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### The Italian Fleet during the Libyan War

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# THE ITALIAN FLEET DURING THE LIBYAN WAR.

## A SUMMARY OF THE MOVEMENTS OF THE NAVAL FORCES.

Translated from the *Rivista Nautica Italia Navale*, November, 1912,  
by Major H. D. Farquharson, R.M.L.I. (War Staff).

WHILST the whole country is congratulating the Navy on its past achievements, the *Rivista Nautica*, with faith in the future, adds to its account of the demonstrations at Naples, a record of the work of the Fleet during the thirteen months of the war in Libya. We prefer the title, "War in Libya," to that of "Turco-Italian War," because the exigencies or requirements of international politics, and, above all, the desire evinced by Italy not to declare war with Turkey, have limited the theatre of operations and fighting to the true objective of the war, and so have caused the same to develop on the most normal lines. If, however, during the last few months the radius of naval operations has been extended, the limitations aimed at have always been kept in view.

Another warning, which we consider indispensable, is that this summary of the movements of the Fleet gives by no means an adequate idea of the work of the Navy. Its "wise preparations" have been highly lauded, but "its final preparations" are not yet sufficiently known. These latter preparations, without the former, would have been slower and less orderly; but preparation made in advance would not alone be sufficient to carry out with such care and order the task required—a task greater than that of the mobilization of the Fleet, namely, the organization of the convoy for the Expeditionary Force, and of all the calculations of time and distance for the expedition and for the occupation.

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The Italian Government presented an ultimatum to Turkey on September 28th, 1911, and on the 29th declared war on the Ottoman Power.

*September 29th:* On the afternoon of the 29th, two divisions of destroyers, under the command of the Inspector of Torpedo Boats, Rear-Admiral the Duke of the Abruzzi, pursued two Turkish torpedo-boats coming out of Preveza. One of these, after being repeatedly struck with projectiles, ran ashore; the other re-entered Preveza. The same day, Vice-Admiral Faravelli, with the "Benedetto Brin," "Sardegna," "Re Umberto," and "Carlo Alberto," left Augusta for Tripoli to demand its surrender. The "Emanuele Filiberto," and "Sicilia," also sailed for Tripoli.

*September 30th:* At Gomenitza the "Artigliere," Commander Biscaretti, and the "Corazziere" sank a Turkish destroyer and a torpedo-boat. The "Alpino" captured the yacht "Theties." The "Pisa" and "Amalfi" destroyed the wireless station at Derna. The ships of the Second Squadron cruised off the port of Tripoli.

#### EVENTS IN OCTOBER, 1911.

*October 1st:* The "Marco Polo" captured the Turkish steamer "Sabah" at S. Giovanni di Medua, with troops and a cargo of war material. The same night the "Albatros" cut the cable between Tripoli and Malta. The "Vittorio Emanuele III.," "Roma," and "Agordat" left Augusta for Cyrenaica.

*October 2nd:* The "Vittorio Emanuele III." and "Agordat" joined the "Pisa" and the "Amalfi" at sea. Rear-Admiral di Revel arrived at Tripoli, as envoy of Vice-Admiral Faravelli, Commander-in-Chief of the Second Squadron, to summon the Vali to surrender Tripoli. The Commander of the Second Squadron, after the Vali had come on board, with his secretary and another official, accompanied by Rear-Admiral di Revel, informed the Consuls that if the town was not surrendered by noon the next day (October 3rd), he would open the bombardment.

*October 3rd:* At 2.30 p.m. the ships of the Second Squadron were disposed in three groups to attack the fortifications to the west, centre, and east of Tripoli, respectively, and the crews went to general quarters. At 3.30 p.m. fire was opened on the works of the lighthouse. At 6.10 p.m. the action ended and the ships proceeded to sea. The ships of the First Squadron arrived at Tobruk, and anchored to the east of the mouth of the harbour. The "Agordat" entered and reconnoitred the harbour.

*October 4th:* At 8 a.m. the Training Division and the Second Division of the Second Squadron bombarded the Sultania and Hamidieh forts respectively, to the west and east of Tripoli. The First Squadron entered Tobruk Harbour. The "Vittorio Emanuele III." fired on the Turkish fort, which hauled down its flag. A landing party under Commander Frank reached the fort, occupied it, and hoisted the Italian flag, which was greeted with a salute and cheers.

*October 5th:* At Tripoli, the Training Division occupied the Sultania fort with landing parties, and hoisted the national flag. During the afternoon a naval brigade, under the command of Captain Cagni, was landed from the Second Squadron, and occupied Tripoli. At sunset the Italian flag was flying on the Vali's castle. Rear-Admiral Borea Ricci was nominated Governor of Tripoli by order of the Commander-in-Chief of the Second Squadron. At Tobruk half the naval detachment was re-embarked.

*October 6th:* Twenty abandoned Turkish field guns were taken, and 20 soldiers captured. His Excellency Vice-Admiral Faravelli issued a proclamation to the Arabs that he had taken possession of Tripoli in the name of the King. The "Vittorio Emanuele III." left for Augusta and joined the "Roma" at sea.

*October 7th:* Rear-Admiral di Revel's Division left Tripoli for Augusta. Rear-Admiral Borea Ricci hoisted his flag on the Vali's castle. The "Vittorio Emanuele III." and "Roma" met the "San Marco" at sea, escorting the "Volta" and "Favigna" with war material for Tobruk.

*October 8th:* The enemy attacked our sailors in the trenches of Bu-Meliana; our men were supported, however, by the guns of the Fleet, and the enemy retired. The "Vittorio Emanuele III." and "Roma" arrived at Augusta.

*October 10th:* During the night our sailors were again attacked for two hours at Bu-Meliana; after heavy firing again by the ships, the enemy retired, leaving three killed, besides arms and ammunition. The first transport arrived at Augusta. Two transports sailed for Tripoli direct, namely, the "Verona" and "Europa." The remainder of the convoy, 18 ships, sailed in the evening, escorted by Rear-Admiral di Revel's Division, the "Ammiraglio di Saint Bon," two small cruisers, and torpedo-boats.

*October 11th:* The "Verona" and "Europa," escorted by the "Varese," arrived at Tripoli. The troops were landed with the greatest expedition in the boats of the whole Fleet. Before sunset the sailors were relieved at the outposts. The "Bormida," escorted by the "Etna," left Augusta for Tobruk with material for the temporary base.

*October 12th:* The convoy with the Corps of Occupation reached Tripoli. The "Regina Elena" arrived at Augusta.

*October 13th:* The Naval Brigade of Occupation was re-embarked. Rear-Admiral Borea Ricci was relieved as Governor by His Excellency General Caneva.

*October 15th:* The "Pisa," "Amalfi," and "San Marco" left Tobruk for Derna.

*October 16th:* At Tripoli the landing of troops and material proceeded expeditiously, with the aid of stores supplied by the warships. At Derna the "Pisa" demanded the surrender of the place, which was refused. The "Pisa" bombarded the trenches on the coast and the houses beyond. The landing party could not reach the shore on account of the heavy sea that was running. Destroyers also fired on the trenches at short range. The "Vittorio Emanuele III.," "Roma," and "Regina Elena" left Augusta, accompanied by two divisions of ocean-going torpedo-boats escorting the convoy, whose objective was Cyrenaica.

*October 17th:* The "Varese" bombarded Homs, which refused to surrender. The convoy for Cyrenaica continued its voyage. Derna surrendered. In spite of a very rough sea, and after several wonderful attempts, a naval detachment succeeded in reaching the shore. In the afternoon the Italian flag was hoisted and saluted.

*October 18th:* The "Varese" failed to land troops at Homs on account of the sea. At Derna, the troops sent to reinforce the sailors, began to disembark. The convoy reached Benghazi, where the "Napoli" and "Amalfi" had already arrived. A boat, flying a white flag, landed the Chief of the Staff of the First Squadron to demand the surrender of the place. In the afternoon it was decided to make a feigned landing to the east of the city, and to disembark the troops at Giuliana. At sunset the "Piemonte," "Etruria," and "Liguria" left for a reconnoitring cruise.

*October 19th:* At Derna the high seas prevented all communication with the shore. At Benghazi the ships were disposed at dawn to cover the landing at Giuliana. No reply having been received at 8 a.m. from the Turkish military authorities, the landing was begun in heavy rain, a fresh north-northeasterly wind and rough sea; and a bombardment was opened on the shore and the dunes occupied by the Arabs. The destroyers and torpedo-boats also joined in the action. On the landing party reaching the shore the ships ceased firing. The sailors began to advance, but were suddenly checked by heavy musketry fire from some Arabs in a house, on which the ships directed a fierce fire. It was at that moment that Marco Bianco fell at the head of his battalion. In the meanwhile part of the troops of the Expeditionary Force had been landed, and had advanced in support of the naval detachment. In the afternoon the soldiers and sailors began a forward movement in two columns against the barracks at Berka, from which heavy musketry fire had opened, and on which the larger ships now directed their fire. After a few rounds the Turkish flag was hauled down. At sundown the troops and sailors took possession of the barracks, and the troops occupied in turn all the positions and villages to the west of Benghazi. As the Arabs were shut in in Benghazi, General Briccola asked that the city might be bombarded, and, with the assistance of searchlights, a violent cannonade was opened against it at 7 p.m. Throughout the night musketry firing continued in the trenches.

*October 20th:* Reinforcements from Tripoli, escorted by the "Benedetto Brin," reached General Briccola. At Derna all was quiet.

*October 21st:* The "Benedetto Brin" arrived at Homs and co-operated with the "Varese" in the disembarkation of the 8th Maggiotto Bersagliere. At 8 a.m. the Italian flag was hoisted on the castle. The following days were spent by all the ships stationed in the various ports, in furnishing, with inde-

fatigable energy, men and stores, to assist in landing troops and material of war.

*October 26th:* At Tripoli a furious attack on the Italian lines from the east was vigorously repulsed. The naval detachment from the "Sicilia" distinguished itself in this assault at Fort Hamidieh. Pietro Verri fell gallantly in the same action.

#### EVENTS IN NOVEMBER, 1911.

On November 5th, the "Puglia" sank a Turkish gunboat at Akabah. On the 30th, the "Volturno" bombarded the forts of Sheikh-Said and Mokha, and destroyed some dhows collected there for the transport of troops. During the whole month the ships of the First Squadron in Cyrenaica, and those of the Training Division in Tripolitana, assisted in unloading transports and in patrolling and defending the extreme flanks of the Italian positions. The small ships continued unceasingly to cruise along the immense expanse of coast line, to prevent smuggling, and to fire on the enemy's positions and camps. During this month the Second Squadron remained concentrated at Augusta, carrying out exercises either collectively (in divisions or squadrons), or singly.

#### EVENTS IN DECEMBER, 1911.

During the first ten days of this month, the Second Squadron left Augusta for Cyrenaica, and relieved the First Squadron. The Training Division, the "Liguria," "Parthenope," "Coatit," "Iride," "Carlo Alberto," and "Cyclope," remained in Tripolitana, and when not employed in warlike missions carried out hydrographic surveys at Tripoli.

#### EVENTS IN JANUARY, 1912.

On the first of the month the cruisers in the Red Sea bombarded various Turkish forts and camps situated on the coast. On the afternoon of the 7th, the "Piemonte," with the destroyers "Giuseppe Garibaldi" and "Artigliere," surprised seven Turkish gunboats at Kunfidah. The "Artigliere" opened fire alone on the enemy, and the "Piemonte" and "Giuseppe Garibaldi" joined in later. Some of the gunboats were scuttled; the remainder were run ashore. The yacht "Fauvette" was captured, and many trophies taken. Nothing else of note occurred during the month, except the splendid work of the Italian ships in assisting at the various ports in landing stores and troops, the continuous guarding of the whole coast, carried through under difficult conditions, both of weather and of navigation, and the co-operation of the guns of the fleet, in all the actions which took place on shore.

#### EVENTS IN FEBRUARY, 1912.

On the evening of the 20th, the "Giuseppe Garibaldi" left for Beyrout, and was joined at sea next day by the "Francesco

Ferruccio." The two ships received orders to capture and destroy a gunboat and a torpedo-boat in the port of Beyrout. On the 24th, at early dawn, they arrived off that port. At 7 a.m. the "Giuseppe Garibaldi" signalled to all neutral ships to quit the harbour, and emphasized the signal with a blank round, to which the gunboat replied with a projectile. At 7.20 a.m. a Turkish whaler left the harbour with a flag of truce, in command of a lieutenant, who stated that the gunboat was the "Awni-Allah." He was handed an ultimatum, that the two ships must be surrendered by 9 a.m. At 9.5 a.m. the signal "Surrender" was hoisted, and seven minutes later, no reply having been received, the "Giuseppe Garibaldi" opened fire with her 6-inch and 8-inch guns. The "Francesco Ferruccio" followed her example. The Turkish gunboat immediately replied, and her few rounds fell near the "Giuseppe Garibaldi." After a few rounds the gunboat was no longer in a condition to reply, caught fire, and struck her colours. The "Giuseppe Garibaldi," therefore, moved in to within 100 yards of the mouth of the harbour, and began to fire on the torpedo boat, which fled to the head of the harbour, behind some shipping; the gunboat was finally sunk by a torpedo. On the conclusion of the action the two ships put to sea.

Off Tripolitana and Cyrenaica all the ships continued their normal patrolling.

#### EVENTS IN MARCH, 1912.

On the 4th, Vice-Admiral Augusto Aubry, the Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces, died on board his flagship, the "Vittorio Emanuele III.," at Taranto. Vice-Admiral Luigi Giuseppe Faravelli was nominated in his place, and arrived from Tobruk in his flagship, the "Benedetto Brin." The command of the Second Squadron was entrusted to Vice-Admiral Leone Viale, and he hoisted his flag in the "Regina Margherita."

The First Squadron remained concentrated at Taranto, and the Second at Tobruk.

#### EVENTS IN APRIL, 1912.

On the 7th, Vice-Admiral Faravelli requested to be relieved of the command of the Naval Forces on account of ill-health. On the 10th, Vice-Admiral Leone Viale succeeded to the command, and embarked in the "Vittorio Emanuele III." Vice-Admiral Amero d'Aste Stella was given the command of the Second Squadron.

On the 10th, at Ras-Macabez, with their accustomed dash, and, in spite of the fury of the sea and wind, the sailors of the Training Division effected the disembarkation of Garioni's Division, which, during the succeeding days, occupied Fort Forwa and began a continuous series of attacks and reconnaissances against caravans.

On the 12th, the "Vittorio Emanuele III." and the "Coatit" left Taranto for Stampalia, arriving there on the 15th.



On the same day Rear-Admiral di Revel's Division, consisting of the "Giuseppe Garibaldi," "Varese," and "Francisco Ferruccio," arrived from Tobruk. On the 17th, at dawn, the naval forces rendezvoused to the south-east of Skyros. They consisted of the First Squadron, the Second Division of the Second Squadron, two auxiliary cruisers, the "Duca di Genova," and the "Duca degli Abruzzi," and the cable ship, "Citta di Milano."

The night of the 17th-18th was spent by the naval forces in cruising to the north-west of Imbros. In the meanwhile the "Citta di Milano" cut the Imbros-Dardanelles cable within 5,500 yards of the forts, and, although under the search-lights, was not discovered. Later she proceeded to cut those between Lemnos and Tenedos, and Lemnos and Salonika. The "Vettor Pisani," which was cruising with destroyers and torpedo-boats to the south-west of the Dardanelles, was forced by the heavy seas to take shelter. Very early next morning Rear-Admiral Presbitero's Division moved forward to the entrance of the Straits out of range of the forts, and remained there until 9 a.m., when, the enemy's fleet showing no signs of coming out, the whole of the Italian naval forces advanced in line ahead towards the Straits. At the entrance a Turkish destroyer was sighted, which appeared from its profile to be one of high speed and of German build. Rear-Admiral di Revel's Division was ordered to advance to the entrance of the Straits and sink the destroyer, but the latter withdrew speedily within the Straits. At the same moment the Orkanieh redoubt opened fire, followed by that of Ertogrul. Rear-Admiral di Revel's Division immediately replied, under orders of the Commander-in-Chief. The three divisions were then disposed according to instructions issued to attack three groups of forts. Fire opened at 11 a.m. and ceased at 1.15 p.m. The heavy coast artillery of the Turkish forts replied with considerable accuracy, but without hitting any of the ships. One projectile struck the "Francesco Ferruccio's" ensign halyards, and brought down the colours on deck, but they were rehoisted at the masthead.

The well-disciplined fire of all the ships was from the very outset concentrated and effective, the distance maintained ranging from 11,000 to 13,000 yards. At the forts of Orkanieh and Ertogrul clouds of yellow smoke were observed, without doubt caused by explosions of reserve ammunition and magazines. (From later information it was ascertained that the damage to the forts was considerable, and that the number of dead and wounded during the whole action amounted to several hundreds).

At 1.40 p.m. the whole naval force concentrated and retired in a northerly direction to the north-west of Imbros, and passed at a distance of about 15 miles to the west of Lemnos. The crews were held in readiness during the whole time to repel torpedo attacks. Next morning, April 19th, the Fleet reached Mudros Bay, Lemnos.

At 2 p.m. the "Pisa," "Amalfi," and two destroyers left. At 5 p.m. the rest of the Fleet, and later, the auxiliary ships, left the anchorage for the Canal d'Oro, to return to Italy, in accordance with wireless orders to the Commander-in-Chief from the Ministry.

On the 18th, the "Emanuele Filiberto" bombarded and destroyed the Turkish barracks at Vathy in the island of Samos, and the "Ostro" sank the Turkish yacht "Ircanieh." On the same day the "Benedetto Brin," after a long search, succeeded in cutting the telegraph between Rhodes and Marmarice, and blew up the house that guarded the landing place. On the 19th, at dawn, the same ship destroyed the wireless station at Patras. On the 20th, the "Citta di Milano" cut the cables between Syra and Scio, and between Scio and Cesm ; the "Pisa," entering the Bay of Eritra, bombarded and destroyed the wireless station of Cesm , and afterwards returned to Stampalia with the "Amalfi." At dawn, on the 23rd, detachments from the "Pisa" and "Amalfi" surrounded the Livadia district in the island of Stampalia, and forced the little garrison to surrender. The Italian flag was hoisted on the historical castle.

#### EVENTS IN MAY, 1912.

On May 2nd, the 1st Division of the First Squadron, accompanied by a squadron of destroyers, and one of ocean-going torpedo boats, arrived at Stampalia from Taranto. The "Pisa," "Amalfi," and "San Marco" had already arrived there. The "Coatit," during the night, and the "Citta di Milano," in broad daylight, cut the cable between Rhodes and Candia, in two different places. At sunset General Ameglio's Expeditionary Force left Tobruk for Rhodes. The same evening, the "Pisa" sailed northward, where the "Amalfi" was already stationed on the look-out to prevent reinforcements and hostile ships from reaching Rhodes. A squadron of destroyers reconnoitred the Gulfs of Kos and Mendeleya, and the "Coatit" visited the Gulf of Marmarice.

On the 3rd, at 2 p.m., the First Division of the First Squadron and the "San Marco," with a section of destroyers and a squadron of ocean-going torpedo-boats, left Stampalia for Rhodes. At 1.20 p.m. the convoy, escorted by the First Division of the Second Squadron, a section of destroyers, and a section of ocean-going torpedo-boats, was sighted to the south-east of Rhodes. The "Napoli," "Roma," and "San Marco" launched their boats, which were collected by the torpedo boats and towed to the transports. The "Roma" and "Napoli," stationed themselves in turn to the south-east and east of the city of Rhodes, the "San Marco" to the north-east, and the "Regina Elena" to the north-west. The "Pisa" and "Amalfi" rejoined from their cruise and anchored to the north of the port of Rhodes; the destroyers and the "Coatit" also

returned. At noon the "Alpino" entered the harbour flying a white flag. Her commander carried the demand to surrender, and the declaration of the blockade of the island to the Governor, and also informed the German consul resident there. The Military Governor was not at Rhodes, but the Civil Governor decided to yield only to force.

The landing, therefore, began at 4 a.m. in the Bay of Kaliteas, and continued rapidly under the direction of Captain Magliano, of the Navy. At 9.50 a.m. all the troops were on shore, and at 2 p.m. the advance began. The naval detachments of the "Benedetto Brin" and "Emanuele Filiberto" accompanied the soldiers. During the advance on Rhodes, which met with little opposition, the ships fired shrapnel on the Smith Plateau, where movements of some hostile columns were observed.

At sunset, the advance was suspended, and the ships remained to watch with their search-lights the two coasts, west and east of Rhodes, while their crews remained at their stations ready to repel any attacks by hostile torpedo craft.

In the evening, the Commander-in-Chief of the naval forces received the Vice-Vali and the Director of Police, who promised to ensure order in the City. In spite of which, during the night the doors of the prisons were opened and the convicts escaped.

The Commander-in-Chief sent his Chief of Staff, Rear-Admiral Corsi, ashore, to ascertain the true state of things in Rhodes, and in consequence of the information he received, two companies of sailors were landed, with which Rear-Admiral Corsi occupied and guarded the city. A naval lieutenant was sent to General Ameglio's camp to acquaint him that the city had been occupied by sailors, and that all was quiet.

At 2 p.m. General Ameglio's troops entered the city. With a kindly intention he had detailed the naval detachments, which had accompanied him, to the post of honour at the head of his troops. Shortly afterwards the Italian flag floated over the Governor's Palace, the ships fired a salute, and the crews shouted, "Long live the King." On the following days the disembarkation of stores from the transports continued. Rear-Admiral Presbitero's Division returned to Stampalia on the 6th. On the 7th, Rear-Admiral Corsi's Division reconnoitred the Gulf of Kos, and then returned to Stampalia. The First Division of the Second Squadron and some torpedo craft, with the "Coatit," remained at Rhodes.

At dawn, on the 12th May, the ships were distributed as follows:—"Vittorio Emanuele III." at Scarpanto; "Regina Elena" at Caxo; "Napoli" at Piskopi; "Roma" at Niseros; "Pisa" at Kalimnos; "San Marco" at Leros; "Amalfi" at Patmos.

Naval detachments were landed, and by mid-day all the Turkish garrisons, as well as the civil officials, had surrendered. At Scarpanto and Caxo, Turkish sovereignty was declared to be ended; that of H.M. the King of Italy was proclaimed, and the

Italian flag was hoisted. The ships left small garrisons and returned to Stampalia.

At 3 a.m., on the 18th, the "Regina Margherita" entered Marmarice, bombarded and destroyed the Turkish fort, and afterwards returned to Rhodes.

The Commander-in-Chief, having been informed of the intentions of the Government, and of the preparation of a military expedition in Rhodes for the occupation of Kos, sent the "Napoli," on the 21st, to collect information about the island. Having obtained it, the occupation was ordered without fail, and on the 22nd the "Napoli" disembarked landing parties in the city, and, capturing the garrison and civil officials, hoisted the Italian flag over the island.

During the whole of this period the ships made frequent visits in turn to the anchorages of the occupied islands.

On the 21st, the "Pisa" hoisted the Italian flag at Kalimnos and Leros, and on the 22nd, at Patmos, the people everywhere giving the ships and the crews a warm welcome. The torpedo craft reconnoitred continuously and carefully the Asiatic coast, and the auxiliary cruisers moved about to repress smuggling and to obtain information.

#### EVENTS IN JUNE, 1912.

On June 16th, with the object of occupying Misurata, one of the most important commercial centres in Libya, General Camerana's Division was landed at Bu-Sceifa. The disembarkation was carried out and protected by the Training Division, whose naval detachments, already famous for their dash and unwearied energy for work and valour in attack, fought on the flanks of the troops and repulsed on the same day a vigorous attack made by the enemy on the right wing of the Division, when it had landed.

On the 26th, the advance was begun from Macabez on Sidi Said. The march was followed on the flank by the torpedo-boats and other craft operating in these waters. These took part with their guns in the actions of Sidi Said on the 27th and 28th.

Meanwhile the "Vulcano" assisted in organizing the various services of the naval base at Stampalia. With stores from Italy, and with the aid of the personnel told off for duty, various look-out stations were established on the most commanding points of the island, which served for a thorough survey by day of the whole horizon, and by night of the approaches to the anchorages of the naval forces. Three batteries for anti-torpedo boat defence were constructed, sited to fire on the entrances to the anchorages. The defences were completed by the installation of three electric searchlight stations for illuminating the water area in the approach to the anchorage of the larger ships. A complete telephonic system was laid down, both on land and under water, connecting the look-out stations, the batteries, and

the searchlights. This defensive system, always ready for any eventuality, was supplemented continuously every night by an exterior service of security carried out by various torpedo craft.

At Maltezana, on shore, magazines for food supplies and a cattle depôt were formed for supplying the ships. Moorings were also laid down for the torpedo craft, and anchorages arranged for colliers and auxiliary ships, which always re-entered the harbour at Maltezana during the night, instead of remaining on the southern anchorage with the larger ships.

To this work of organization were added numerous and continuous cruises in the various islands, manœuvres, evolutions, and war exercises, either collectively or by single ships, which always maintained the ships and crews ready and vigorous for that trial with the enemy's fleet, which was vainly hoped for and ardently awaited by everyone.

#### EVENTS IN JULY, 1912.

On the night of the 18th-19th, a squadron of five torpedo-boats, the "Spica," "Perseo," "Centauro," "Climene," and "Astore," entered the Dardanelles. They were led by Captain Enrico Millo in the "Spica." In spite of the vigilance of the searchlights at the entrance, the squadron was not discovered, and ran about a mile-and-a-half up the Straits, when the "Astor," the last in the line, came under the beams of a light. A blank round gave the alarm, and was immediately repeated by the numerous look-out stations on both shores. A large number of searchlights illuminated the squadron, and the batteries opened fire. The boats increased their speed to 22 knots, hugged the European shore, and boldly continued their course towards the Kilid Bahr Chanak Straits. On reaching the Straits, 12 miles from the mouth, the "Spica," which was leading, struck one of the steel cables of the boom that had been fixed at that point. The torpedo-boats were then in view of the enemy's fleet, the ships of which were working their searchlights and opened a violent fire with their anti-torpedo armament, to which was added the heavy fire of the numerous shore batteries. Having ascertained the position of the Turkish squadron, convinced of the impossibility of torpedoing it, and certain of the complete destruction of the torpedo boats if the attempt were made, Captain Millo gave orders to return; this was carried out under a perfect tempest of fire, and with marked boldness and *sang froid* on the part of the commanders. The damage reported by the boats was insignificant.

During the same night the ships of the First Squadron were to the south-west of Tenedos, ready for any eventuality if any Turkish unit happened to come out.

#### EVENTS IN AUGUST, 1912.

On the night of August 4th, General Tassoni's brigade disembarked at Zuara, under the protection of the ships stationed

in Tripolitana. This was the last landing operation in which the Navy took part; the Cadets of the Naval Academy were present on board the "Etna," which fired on the enemy's trenches.

From August 22nd to Sept 5th, the Second Squadron, composed of the "Regina Margherita," "Ammiraglio di Saint Bon," "Emanuele Filiberto," "Giuseppe Garibaldi," "Francesco Ferruccio," and "Coatit," carried out a cruise on the coasts of Syria and Anatolia, visiting the coasts and ports of Jaffa, Haifa, Beyrout, Alessandretta, Latakia, Messina, Adalia, Castellorizo, and Rhodes.

#### EVENTS IN SEPTEMBER, 1912.

In the month of September the "San Marco" and "Amerigo Vespucci" assisted in the victory of Casr-el-Leben. The Second Squadron, under the orders of Admiral Amero, arrived off Smyrna on the 22nd, and in the evening anchored at Sighajik. On the 23rd it again returned to the Gulf of Smyrna and came under the fire of the forts, passing by Mytilene at sunset, with crews at their stations. It then visited in turn the islands occupied by the Italians, and returned on the 30th to Stampalia. The First Squadron returned to Italy during the first ten days of the month, and remained disposed as follows: First Division and the "San Marco" at Spezia; Second Division at Taranto.

During the month negotiations to establish the principal agreements for a treaty of peace assumed some importance. These came to an end on October 12th, until which date a definite conclusion of peace had seemed imminent, by Turkey advancing proposals unacceptable to Italy. Consequently the Royal Government ordered some units of the First Squadron, to hold themselves in readiness to sail, and despatched an ultimatum to Turkey.

On the afternoon of the 12th, the "Regina Elena," the "San Marco," and the "Espero" left for Spezia. At Taranto the "Pisa," "Amalfi," "San Georgio" and "Napoli" were held in readiness to sail. The "Espero" called en route at Naples to embark stores. The "Regina Elena" and the "San Marco" arrived at Messina early on the 15th, and after having embarked ratings, taken in stores, and coaled, left on the 18th directly for the Aegean. During the night a Ministerial wireless telegram announced that the preliminary agreements for peace had been signed during the afternoon, and that, therefore, the cruise of the Squadron in the Aegean was cancelled. The Commander-in-Chief, with the "Regina Elena" and "San Marco," made for Taranto, and ordered the Second Division of the First Squadron, already en route to the Aegean, to repair to the same anchorage (Taranto). The whole of the First Squadron reached the Mar Piccolo on the 16th September.