at sea, and against an enemy whose sea-power was relatively insignificant."

It is clear, then, that in the past we ourselves required many more men in war-time than in peace-time, and other Powers have had a similar experience in quite recent times. For instance, in the "Naval Annual" for 1902, Lord Brassey, speaking of the United States as "potentially the strongest of the Naval Powers," says:—"In the short war with Spain the number of men in the Navy increased from 12,000 to 24,000." Surely this is a most significant statement. Spain was, in the seas on which she fought, a very weak Power, yet the United States Navy is compelled to double her numbers of men in order to meet her. We are not certain that something of the same kind will not be the

case with us in foreign waters in the wars of the future, and we may, I think, take it for granted that it will be the case so far as home waters are concerned. How are the men to be provided?

There are two methods:—

1. A large increase of regular seamen and marines.
2. An adequate Naval Reserve.

It ought to be mentioned at once that, if desirable, there would be no difficulty in at least doubling the number of long service seamen. Over and over again the present writer has seen two or three of the best of a batch of boys picked out, and the remainder rejected, for some defect which is contrary to regulations, but which scarcely impairs general efficiency. Several years ago a large increase of seamen was suggested, and Mr. Balfour replied: "What are we to do with the men?" At which people laughed. But the reply was sound enough—with explanations. "No country," said Lord Brassey in the House of Lords in 1889, "has ever maintained afloat in peace the numbers required in actual war. The reason is obvious. Such a policy would involve an enormous expenditure, not only on pay, provisions, and pensions, but in the maintenance of ships to give the practice at sea which is essential. If men remain too long in harbour, they lose their sea habits."

From the Report we gather that the annual expenditure upon each unit of the active Navy, including Coastguard, is from about £34 for marines afloat to about £58 for stokers afloat, and £49 for seamen afloat. Seamen in barracks cost annually about £56, stokers £65, marines £43, and the annual expenditure upon the Coastguard is about £83 a head; while Royal Fleet Reserve (Class B) seamen, stokers, and marines cost annually from £15 to £16, and Royal Naval Reserve seamen and firemen from £10 to £16. Economy is one of the cries of the day, and probably the best of them, or, rather, the second best, for it comes second to the necessity for a sufficiently strong Navy, but second to that only. In war-time a full purse and a large population are to most countries the two most valuable assets. To the British Empire they come after the Navy, but of almost any other Empire we may say that in the long run and over many years that country will win in the end which has the longest purse and the largest population. Even on the Navy we cannot possibly afford to spend from £34 to £83 per man, if we can get something good enough for from £10 to £16.

And so, after considerable agitation, a Committee was appointed "to consider generally, whether and how, consistently with efficiency, Naval Reserves can be more fully utilised to supplement the Active Service ratings in peace or in war. What is desired is *to establish a principle and policy* in respect of the support of active service ratings by Reserves, which may be applicable to any future increase of the Fleet."

The italics are my own. It is seen here, and will be more clearly seen further on, that a tentative policy is established, that the thin end of the wedge of short service is inserted in the naval fabric, a policy advocated at the Royal United Service Institution by Admiral Sir Edmund Fremantle and others, and which I ventured to suggest at the same Institution some time ago.

The Terms of Reference for the Committee add:—"It will not be open to the Committee, without further instructions, to recommend any fundamental change in the continuous service system under

which active service ratings of the Navy are at present entered and trained; but they may make recommendations as to improvements in detail, and generally as to how far, consistently with efficiency, the active service ratings can be supplemented by Reserves. Moreover, if they arrive at the conclusion that the formation of an adequate Reserve is not compatible with the present system, they are requested to make a report to that effect."

There is then at present to be no "fundamental change," and it can hardly be said that there is such a report as suggested under a certain contingency in the last sentence of the above paragraph, unless, indeed, a striking suggestion to employ soldiers as sailors, a suggestion, referred to later in this paper, may come under that head. But though radical change be set aside, it is clear that the Committee is not at all heart-easy in this matter, for, embodied in this short Blue Book is a bewildering number of suggestions, but no one clear plan—suggestions which it will surely tax the ingenuity of even that most hardworking and versatile of all men, the "handy officer" of His Majesty's Navy, to carry out effectively.

Let us first see of what the present Reserves consist, and if I am here and there a little explanatory, naval officers will excuse me, recollecting that others besides those in the Services are permitted to attend these discussions.

According to the Report, the Reserves consist of 4,200 Coastguard, 12,500 long service seamen and marine pensioners, many of them, by-the-by, approaching the age of 55, 1,350 Royal Fleet Reserve seamen, 500 Royal Fleet Reserve stokers, 850 Royal Fleet Reserve marines, 3,900 Naval Reserve firemen, and 20,400 Royal Naval Reserve seamen, producing a total efficient Reserve, according to the Report, of 34,000, the Active Vote for 1902-3 being 122,500. It was suggested by the Royal Commission of 1859 that the proportions of the two branches of the Service should be: Active Service men 73,000, Reserve 38,000. It is clear that if we are now to attain similar proportions we must increase our Reserve by about another 30,000 men, and the Committee appears to approve of these proposals of the Royal Commission of 1859. It should be observed that the Royal Naval Reserve seamen are merchant seamen and fishermen, of whom about 11,000 have had a fairly efficient training. It will be seen if we tot up the figures above of the various sections of the Reserve that they come to 43,650, not to 34,000. It is clear, then, that at present we must deduct some nine or ten thousand men from the nominal Reserve to arrive at the efficient Reserve. The grand total of the Reserves up to 1st January, 1904, is 45,707. Making a similar deduction, we arrive at an effective force of about 35,000 men.

But does this total Reserve force exist except on paper? It is obvious that a portion at least of the Coastguard, and also a large proportion of that part of the Royal Naval Reserve which belongs to the merchant service, would be required where they are in time of war even more than in time of peace, and the same remark applies to the Royal Naval Reserve of firemen. The number of British seamen and British firemen in British ships is dangerously low already, and is still decreasing, so far as seamen are concerned, at a rapid rate; so far as firemen and trimmers are concerned, the numbers in 1890 were 24,000. In 1901 the numbers were 23,500, but meanwhile the number of steamers

has increased. Now, as is well pointed out in the Report, one of the objects of a strong Navy is to enable our merchant ships to keep the sea in time of war, so there is not much sense in taking a large number of British seamen and firemen from their ships in war-time, a fact which is recognised in theory by the Committee, but in practice, I imagine, the Admiralty would still continue to get all they could from this source. Since writing the above the Naval Estimates for 1904-5 have been issued, and the First Lord notices a satisfactory increase in the valuable Royal Fleet Reserve, which "already numbers 8,375 men." I imagine that the increase is largely in Class B, "men who had left the Navy without permission, and whose services were lost to the country until the establishment of this Reserve." And perhaps some thousands more men may in time be derived from this source.

The present Naval Reserve scheme, however, of necessity, because the number of British seamen in British ships is becoming smaller, and of choice, because such men are wanted in these ships more in war time than in peace time, proposes to rely more and more upon the fishermen and long-shore men who now form about half the Reserve, and it is upon this source of supply, together with such supplies as may be drawn from the Colonies, that, failing new schemes, the Naval Reserves must more and more depend. It is impossible, and, indeed, not necessary, to deal here with the question of training. Suffice it to say that the Committee agrees with Admiral Tryon's Committee of 1892, that there must be such a cohesion and solidarity in the various forces when massed together "that they may be inspired with that justifiable confidence and unity of action which go so far to ensure success." "The usefulness, or otherwise, of Naval Reserves," says the 1903 Committee, "depends very greatly upon the extent to which they will promote or impair this cohesion and solidarity on board ship." It is necessary, therefore, that ships actually in commission in time of peace shall be to some extent manned by Reserves, but such a change of system must be carefully watched.

Any partial manning with Reserves in time of peace is sure to be unpopular. It entails extra work upon the already hard-worked—in the case of commanders or first lieutenants overworked—executive officers. But the naval officer is a practical, many-sided man, filled full with zeal and devotion to duty, and, though he will grumble, he will make the best of what he sees to be in the interest of the Service and of the Empire.

The plan for providing a Naval Reserve, proposed in 1859, was to train boys "in the same training-ships, and on the same system, for the Navy and the Mercantile Marine, those who entered the latter were to be enrolled in the Naval Reserve, and to be employed mainly in the coasting trade," and this plan, or somewhat similar plans, still finds much favour. But the Navy has grown, and the number of British seamen in British merchant-ships has decreased, and the Committee considers that it is not feasible to attempt such a scheme now. Compared with the result obtained as regards national defence, it would cost too much. Its advantage would be that, at the outbreak of war, you would have a large Naval Reserve. Your merchant-ships, it is true, would be depleted of their best men in time of war, and, in time of peace, such men would demand high prices, unless, indeed, they were paid by Government a heavy retaining fee, and that would resolve itself into a heavy subsidy of part of the merchant service.

Moreover, merchants, and the captains of merchant-ships, might prefer to make their own arrangements. These are some obvious difficulties in the way of an attractive scheme, a scheme supported at the present time by the high authority of Sir John Dalrymple Hay, and by others who are particularly well acquainted with the needs both of the Naval Reserve and of the mercantile marine. The beauty of the scheme is its unity and coherence.

To pass on now to war requirements, and to the suggestions and proposals of the Committee.

In the Report, war requirements are put down under two heads: "A" on mobilisation; "B" afterwards. It is estimated that after mobilisation 25 per cent. or less of most of the active service ratings will be left. Of stokers, the proportion will be, unhappily, far less. It is estimated that the proportion of 50 per cent. of the numbers required to mobilise the fleet would be required subsequently in addition. This is a minimum number by the admission of the Report, and, in a long war, we may be sure, I believe, that it would be far exceeded. However, taking the number at 50 per cent., and supposing that of the various ratings from 10 to 25 per cent. of active service men are left after mobilisation, the remaining 40 to 25 per cent. must be supplied by the Reserves. Of these Reservists, the most valuable section is undoubtedly the Royal Fleet Reserve, that is to say, that part of the Reserves which consists of men who have served their time in the Navy. In order to increase this invaluable Reserve, the Committee proposes that in future one-fourth of all ordinary seamen and A.B.'s (trained men) shall be non-continuous service men, leaving all the gunnery and torpedo ratings and three-quarters of the remainder to be filled by continuous service men; also one-sixth of the stokers are to be non-continuous service men. The seamen are to enter at the age of from 18 to 25, and stokers from 18 to 28. They are to serve for five years in the Fleet, followed by service in the Royal Fleet Reserve to make up 12 years from date of entry.

In these pregnant and most important suggestions we have a return, so far as it goes, to non-continuous service, a system of the past never entirely abrogated, so far as certain ratings are concerned, and from this fresh start I foresee most important developments, which time and necessity will bring about.

It must not be forgotten that in the old days men were only enrolled for the ship's commission—say, three to five years—and that when, in 1853, a ten years' service was introduced there was a general outcry amongst officers and men.

There will be great difficulty in getting stokers, and it is suggested that for the present, at any rate, supernumerary non-continuous service stokers should be accommodated and trained, and that, in order to increase the number of stokers, non-continuous service seamen should be trained both as seamen and stokers. Here we have a suggestion of the German methods of interchangeability—methods tried on one British station at least some years ago in individual ships, but promptly suppressed. It should be noted that, since the Report was issued, an excellent arrangement has been made, whereby all seamen passing for A.B. have to pass in stoke-hole duties; also all boys now joining are being trained in these duties.

As stated above, non-continuous service men are to serve five years in the Fleet, and for seven years in the Royal Fleet Reserve.

thus making up the twelve years' ordinary service. It is not really a short service, as service goes in foreign fleets, and, being actually a continuous service, and being also a shorter service than that to which we are accustomed, the expression "Non-Continuous Service" is hardly a happy one, and it is introduced probably because of the prejudice against the shorter expression. After their service on board ship these men pass to the Royal Fleet Reserve, Class B (2). In regard to employment when in the Reserve, the present writer is able, from a somewhat full experience, to confirm the opinion of the Committee that Royal Fleet Reserve men seldom lack employment if they desire it. He has lived in a parish in the West Country in which probably every labouring man is either a pensioner, or has some near relative a pensioner; every boy and man of the labouring class in the parish, in fact, being in the Service, or having been in the Service, or having a father, a brother, or a son in the Service. The Navy, with its elastic system, turns out men able to put their hands to all sorts of work—"handy men"—and pensioners seldom fail to find employment if they want it. Naval service is hereditary in these families, and has been hereditary in them for two generations at least.

But it is also very properly proposed that the whole of the crews of merchant ships subsidised by the Government should be Reservists, either in the Royal Fleet Reserve, or in the Royal Naval Reserve. The number of men in classes A and B of the Royal Fleet Reserve, including seamen, stokers, and marines is, according to the Report, 5,858, of which number stokers are less than a thousand. According to the latest estimate the numbers of the Royal Fleet Reserve reach 8,375 men.

The Royal Naval Reserve is a larger body, numbering, according to the Report, in all some 26,000. Of these, 20,441 are seamen, and 1,500 executive officers, the engineer officers being 400, and the firemen 3,936, so that it is clear that the Royal Fleet Reserve of stokers, at the outside not more than twelve or fifteen hundred in numbers, will not be much helped in time of war by the Royal Naval Reserve. Especially is this the case when we remember that British firemen will, like British seamen, be required in British merchant ships even more in time of war than in time of peace. So far as the stokers of both branches of the Reserve are concerned, they hardly exist for practical purposes, and various odds and ends of ways are suggested for supplying the defect, two of which are perhaps especially worth mentioning, namely, the enrolment, if you can get them, of gas and electric light stokers, and, more important, so far as numbers are concerned, the enrolment of Lascars and Kroomen. But surely it is a position fraught with the utmost peril to the Empire, when we find that our present and possibly our future reserve of British stokers is practically non-existent. Moreover, to the civilian, it would seem that the stoker should be an even better disciplined man than the seaman. I can imagine nothing more like the infernal regions than the stoke-hole of a man-of-war in a battle in rough weather in a broiling climate, with an undisciplined set of stokers, unaccustomed to the sea, and to the conditions of a naval stoke-hole. Here, if anywhere, you require perfect knowledge, perfect health, and that entire devotion to duty which has been the glorious tradition of naval engineers and stokers on several memorable occasions in the recent past.

The Royal Naval Reserve of *seamen* is, comparatively speaking, more satisfactory than that of stokers, that is to say, the numbers are, as we have seen, over 20,000. But as regards about half of these, they would be required in British merchant-ships in time of war even more than in time of peace. We may say, I believe, that not more than 15,000 men would be obtained, and 5,000 of that number with much trouble, and after war had continued for some time, and with added and serious danger also to our trade and food supplies. Several methods are suggested for increasing the supply of Royal Naval Reserve seamen, the most interesting of which seems to be the proposed establishment of ships and batteries at our Eastern fishing ports (a suggestion since partially carried out), in order to attract the East Coast fishermen. The East Coast fishermen, as such, are of more importance than the West Coast fishermen, but the latter body provides comparatively an infinitely larger number of men for the Navy and the Reserves than do the fishermen of the East Coast. In the West the Navy is hereditary. Besides, our West countrymen are both shrewd and constitutionally lazy, shrewd enough to know that their Naval Reserve pay will, to a large extent, supply their small wants and keep them in comparative idleness—that and occasional fishing when it does not rain or blow. Whether batteries will attract the East Coast fishermen remains to be seen. These men look upon fishing more as a profession than do their brethren of the West Coast. They may not have the time to spare for employment in the Naval Reserve, but the experiment of establishing naval batteries and centres on the East Coast is well worth trying, especially, perhaps, the suggested transfer of training-ships to Harwich from Portland, which port will now be required for other purposes. It is worth while noticing here that some naval captains prefer a London crew to any other, on account of their smartness, a quality which will be more needed than ever in future naval war, and an endeavour is to be made to attract the Thames watermen into the Naval Reserve.

Naval Volunteers were some years ago suppressed, but the system is now revived. Why, asks the Committee, should the Army get all the Volunteers? The new system is working well. London has already 1,000 Volunteers. The Clyde has the same number. Volunteers are to use modern quick-firing guns. It is earnestly to be hoped that they will be efficiently trained by able, tactful, gunnery lieutenants, in active service, who will know that their promotion depends upon their efforts.

Then there is the suggestion of enrolling Colonial Naval Reserves, but with the express proviso that “in making these suggestions the Committee had regard solely to strengthening the Imperial Navy without impairing the central control or localising any part of the Fleet for war service”; with regard to which one can only remark that (notwithstanding recent Colonial action) the exact opposite seems, so far as one can judge from the Press, to be the desire of Canada, and probably of Australia.

In regard to other possible Reserves there is an interesting suggestion, which might be of much value were all our forces under a common guidance and directorship, as to using the Army as a Naval Reserve in times of naval warfare. There is no special mention made of Artillery; but to the layman it seems that the Artillery, with sea legs and some technical instruction, such as learning certain calls and orders, would be a most useful Naval Reserve, the most useful

Reserve, in fact, which could be imagined, for in the case of war with almost any European Power or Powers in Europe, the Navy would be of infinitely greater importance than the Army as such. Soldiers have fought on board ship in the past; why should they not do so again? I am not sure that such might not be a solution of the problem, so far as fighting men are concerned, at any rate until command of the seas were obtained. In this connection it is interesting to note some remarks by Admiral Sir John Fisher at last year's Royal Academy banquet. Sir John Fisher has had, and will probably have in the near future as much to say as anyone in regard to new naval schemes, and he appears to contemplate the possibility of the Army fighting side by side with the Navy on board ship; but to co-ordinate Army and Navy, a Committee of Defence would be required with a great War Minister at its head, not an Army Minister, nor a Navy Minister, but such a War Minister as Cromwell, or Marlborough, or Pitt.

By these and other methods it is proposed to increase the Reserves of the Navy. One means of so doing appears to have escaped notice. There are in every man-of-war a number of men, stewards, writers, domestics, and band, amounting perhaps in a battleship to 50 men. Some of these men are trained in rifle and cutlass and pistol drill, all of little use in a naval engagement. The argument is that there is plenty of scope for these unskilled men during an action. So there is; but, having all these men, why not train them in heavy gun drill, and improve their physique by making them learn to pull an oar, and do any ordinary duty which a seaman or marine might be called upon to do? They could then be employed as seamen or marines in war-time, and their places could be taken by men who would be thrown out of work in the merchant service, and who would be perfectly competent to do the work of servants, cooks, and so forth, without any naval training: men such as the enormous number of stewards, etc., in our big liners. These men would do for "powder passers," as the Americans call them, as well as the present domestics. They would have their sea-legs, know port from starboard, forward from aft. Their services ought to be readily obtained for a small retaining fee. The "Oceanic" has 210 men in the purser's department, and in time of war the stewards, etc., would be thrown out of work, as passenger traffic would cease, or be carried on to a very limited extent.

There are besides in a man-of-war men belonging to many trades, and the principle of interchangeability is suggested in the Report. Might it not be possible to have every man on board ship trained sufficiently at any rate to take a number at a gun? They could then be employed as seamen in war-time, and their places taken by a Reserve formed of men of the same trades — coopers, carpenters, painters, plumbers, etc.

But incomparably the most important suggestion of modern times is that return to non-continuous service suggested by the Report — short service a layman might venture to call it, though I have never personally come across any officer who would endure such an expression. And indeed the difficulties are very great. There is the danger that you may mar one Service and fail to make another. At present the Naval Service is a life-long service, and, usually, hereditary. It is popular largely because of these facts. However, in issuing the Naval Estimates statement for 1904-5, Lord Selborne announced that

"It is certain that the full number of 625 (non-continuous service) stokers, and 375 (non-continuous service) seamen proposed by the Naval Reserves Committee will have been enlisted before the end of the present financial year." The number is, of course, very small. So far as the more important requirement, stokers, is concerned, it is interesting to notice that, up to a recent date, Devonport was far ahead of Chatham and Portsmouth in enlisting the non-continuous service men required.

In regard to the present scheme, there are a good many practical difficulties. In an Appendix to the Report the working of the scheme is shown in relation to various ships. Take a ship with a total complement of 314 seamen, she would have 275 continuous service seamen and 39 non-continuous service seamen; also 112 continuous service stokers, and 22 non-continuous service stokers. To a civilian it would seem that there would be great difficulties in working such a scheme. There would seem to be a risk that the non-continuous men would be nobody's children. At least it would appear that non-continuous men should not go to newly commissioned ships when first entered; that they should go in batches of, say 10 or 20 men, or the whole non-continuous service complement, and that Commanding Officers should understand that the men are sent to be trained, not to do odds and ends, as some of the Naval Reserve men complain is the case with them. A great deal would depend upon Commanding Officers, whose task is hard enough at any time. Some help might be afforded them by the men having had, say, a previous two months' training in barracks, in cleanliness, smartness, and the rudiments of drill; and this would seem also to be of advantage to the men. It would be very desirable that they should make a good impression on their comrades and officers when first going on board. In cases where they have been entered in batches and placed under a petty officer, there are already good accounts of them.

There is a clause in the regulations which would appear to require much care in carrying out. It is suggested that captains should be empowered, under the authority of the Commander-in-Chief, to transfer specially qualified men to continuous service. It would seem that the utmost care should be taken in this matter, and transfers only allowed under most exceptional circumstances, otherwise there would be a danger that every decent man who entered might be transferred, and the Reserve consist only of the useless.

But these are practical points and matters of working and detail upon which, perhaps, I ought hardly to venture an opinion. More to my purpose is it that recent experience in the training of seamen to serve as stokers tends to show that the proposed proportion—one in six—of non-continuous service stokers (how much shorter short service would be, if one dared to use the expression) might be much increased. The seaman becomes a fairly satisfactory stoker in about a month. Besides, stokers do not join as boys, so there is less prejudice to overcome in their case.

Time fails me to notice many admirable suggestions in this able Report, nor must I be led away too far by a criticism of detail, in any case of small value as coming from a landsman. The point is: Will these many proposals suffice to provide a War Navy? At present, if we may believe the statistics given in an earlier part of this paper, we have, so far as men are concerned, a Peace Navy. I do not think

they will do so unless the short service system (there, it will out) is greatly extended.

I believe that it is necessary for the safety of the Empire that short service should become the system of the Navy, as it is the system of the Army, reserving long service for specially selected men.

There are ill-omened prophets who prophesy that affairs will not be settled in the Far East until after a war between Great Britain and Japan (with, perhaps, the United States) on the one hand, and Russia, France, and Germany on the other hand; and, had it not been for the personal service to the Empires of Great Britain and France of his Majesty the King and the President of the French Republic, so awful a disaster as that War of the Worlds might have been within our immediate purview. Should we have had men enough for such an emergency? Should we have men enough for any similar emergency even under the present scheme? We know that it would not be the case. If it be contended, why say these things? Why inform foreign Powers? That is a contention of ignorance which hardly needs refuting here. Foreign Powers know all about it.

In discussions on the Navy Estimates, nothing is more striking than the agreement of Members of Parliament, who usually hold all sorts of opinions, as to the need for as strong a Navy as the Admiralty may demand. In fact, this matter is put outside ordinary politics. The average member of Parliament allows himself a good deal of licence; but he cannot play with a matter of life and death. There is one other remarkable note of present debates—the note of economy; a matter, as I am convinced, of the utmost Imperial importance. May our municipal and Imperial guardians have strength to resist fads. This is no time even for improvements, unless they are necessary for defence, or will bring in money. The argument for a strong Naval Reserve is based upon these two grounds: necessity and economy. I do not say that this Empire *cannot* face the expenditure which would be necessary if it were decided to maintain in time of peace a sufficient number of long service men for war; but I do say that no Government could face the enormous expenditure of so doing which had not previously made trial of a genuine system of Naval Reserves, provided either by short service or in some other way. The Navy Estimates this year, even when Russia is partially crippled, amount to close on £37,000,000, and it seems but yesterday that they were seventeen or nineteen millions. How are we to economise? We cannot safely economise in construction.

It is the fashion for the moment to disparage the naval power of France, and indeed she is not relatively so strong as she was; but in men she is, compared with us, very strong. The French *Inscription Maritime* has on its rolls over 200,000 men, and can certainly provide over 100,000. Of these the Reserves would produce about 50,000. I believe it would be a liberal estimate to put down our own available Reserves at 22,500 seamen of sorts, and 2,500 stokers and firemen. Admiral Sir Edmund Fremantle calculates that in a war with France alone we should require 250,000 men, and if the above figures are anything like correct, it seems obvious that the gallant Admiral does not err on the side of excess. How many men should we require if we were at war with France and Russia? Perhaps 400,000; perhaps many more. Merely to name such numbers shows the futility of suggesting that we should keep up such an active fighting force in times of peace. We must learn to rely upon a Reserve, and though the

conditions are not altogether alike, the splendid way in which our Army Reserves flew to the colours and their splendid services at the time of the South African war are a happy omen to those who, by short service, would double and treble and multiply by five or ten our Naval Reserves, and rely year by year increasingly upon them. We must remember that it is not so very long since short service was as unpopular in the Army as it is now in the Navy; yet without it the South African war would hardly have been possible; and, had we failed in that war, the Empire would have been shaken to its foundations.

The German Navy is believed to be efficient. Yet it is a short service Navy, which proposes to provide two men in the Reserve for every man serving afloat. The Germans have at present rather under 40,000 men afloat, and have not yet got their full proportion of Reserves; but by 1916 they will have 50,000 active service men, and a very considerable Reserve, which by about 1920 will amount to 112,000 men. The preamble to the German Navy Bill of 1900 states that "Germany must have a Fleet of such strength that a war, even against the mightiest naval Power, would involve such risks as to threaten the supremacy of that Power." The "Mightiest Naval Power" can, of course, only mean England; and Germany with short service proposes to threaten our naval supremacy. In the case of men in our own Navy who have joined the Service, through the "Northampton," at a later age than that at which the majority join, it has been found that a few years later these men have gained an equal number of positions as petty officers, etc., compared with those who joined as young boys in the ordinary way.

Of course, if conscription were decided upon, the matter would be settled. The idea of conscription has hitherto been associated chiefly or only with the Army; but, to my mind, it is of infinitely more importance as regards the Navy. At one time during the late war it was thought that the Government would go out upon conscription; but it is clear from the Prime Minister's speech at the United Club that to-day again conscription is outside practical politics, even, perhaps, such a modified form of it as suggested by Sir George Taubman Goldie. And, indeed, there is force in Mr. Balfour's argument, or implied argument, that one could hardly compel all Englishmen to serve for the benefit of the Empire, while Canadians and Australians might serve or not as they pleased.

The interesting proposals and suggestions of the committee are marred by their number. We want some one or two schemes, plain, easily understood, capable of providing large numbers of fighting men, and above all, of stokers. For the latter I can see nothing but a greatly extended system of short service. For the former nothing but short service combined, perhaps, with use of soldiers on board ship. The problem of the Naval Reserve is incomparably the most important Imperial problem of the day. On its right solution may depend the existence of the Empire.

A comparison has been made between ourselves and Japan. The comparison is one-sided. Japan by a sudden dash became mistress of a sea—for the time being at least. We cannot by dashes in all directions become mistress of all seas. We must have men enough for long wars.

If we are asked to propose a detailed plan, I reply: That is not our business. I point to a danger, the greatest, as I believe, of Imperial dangers, and, as one who with his whole heart and soul loves his country, thinks it the greatest, highest thing of all to be a citizen

of the British Empire, I would venture to use those famous words of a sailor Prince, and cry aloud that we must "Wake up," lest, haply, the enemy come upon us unprepared, and take from us our Navy in which we trusted, and our Empire which we love.

Commander W. F. CABORNE, C.B., R.N.R. :—The question of our Naval Reserves has been so often debated in this Institution that it is very difficult to say anything without repeating oneself, but it is an absolute and undeniable truism that the subject is one of the gravest and utmost importance. It is evident that it is eminently undesirable, on the score of expense, that the country, while of necessity constantly adding very largely to the *matériel* of the fleet, should also go on increasing indefinitely the permanent *personnel* of the Navy. The paper before us this afternoon is mainly devoted to reviewing some of the suggestions and opinions of the recent Naval Reserves Committee, whose report, while possibly open to criticism in some of its details, would appear to have been pretty generally received in an appreciative spirit, and the lecturer's principal point seems to be the extension of the plan of short service—the thin edge of the wedge of which has been inserted into the existing system as the outcome of a recommendation of the aforesaid Committee. Whatever our views may previously have been—and it is almost needless to say that the views which may be perfectly sound under one set of conditions to-day, may be equally unsound under another set of conditions to-morrow, and *vice versa*—we all, I am sure, wish the new departure every success. Personally, I have never hitherto been very favourably disposed towards short service in the Royal Navy, because it has in the past seemed inadvisable to tamper with a system which has worked so well since its introduction in 1853, and has provided us with such a splendid *personnel*, and also because I have always been sceptical as to the men trained in the fleet, when transferred to the Reserve taking kindly to life in the Mercantile Marine, their availability for employment in our merchant ships being one of the prospective advantages usually held out by the advocates of change. But, as I have already said, it is manifest that the country cannot maintain permanently in time of peace the enormous *personnel* that will be required in time of war, and we are all well aware that, owing to the falling off in the supply of European British-born subjects in the Mercantile Marine, that service is no longer in the position that it once was in to largely help in solving the problem of how to maintain a large Naval Reserve, and so some modification of the plan which has obtained of late years seems to be unavoidable. Up to the present time, our mail steamers and other first-class steamships have been principally manned by British subjects, and so Reserve men from the Royal Navy were hardly required for the purposes of those vessels, and I have always been of opinion that these latter persons, while being very willing to engage on board the liners and similar craft, would most religiously avoid our long voyage merchant sailing-ships and tramp steamers—that, is, under existing conditions. Of course, if those conditions were improved, as they should be, that objection would fall to the ground. However, owing to the constant decline in the number of European British-born subjects in the Mercantile Marine, and particularly in certain ratings, it is open to question as to how long the supply will be sufficient for even our mail steamers, etc., without drawing upon foreigners, and foreigners who have been naturalised, who are equally open to objection; and in the event of further shortage, the non-continuous seamen of the Royal Navy, as they are now termed, would no doubt welcome, and be welcomed in, such employment. Again,

it seems to be the opinion of the Naval Reserves Committee—and I think it is one which you, Sir, personally share—that after the completion of training in the fleet, it is more or less immaterial whether the short service men transferred to the Reserve continue to follow the sea or enter into shore employment, always provided that they undergo periodical gunnery drill and are embarked for occasional cruises. If it be true that the nature of this after employment is immaterial—and viewed in the light of the preceding remarks—an extension of the short service principle would seem to be inevitable. There are one or two special points in the lecture upon which I should like to say something. For instance, I notice that in one place the lecturer states that 11,000 out of the total number of Royal Naval Reserve men enrolled may be said to be fairly well trained, the natural inference being that the others are not; and I should like to know how he arrives at those arbitrary figures—in fact, upon what principle he separates the sheep from the goats. All classes of the Royal Naval Reserve—with the exception of stokers, who only drill for fourteen days annually after their first year of enrolment, when they have to perform twenty-one days, and a small number of probationers, who do not receive any instruction whatever—are required to undergo the same amount of drill yearly, although it is true that certain of the men have been embarked for training in the fleet, and so presumably are better up in their work than are those of their fellows who have not enjoyed the same advantages. The lecturer also remarks that the merchant sailors and firemen at present enrolled in the Royal Naval Reserve will be urgently needed in the Mercantile Marine in time of war. There is no doubt but that this will be the case, and the necessity for taking adequate steps to increase the supply of British-born merchant seamen for both commercial and naval exigencies has been put forward over and over again in this Institution. But the fact remains that the Admiralty possesses the power to call upon the members of the Royal Naval Reserve to fulfil their obligations to the State, and will very properly take them from their ordinary vocations, and the shipowners will have to man their ships as they best can; and if those gentlemen experience great difficulties in so doing, they will have nobody but themselves to thank for not having exercised reasonable foresight during many years of peace. At the same time, the gravity of the position to the country must not be overlooked. With regard to the representation made by the Naval Reserves Committee, mentioned by the lecturer, as to the manning from the Royal Fleet Reserve and the Royal Naval Reserve of all subsidised vessels, I may mention that I made a similar suggestion in this theatre some years ago with respect to transports taken up by the Government under normal peace conditions, and I understand that this practice is carried out to a limited extent at the present time. While speaking of the recommendations of the Naval Reserves Committee, it may be of interest to point out that in the February *Navy List* the names of two Royal Naval Reserve Warrant Engineer Officers appear for the first time.

The CHAIRMAN (Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle):—Had we none before?

Commander CABORNE:—None whatever; it is a new departure, taken at the instance of the Naval Reserves Committee.

The CHAIRMAN:—I thought we had some engineer officers.

Commander CABORNE:—We had 400 commissioned engineer officers, but no warrant engineer officers; it is a new rank. In the same way the

grade of Artificer Engineer has been introduced into the Royal Naval Reserve, and I understand that the prospects of getting a satisfactory supply of suitable candidates are very encouraging. In conclusion, the lecturer says he is afraid that the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve will in a measure interfere with recruiting for the Royal Naval Reserve, at any rate in some of the smaller ports; but I do not share that fear, for the simple reason that Royal Naval Reserve men receive pay and allowances when on drill, are paid annual retaining fees, and in process of time become eligible for pensions. On the other hand, the Naval Volunteer Reserve men are unpaid, except when called out for active service or undergoing special courses, and only a capitation grant is made to them, the amount of which is absorbed in the funds of their respective companies or divisions. Under these circumstances I do not think that the class of men who are now enlisted in the Royal Naval Reserve will be inclined to throw away manifest advantages—in other words, to grasp at the shadow and lose the substance.

The Marquis of GRAHAM (Commander of the Clyde Division of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve):—I regret, owing to the vagaries of the Post Office, I only received this paper this afternoon, and therefore have not had time to consider it, but there is one thing I may do, and that is associate myself with all present in gratitude to the author for his very able and lucid paper. I am glad to hear Mr. Jerram say that this problem of manning the Navy is one of the most important of our time. There can be no doubt that it is so. I notice one of the reasons why he believes so is owing to the great wastage of both men and ships in war. He quotes the Naval Reserves Committee, who pointed out that the wastage of ships would be probably out of proportion to the wastage of men. This has been proved more or less during the present war in Japan. There is one point which should be carefully noted, and that is that men have not been merely lost and placed out of action by shot and shell, or the sinking of their ships, but that when the ships sank some of the men took refuge on neutral ships and shores, and were handed over to Russia on the condition that they would never fight again in the present war. So that there is a probability that after a great action men might be rescued by neutral ships, or take refuge on neutral shores; and be restored to this country on the promise that they would not take up arms again during the war, and so rob us of a source of manning to which we might have been looking for the manning of our reserve ships. The author has referred to the establishment of Naval Volunteer divisions. As one of the commanding officers of one of those divisions, that of the Clyde, I am very glad to see that he regards that as being a practical part of the fighting efficiency of the Navy. While the Naval Forces Act of 1903 provides for the establishment of 30,000 Naval Volunteers, we shall never get 30,000 Volunteers unless Volunteering is treated with greater liberality than at present by this country and its people. Our Naval Volunteers have been treated with generosity, so far as generosity in Parliament and the Admiralty is concerned, but there is no generosity towards Volunteers by the country as a whole. Volunteers like everyone else are taxpayers towards our National Defence, but, beside that, they give their time free to the service of their country; and then, because they are Volunteers, they are expected to put their hands still deeper in their pockets and pay for the rents of their drill halls, their railway journeys, their travelling by tram or 'bus, and even for the ammunition which they fire. That is not generosity. If a man is a Volunteer and drills to save his country

conscription, he should be treated with generosity as part of the Reserve forces, and the other people who do not serve as Volunteers should pay unreservedly for his Service expenses. As an illustration, take my own men. I have 80 per cent. of them working men—boiler makers, rivet makers, and ship builders. Many of them are ex-seamen. They pay between 2d. and 5d. a night in tram and ferry fares to reach their drill hall, and beyond that they have to pay eighteenpence in order to travel down to get some boat exercise. If this country looks to 30,000 working men to volunteer for service in the Navy, they will be disappointed, unless they are willing to treat Volunteers as part of the Naval Reserve and with the generosity which they deserve.

Commander W. C. CRUTCHLEY, R.N.R. :—I have not had an opportunity of studying this paper very closely, but the general impression I have gathered is that it is a most excellent one, and I would quote almost the end of it as a text for the few words I want to say on the matter. I am speaking simply on my own behalf, and not on behalf of anyone else. The author says that :—"The problem of the Naval Reserve is incomparably the most important Imperial problem of the day, and that on its right solution may depend the existence of the Empire." I submit with all consideration that this question touches most closely the Mercantile Marine. The Mercantile Marine in the days of our great sea fights was largely the source upon which the Navy depended for men. In fact, the men were interchangeable between the Navy and the Mercantile Marine. I do not know that conditions have altered now in such a way as to entirely differentiate the present from the past. I think that the Mercantile Marine man of to-day is as capable of learning gun drill as was his predecessor in the days of Nelson. To turn to France, which the lecturer has mentioned. That country has not the same maritime interests that we have, but they find it necessary to train every man to the use of arms that adopts the sea as a calling. The entire maritime population is enrolled in the *Inscription Maritime*, and that means that everyone plying his calling as far as the head of tidal waters is enrolled in the fighting forces, and is trained to be a fighting man. I submit that for a maritime nation such as Great Britain and her colonies, all the men that go to sea for a calling should be also trained as fighting men, and I can see no reason why they should not be. It would improve the *moral* of the men, and it would add a source of strength that we at present seriously lack. My friend, Commander Caborne, has dealt with one point that is often raised as an argument against this, and that is, that if you take the crews from merchant-vessels in time of war there will be a difficulty in manning such vessels. I do not think that is at all a valid argument, and I feel confident you will endorse my words when I say that a man who has the habit of the sea would be the better fighter at sea than any man who did not follow the sea as a calling. The habit of the sea is no small thing when you come to indulge in naval warfare. With regard to the men to man the merchant-vessels, I admit that dock labourers or stevedores, or people of that description, would be quite competent to do the ordinary work of merchant-vessels or mail steamers under the stress of war. If the ships were left with their masters, officers, and engineers, the mere rank and file would not matter very much. Last time I had the honour of speaking at this Institution I used some very hard words on this question of training, and I meant to use them. In reading to-day's *Times*, I have come across just one slight glimmer of hope. This is the first thing I have

seen for at least the last five years that has given me any satisfaction in connection with this training of men. I refer to the answer given by the President of the Board of Trade to Sir Charles Dilke, that staunch supporter of seamen, who asked :—"Whether, in view of the supply of boys willing to go to sea, effective means for their doing so could be provided," and Sir Charles further asked what steps it was proposed to take to give effect to the eleventh recommendation of the Board of Trade :—"That every encouragement should be given to training-ships and to the training of boys on merchant-vessels with the object of increasing the number of British seamen in the Mercantile Marine." The answer to that question was as follows :—"The Board of Trade have commended to the consideration of the principal associations representing British shipowners the recommendation of the Mercantile Marine Committee of the Board of Trade, and with the co-operation of the other departments of the Government interested in educational matters in the United Kingdom, they have arranged for the circulation of a memorandum inviting local educational authorities to give their assistance and encouragement to training-ships." It appears to me that if there is anything at all in that, it means the dawn of a new epoch, and that something is going to be done by way of extracting technical education money for the education and training of sailors. If that is the meaning of the President of the Board of Trade, I think that the lecturers at this Institution and other people can congratulate themselves at last upon having effected something.

Mr. CHARLES S. JERRAM, in reply, said :—I think I have detained you long enough this afternoon, and I confess I am somewhat surprised to find that there has not been so much opposition as I expected to certain expressions in my lecture. I thought that the expression "short service" would have created more objection than seems to have been the case. I do not think it is really necessary for me to say more than that I most heartily endorse what Commander Crutchley said just now with regard to devoting, at any rate, part of the technical education money to the establishment of training-ships, and I should like also to say that I am fully in agreement with Lord Graham's remarks about the expenses of Naval Volunteers. I recollect perfectly well that when a young man, and not very well off, I would have joined the Volunteers if I could have afforded it. I was ready to offer my services to the country, but I could not afford it. I think it is hard when men are prepared to offer their services as soldiers or sailors that they should not be supplied with what is necessary. I thank you all very kindly for the way in which you have listened to the lecture. I am a layman, but I have been intensely interested in the subject of the Naval Reserves for many years past, and I hope you will not consider what I have said conceit in any way. I seriously believe it to be the most important public question before the Empire at the present time.

The CHAIRMAN (Admiral the Hon. Sir E. R. Fremantle, G.C.B., C.M.G.) : — I was very glad when the lecturer asked me to preside at this meeting. I need not tell most members of this Institution that this is a subject which has interested me for a long time. I gave a lecture practically on a similar subject in 1891, and I gave another lecture on the subject in 1902, which I called "A Reserve for the Navy from the Navy," in which I advocated that there should be some sort of short service to the Navy, principally

on two grounds. The one was financial, and after all we must consider financial questions, and if we continue long service and keep on increasing the number of long service men, the pension list gets very large; and I think I represented it rather in this way: that the long service system would begin to be an octopus, stretching out its tentacles everywhere, and we should eventually cut down the expenses and become very stingy in our shipbuilding work. I hold to that now. The other ground upon which I argued was that it was a good thing. I think it was Admiral FitzGerald who gave us the illustration of a certain fable of the dog and the bone. The dog had the bone in its mouth and dropped it because he saw the reflection of the bone in the water, and thereby it lost both. I told him that I did not think the bone was big enough, and that, if the bone was not big enough, it would be necessary to try and get another one. If it were possible to get another bone as well, without dropping the first into the water, I think it would be an advantage. With regard to my lecture of 1902, I obtained very little support from naval officers. After the lecture a gentleman said to me as I went into my club: "I am afraid, Sir, you did not get much support for your lecture." I said: "None at all; but I will tell you what it is. The Admiralty will see the points of it, and are very much more likely to do it than you seem to think." That very year they introduced a limited amount of short service—1,000 men. Lord Selborne says that the non-continuous service men, as he calls them, which is a very long name for a short thing, as the lecturer says, will be all entered this year by the end of the financial year, and he will do the same next year. I had rather hoped he would have doubled the number this year. There is nothing like *festina lente*, and if we advance in the right direction I for one am satisfied. I am not quite satisfied, because we have increased the standing Navy by 4,000 this year, up to 131,000. When I read my lecture it was 122,000, and I told them they were going on, and that we should shortly come up to 150,000 before many years had elapsed. Sir Charles Dilke said then: "I think the Admiralty are hopeful that in a few years' time they will have a sufficient Fleet Reserve." All I can say is that the Fleet Reserve is almost precisely the same now as it was then. The estimate for the "Fleet Reserve" in 1902 was 10,500, and though no doubt the Admiralty have made great endeavours to increase the Fleet Reserve, and Lord Selborne takes great credit to himself for having a Fleet Reserve, it is now 8,375 men. Therefore, I am afraid we have not advanced very much on the question of Reserve. There is a question which has been raised before, and which the lecturer has raised again, as to the naval wars in future: whether ships will perish out of proportion to the men, or *vice versa*. Now, at first sight that appears likely to be the case. We have an illustration at present in Port Arthur, where I have very little doubt there are a great many more men than ships; but you must not take Port Arthur. How about Japan? What are the number of men they have at sea at present? We hope to command the seas, and not to be shut up in our ports. If we are shut up in our ports, no doubt there will be more sailors than ships; but I think if we are to keep the seas the thing will be very different. I think we shall find that the Japanese Navy has increased enormously. I can only give you the numbers as they were in the War of Secession between the Northern and Southern States of the North American Union, when the numbers increased from 7,000 to 51,000. In the last American war with Spain, although there was practically no Spanish Navy at all, or none to speak of, the numbers jumped up in the American Navy from 12,000 to 24,000 almost at once. My conception of

the situation is that if we command the seas we shall have ships in every sea, not half a dozen ships, but we should at once increase them with all sorts and descriptions of ships, and in places where we now have 10 ships we shall have 20 or 30—not necessarily all of them hard fighting ships, that is to say, big ships or even big cruisers. When you are engaged in any sort of warfare the stress and strain are very considerable, and sickness is consequently very considerable too. That, I think, is not taken into consideration. If you lead a hard life, generally speaking, you find you get sick, and we have to lead a hard life in war time. With regard to trained men, I was accused of trying to take away the Navy's birthright by introducing something in the way of short service. We should be a little particular about our terms and about what we mean by them. I used the term "short service" because it was shorter service than we have at present; but you know that the short service which I propose is as long as what the French call long service. The French Navy is supposed to be very well manned, and I understand that the French Navy is manned half by Reserves and half by what they call long service men, and those long service men serve seven years in the French Navy. I suggested that our short service men, of which I only proposed a certain proportion, should serve seven years. Therefore I should have a double advantage over the French. The French have longer service than the Germans or Russians or any other country except Great Britain. Therefore you will see there is a great deal of nonsense talked about this matter. There is nothing sacrosanct in 10 or 12 years. The question is whether it is a reasonable amount. It is not possible to compare it with short service in the Army, where the circumstances are entirely different. It is quite certain that when a ship goes to sea she does not go to lie at Hong Kong as a regiment does for a period of 7 or 8 years. I do not approve very much of employing soldiers as sailors. I cannot help thinking that we ought not to have too many soldiers on board ship, and that those soldiers ought to be trained properly to fight on land, although it may be a reasonable make-shift to take them on board ship. At St. Vincent we had them, but it was only a make-shift, and make-shifts are not satisfactory. We should provide beforehand for exactly what we want. We certainly might have a certain number of regiments called Marine Regiments. The Bombay Marine used to serve afloat, and they are a Regular military regiment. If that is to be done, there are certain regiments which ought to be regularly trained for that service, though I do not think it is a very good idea myself. My own opinion is that sailors ought to do sailors' work, and soldiers ought to do soldiers' work. I quite agree that you can make a very fair sailor in six months' time, always supposing that you have the real nucleus of well-instructed and well-skilled men on board ship, and a sufficient number of skilled officers, too. As a great deal has been said, and very properly said, with regard to what was stated by the Committee, over which Sir Edward Grey presided, I should like to make one or two remarks on that point. In the first place, a Committee only reports in accordance with the instructions which it has received. They were circumscribed in the instruction, and they were only allowed practically to make suggestions in a sort of palliative way; that is to say, they were not allowed to propose anything very drastic, and therefore we had a report with a good many comparatively small suggestions. At the same time, those suggestions were very good, but I do not think they have as yet, at all events, been carried out. The author says:—"In order to increase this invaluable Reserve, the Committee proposes that in future a quarter of all ordinary seamen and A.B.'s (trained

men) shall be non-continuous service men." We have got at present less than 1 per cent., which is not quite a quarter—we have really 1 in 130. Perhaps it is intended by the Admiralty to gradually bring them up to the numbers proposed by the Committee; I am not saying that is not so. With regard to the question of the amount of training that men require, I can only give my own experience. When the "Northampton" was introduced, taking youths of 17 and training them for 6 months, and then sending them straight to sea-going vessels, instead of taking boys of 16 and training them for a couple of years and sending them to sea, I was not very much in favour of it. I thought we should make a very scratchy sort of sailor; but I am bound to say it answered very well. No one knows better than Captain Jerram, the brother of the lecturer, because he had charge of one of the "Northampton" training ships, and I saw him several times at Plymouth, and on the whole I thought the training was very satisfactory. I had to inspect ships on paying-off, and I have several times ordered all the "Northamptons" under that special training to fall out to one side of the ship, and I could not see much difference between the two bodies of men; they seemed to be very much the same. I have said to the captain: "Have you found any difference between them?" "To tell you the truth, Sir," he said, "I did not know which were 'Northamptons' and which were not." He pointed out to me a good-looking young fellow, and he said: "That fellow is the best we have got, and he was a 'Northampton.'" Therefore, if it is so absolutely necessary to have them so long, I think it is difficult to account for the fact that the captain when he was on board ship did not know one from the other, and that the best man on board his ship was one who had been in the "Northampton." I should like to say, also, something about what Lord Selborne told us at the Navy Club. In the Navy we are very much wedded to the things we have, and it is very natural. But Lord Selborne told us a story at the Navy Club—there were no reporters present, but I suppose it is not a great secret, he said: "I daresay nearly all of those who are listening to me here will be of opinion that one of the great advantages we have in the present Navy, and one of the things which we should be most sorry to lose is the long service system." He continued: "Perhaps it will astonish some of you that I have got a sheaf of letters sent to me by Lord Northcote the other day, letters which had been written by distinguished naval officers of that day to Sir Francis Baring, his father, who was then first Lord of the Admiralty, and these distinguished naval officers had heard that it was proposed to have this long service or continuous service, and they one and all said that would be the ruin of the Service, that the Service would go to the dogs if long service was attempted, because they might have had people and not be able to get rid of them, and all sorts of things." That was the opinion of the day. They had been brought up in one school, and they did not understand that it was possible to make any change. Commander Caborne said that men in the contract ships would be in the Naval Reserve, and I hope they will adopt that.

Commander W. F. CABORNE:—They have done so to some extent.

The CHAIRMAN:—We are very much obliged to Lord Graham for speaking on the subject. I will not touch on the question of the pay of the Volunteers, but I certainly think if we are to have Volunteers at all, they ought to be paid their expenses, to say the least of it. He spoke of the question of wastage of men in ships, and I am glad he agreed with

me. The question of the neutrals I think is a very apposite one, and we shall have that question arising occasionally. If a ship is sunk or nearly sunk and escapes into Lisbon, or ~~somewhere~~ like that, and that is a neutral country, and they insist at once upon these men being returned with promise not to serve again, they will not be available for the rest of the war. I rather agree with what Commander Crutchley said. If you will read some old documents of about the time when war was declared, you will generally see that in the seaports the rate of wages went up very largely for seamen, because of the hot press for the Navy. Longshoremen increased exceedingly, and even some people who had not seen the shore at all before came to the sea-ports, and the shipowners were glad to take them to man their vessels. In these days of steam we know shipowners do man their ships very often with anybody they can pick up, and therefore if we take away the Royal Naval Reserves I think the shipowners will be able to man their ships, and it would increase the number of seafaring men or nominal seamen. In your name, gentlemen, I thank the lecturer for having brought this subject forward to-day. Anybody who sees the great increase in the Navy Estimates and the prospective increase, and who has an intelligent appreciation of the cold fit which seems to be rather inclined to come—although the Naval Estimates were carried by very large majorities the other night—will see that we ought to endeavour to run on rather economical lines. We generally look to the Germans as being long-sighted and as having studied questions thoroughly, and it is interesting to note that they are not afraid of short service. They were not afraid of short service in the Army, and they are not afraid of short service in the Navy. I do not know exactly the whole of their system, and I do not say that I desire to follow them entirely; but you may depend upon it that when they have adopted, as I believe they have, a system of shorter service than the French, they must think that they can keep their ships efficient and complete and in a good state of discipline even with short service. I think that ought to make us pause. When we have to deal with certain things, I think it is very often advisable to look to new countries, especially if they are well educated and intelligent, and see what is going on there. The Japanese looked round for what was good in the naval service. They came to England, but they did not adopt all our principles, and where they have not adopted any principle I think you may have some doubt as to whether that principle was correct, and consider whether it should not be altered. The whole subject is one on which I feel very deeply, and, as I have said, is one of the greatest importance, and I can only say that I am very glad it was brought before us to-day.